Manton Thomas The complete works of Thomas Manton vol 19

PRINCETON, N. J.

Manton, Thomas, 1620-1677.

The complete works of Thomas

Manton

THE WORKS OF THOMAS MANTON, D.D.

VOL. XIX.

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THOMAS MANTON, D.D.

VOLUME XIX.

CONTAININO

SERMONS ON SEVERAL TEXTS OF SCRIPTURR.

LONDON:

JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNEES STREET

1874.

I'RINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND COMPANY

EDINBURGH AND LONDON

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SERMONS

SEVERAL TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE,

VOL. XTX

SERMON UPON JOHN XVIII. 11.

The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drinh it ?

John xviii. 11.

These words are part of Christ's rebuke to Peter, who, when the high

priest's servants came to attack Christ, draweth his sword, and cuts

off Malchus' ear, which our Lord first healeth, and then reproveth his

disciple for this temerarious action : ' Put up thy sword into the sheath.'

He reproveth him, partly because it becometh no private man by oppo-

sition to resist authority ; but the chief reason was, our Lord would

not be hindered in performing the great act of his mediation, his dying

for sinners. You shall see in another place, when Peter counselled

him against his sufferings, he rebuked him with the same severity that

he doth the devil tempting him to idolatry : ' Get thee behind me, Satan,'

Mat. xvi. 23, compared with Mat. iv. 10. And here this rash and

unseasonable interposition, to save his master by force, is again

reproved. In Peter's temerity, take notice of the difference between

military valour and christian fortitude. He that faltered and was

blown down by the weak blast of a damsel's question hath now the

courage with a single sword to venture upon an whole band of men.

Military valour is boisterous, and dependeth upon the heat of blood and

spirits, and is better for a sudden onset than a deliberate trial ; but

christian fortitude dependeth on the strength of faith, and lieth in a

meek subjection to God, and will enable us to endure the greatest

torments rather than encroach upon the conscience of our duty to God.

A man of a military forward spirit may outbrave dangers when they

are sudden, but faileth or fainteth in weaker trials, that are managed

rather in a way of charge and accusation than force. But in Christ's

rebuke, take notice of his obedience to God and love to men. Obedience

to God : Shall I not suffer patiently, without resisting, what my Father

hath determined me to suffer ? And love to men ; it was the cup which

God had given him to drink for the good of his people, and therefore

he would by no means decline it.

In the words take notice of — (1.) The notion by which affliction is

expressed ; it is ' a cup.' (2.) God's ordering of it, ' Which my Father

hath given me.' (3.) Christ's submission, ' Shall I not drink it ? '

1. For the term or notion whereby Christ's sufferings are expressed,

\*a cup.' We read of a threefold cup in scripture — (1.) A cup of tri-

4 SERMON UPON JOHN XVIII. II.

bulation ; (2.) A cup of consolation ; (3.) A cup of salvation and

thanksgiving.

The first of these is often mentioned : Ps. xi. 6, ' Upon the wicked

he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest ; this

shall be the portion of their cup.' So the prophet Jeremiah is bidden,

chap. XXV. 15, \* Take the wine-cup of this fury at my hand, and cmise all

the nations to whom I send thee to drink it.' So Ps. Ixxv. 8, 'For in the

hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red ; it is full of mix-

ture : and he poureth out the same ; but the dregs thereof, all the

wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.' Thus

God's dispensations are ordinarily expressed by a cup poured out and

given to men to drink. And therefore our Lord Christ himself usetli

this form of speech, not only here, but elsewhere ; as Mat. xxvi. 39,

' Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' It was a dread-

ful cup that he was to drink of.

The second cup, the cup of consolation, is spoken of Jer. xvi. 7,

\* Neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their

father or for their mother ; ' taken from the Jewisli custom of sending

it to them that mourned, or to condemned persons. The same is spoken

of Prov. xxxi. 6, 7, ' Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish,

and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts ; let him drink and forget

his poverty, and remember his misery no more ; ' Amos ii. 8, ' They

drank the wine of the condemned.'

The third was the cup of salvation, spoken of Ps. cxvi.,13, 'I will

take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.' Or

the cup of deliverance, used more solemnly in the temple by the priests,

or more privately in the family. Sometimes called the drink-offering

of praise; and to which the 'cup of blessing,' 1 Cor. x. 16, used in the

Lord's supper, hath a great respect ; for it was always used with cer-

tain expressions of commemoration and praise. The first is plainly

here intended, the cup of tribulation, so called because our afflictions

are measured out by God, both for quantity and quality, either by his

justice or by his wisdom and mercy.

2. God's ordering of it, ' Which my Father hath given me.' Christ

mentioneth not the malice of his enemies, but the will of God and his

Father. His hand in Christ's sufferings is often asserted in scripture :

Isa. liii. 10, ' It pleased the Father to bruise him ; he hath put him

to grief;' Acts ii. 23, 'Him, being delivered by the determinate

counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands

have crucified and slain ;' Acts iv. 28, 'For to do whatsoever thy hand

and thy counsel determined before to be done.' God did not excite

and instigate those wicked wretches to that cruelty which they exer-

cised upon Christ, yet it was predetermined by God for the salvation

of mankind.

3. Christ's submission, \* Shall I not drink it ? ' If God put a bitter

cup into our hands, we must not refuse it, for here we have Christ's

example. The meaning is, this bitter passion which the Father hath

laid upon me, shall I not suffer it patiently ?

Doct. That it is the duty of christians patiently to suffer whatever

God hath appointed them to suffer.

The note is plain. I shall discuss it in this method —

SERMON UPON JOHN XVIII. 11. 5

1. That in all calamities we should look to God.

2. That it is a great advantage to patience when we can consider

him not as an angry judge, but as a gracious father.

3. Tliat it well becometh his people to endure that willingly which

he calleth them unto.

I. That in all calamities we should look unto God : Ps. xxxix. 9, ' I

was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.' That is

the first thing that quieteth the heart, when we see God's hand in all

tilings that befall us. So Hezekiah : Isa. xxxviii. 15, 'What shall I say?

he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it.' If God hath

done it, it is time to cease, and say no more ; for why should we con-

tend with the Lord ? We murmur and repine if we look no higher

than second causes ; but owning God's hand, we have nothing to reply

by way of murmuring or expostulations. So Job, chap. i. 21, ' The

Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name

of the Lord.' He doth not say, Dominus dedit, diabolus dbstidit — The

Lord hath given, and the devil hath taken away ; nor yet, 6 Xa\hato<i

a^eiXero, the Chaldean or Sabean hath taken away ; but he owneth

God in the providence. Compare the different carriage of David when

Nabal slighted him and when Shiraei railed on him. The one you

have 1 Sam. xxv. 21, 22, ' Now David had said, Surely in vain have I

kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was

missed of all that pertained to him; but he hath requited me evil for

good. So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave

of all that pertaineth to him by the morning light any that pisseth

against the wall.' A rash speech, because he only reflected upon the

unkindness of Nabal, and meditateth nothing but revenge. The other

you have 2 Sam. xvi. 11, ' Let him alone, and let him curse, for the

Lord hath bidden him.' David then considered not the instrument,

but the supreme author ; he looked not to the stone, but the hand that

flung it, to God's providence, who thought good by that means to

chastise him. If we mind providence rather than revenge, we must

not reflect on the injury done to us, nor the malice of our adversaries,

but the will and good pleasure of God. So Joseph: Gen. 1. 20, 'As

for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it for good.' So

he calmeth his heart, and fortifieth it against all thoughts of revenge

against liis brethren. In short, there are two sorts of evils and afflic-

tions, such as come immediately from the hand of God, or such injuries

and afflictions wherein men are the instruments. Patience hath to do

with both, that we may bear afflictions from God without murmuring,

and injuries from men without thought of revenge. Such as come im-

mediately from the hand of God are not to be looked upon as chances

or casual accidents, but the Lord is to be owned in them, and then we

must ' humble ourselves under his mighty hand,' 1 Peter v. 6. In in-

juries from men, we must consider they are also governed by God's

providence, and sent by God as well as other evils. Some are patient

under an affliction from God, but very impatient under injurious deal-

ing from men ; as when a shower of rain falleth from heaven, we bear

it quietly, but if one throw a basin of water upon us, we storm, and are

vexed at heart. But if we did look through the wrongs of men to God,

they would not be so irksome to us, be they injuries in civil commerce,

6 SERMON UPON JOHN XVIII. 11.

suoli as oppression, detention of dues, contumelies, reproaches, or per-

secution for righteousness' sake ; see God in all, that you may not fret

at it.

Two things we must lay down briefly —

1. That notliing falleth out without God's particular providence:

Lam. iii. 37, 38, ' Who is he that saith, and it oometh to pass, when

the Lord commandeth it not ? Out of the mouth of the Most High

proceedeth not evil and good ; ' that is, nothing is done here below but

by a divine disposal and providence, nothing but what he by his secret

wisdom hath pre-ordained and appointed.

2. That cross issues and punishments, as well as benefits and pros-

perous successes, come all of God : Isa. xlv. 7, ' I form the light, and

create darkness ; I make peace, and create evil : I, the Lord, do all

these tilings.' AH evils of punishment come from God, as well as the

blessings of providence ; and without tliis principle we could neither

be thankful for the one nor humble under the other. We look upon

it as a piece of atheism and irreligiousness if we be not thankful for

benefits ; it is as great an evil if we be not humble under punishments.

We count him a profane man that should thank his dungcart for his

good crop ; and doth not he as much deny providence that in all his

afflictions looketh only to instruments, and not to the hand of God ?

that rageth against men, but doth not take notice of the will of his

heavenly Father ? It is very notable, Jonah iv. 6, 7, that God first

prepared a gourd to shelter Jonah from the scorching heat of the sun,

and then prepared a worm tliat smote the gourd, and deprived him of

that comfort and benefit. He that gave us the delight in any natural

comfort doth also take it from us. The same hand must be owned in

giving and taking, or else we shall not prevent atheism. He that

created the gourd created the worm ; and he that governed the gourd,

and made it a refreshing shadow from the heat of the sun, he governed

the worm to eat out the root and life of the gourd. As Christ here

saith, not the Jews or pharisees provided this bitter cup for him, but

the Father, fficnmenius, an ancient Greek writer on the scripture, in

his comment on the Acts of the Apostles, telleth us that once a great

plague invaded the city of Athens, and miserably desolated it, which

also other histories testify ; the citizens being almost consumed, ran to

the image of Jupiter with sacrifices, vows, and prayers, to save them

from the pestilence, but Jupiter could not do it ; then to Saturn,

Mercury, Neptune, and other gods, but still in vain, for the plague

daily increased, and was more mortal and deadly. And when this was

considered in the court of the Areopagites, a wise man among them said,

Without doubt these gods known to us did not send this pestilence,

because upon our prayers and supplications to them they cannot take

it away ; there may be some other god unknown to us who sent it, and

who alone can cause it to cease, therefore he is to be sought unto, an altar

erected to him, and sacrifices and intercessions offered to him, to take

away this plague from us. And this writer thinketh that this was the

original of that altar which Paul saw with this inscription, ' To the un-

known God,' Acts xvii. 23. I have brought this account to show you

that all evil is sent by God, and his hand must be acknowledged in it, or

else religion will fall to the ground. \Vhen the disciples were terrified

SERMON UPON JOHN XVIII. 11. 7

in a great storm, Christ cometh walking upon tlie waters, and telleth

them, ' Be of good cheer, it is I ; be not afraid,' Mark vi. 50. They

thought it was a spectre, but Christ saith, \* It is I.' In short, the author

of all the annoyances and afflictions that befalleth us in this life is God,

their end is repentance, their cause is sin ; and this well thought of

will silence all our murmurings.

II. That it is a great advantage to patience when we can consider

him not as an angry judge, but as a gracious father. The cup which

Christ drank off was very bitter, and yet he saith, ' The cup which my

Father hath given me.' Now every one cannot apply this comfort,

for many are not so much as in a visible relation to God, and others

that visibly live in his family yet are not owned and acknowledged by

him as his dear children, rather counted bastards than sons, as the

apostle speaketh, Heb. xii. 7, 8, ' If ye endure chastening, God dealeth

with you as with sons ; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth

not ? But if ye be without chastisements, whereof all are partakers,

then are ye bastards, and not sons.' Not legitimate, but degenerate

children. Others have a special relation to God, such as is between

father and children : 2 Cor. vi. 18, ' I will be unto you a Father, and ye

shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.' These have

an interest in his dearest love, and a right to his choicest benefits ; and

they shall know it by his fatherly dealing with them. Now to such

this comfort properly belongeth ; for though God may punish and afflict

others, j^et he cannot be said to chastise them as a father, but as an

angry judge he doth punish them for their offences and rebellions.

Therefore, if you would apply this comfort, you must clear up your

interest, enter into covenant with him, and sincerely believe in Christ,

and devote yourselves to him, that he may be your God and Father.

But because being and seeing are two things, and many that are the

children of God may not know themselves to be so, therefore I shall —

(1.) State this matter ; (2.) Show what an advantage it is to patience.

First, I shall state this matter in these considerations —

1. God is a father by creation or adoption.

[1.] In a more general respect by creation, as Adam is called 'the son

of God,' Luke iii. ^38. So Mai. ii. 10, ' Have we not all one Father ?

hath not one God created us ? ' God is more our Father than our

natural parents are ; they concur to our beings but instrumentally, but

God originally. It is God that formeth us in the womb ; we are his

workmanship, not our parents', both as to body and soul. As to the

body : Ps. cxix. 73, ' Thy hands have made me and fashioned me.'

They know not whether the child be male or female, beautiful or

deformed ; they cannot tell the number of the bones, muscles, veins,

and arteries, which God hath framed in such a curious and exact order.

But for the soul, which is the better part of man, that is of his immediate

creation ; therefore God is called, ' The Father of spirits,' Heb. xii. 9.

They do not run in the channel of carnal generation or fleshly descent.

In this general sense, by virtue of creation, God is the Father of all

men, good and bad ; which though it give God a title to our love, service,

and honour, yet it giveth us no interest in his special benefits, or the

fruits of his fatherly love ; it moveth God not to stir up all his wrath

against them, yet not to bestow saving grace, his favour and image,

upon them.

8 SERMON UPON JOHN XVIII. 11.

[2.] More especially, and in a more comfortable sense, there is

a more peculiar sort of men to whom God is a Father b}' adoption,

and they are his dear children. This title is not by nature, but ])y

grace; the foundation of it was laid in the election of God: Eph.

i. 5, 'Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by

Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.'

But before this decree could be executed and take place, the redemp-

tion of Christ Avas necessary ; for we read, Gal. iv. 4, 5, \* When the

fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman,

made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that

we might receive the adoption of sons.' Sin needed to be expiated by

the Son of God in our nature before God would bestow this honour

upon any of mankind ; Christ was to take a mother upon earth, that

we might have a Father in heaven : ' Forasmuch as the children are

partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the

same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of

death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death

were all their lifetime subject to bondage,' Heb. ii. 14, 15. And besides,

this grace is applied to us by the Spirit, who by his effectual operation

bringeth us into a state of love and sonshij). As a Father by creation,

he giveth us our natural endowments ; as a Father by adoption, he givetli

us the supernatural grace of the Spirit, to sanctify and change our

hearts ; for regeneration and adoption always go together : John i. 12,

13, 'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become

the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name ; which were

born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man,

but of God.' And by the new nature put into us we are brought into

this new state and relation : Gal. iv. 6, ' And because ye are sons, God

hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into 3'our hearts, crying, Abba,

Father.' The soul that was shy of God then incHneth to him as our

Lord, that we may honour, love, and obey him, and as our happiness,

that we may seek after him, and live in communion with him. And

lastly, the act on our part, that we may be received into the number of

God's children, is an owning and acknowledging Christ to all the ends

and purposes for which God hath appointed him ; if we really entertain

him as sent by God to be our Lord and Saviour, we are advanced to

this dignity : John i. 12, ' To as many as received him, to them gave

he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his

name.' This of the privilege.

2. You having received this grace, it is your duty to get it evidenced,

that you may maintain a comfortable sense of your adoption. It is

evidenced by the dwelling and working of the Holy Spirit in you : Eom.

viii. 16, ' The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are

the children of God.' He witnesseth objectively and effectively, per

modum argumenti, and per modum efficientis caused' — by way of

argument, and by way of causal efficiency. Objectively, if I have the

Spirit of God framing my heart to love, and honour, and fear, and obey

him, and delight in communion with him, surely I am a child of God ;

for where these are, sincere love to God prevaileth : 1 John iv. 13,

' Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath

given us of his Spirit.' There he speaketh of love to God, and so for

SERMON UPON JOHN XVIII. 11. 9

honour ; it is else but an empty title : Mai. i. 6, ' If I then he a father,

where is mine honour ? If I l3e a master, where is my fear ? ' So for

fear or childlike reverence, that we dare not offend him : Ps. ciii. 13,

\* As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear

him.' His children, and those that fear him, are equivalent expres-

sions : 1 Peter i. 17, ' If ye call on the Father, who without respect of

persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your

sojourning here in fear.' I illustrate by that, Jer. xxxv. 6, ' And they

said, We will drink no wine, for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father

commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye nor your

sons, for ever.' So for obedience: 1 Peter i. 14, 'As -obedient chil-

dren, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your

ignorance ; ' Eph. v. 1, ' Be ye followers of God, as dear children.' So

for delighting in communion with him : Rom. viii. 15, ' For ye have

not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received

the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father ; ' Gal. iv. 6, ' And

because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our

hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' This is most felt in prayer ; Zech. xii.

10, ' I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of

Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplications ; ' Rom. viii. 26, ' Like-

wise 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 ; ' Jude 20, ' But ye,

beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the

Holy Ghost.' Here we have the nearest familiarity with God whilst

we dwell in the flesh, and our souls are carried to God as light bodies

move upward. This is the matter of the evidence, but the Spirit giveth

a sight or sense of this ; if he be not grieved and ill-treated, but his

sanctifying motions be obeyed, he sheddeth abroad the love of God in

our hearts, and fiUeth us with much joy and peace.

3. If this be faithfully done, and there be no other reason to break

our confidence, the bare affliction, or the greatness and grievousness of

your afflictions, should not ; for these sharp afflictions are not only

consistent with this relation, as the instance of Christ showeth, but

also it is an act of his fatherly love and discipline. The exhortation

speaketh to us as children : Heb. xii. 5-8, ' Ye have forgotten the

exhortation that speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise

not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked

of him ; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every

son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with

you as sons ; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ? but

if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers; then are ye

bastards, and not sons.' God's children must look to be chastened ;

neither must our Father's hand be slighted, nor must we faint under

it. It is an act of love and kindness to us, that he will not suffer us

to go on in our sins. God seemeth to cast off them whom he leaveth

to their own hearts' lusts : Hosea iv. 17, ' Ephraim is joined to idols ;

let him alone.' But he loveth whom he chasteneth, and scourgeth every

son whom he receiveth. The rod of correction will not wholly be laid

aside while God's children are in the flesh. In heaven, where there

are no dangers, there is no use of it any more, because then we are

10 SERMON UPON JOHN XVIII. 11.

fully and perfectly sanctified, but here you must be content to submit

to the discipline of the family. Certainly you must not question his

love because something falleth out contrary to your desires. God is a

Father when he frowneth and when he smiletli ; he is the God of the

valleys as well as of the hills and mountains ; his love doth not alter

with our condition, the comfort of adoption is for such a time.

4. Because of our imperfection both in holiness and comfort, we must

submit to the authority of a father, when we cannot see our interest in

his special fatherly love. Alas ! most are so ill settled in the peace

and comfort of the gospel, that every notable afiiiction reviveth our

guilty fears ; as the Sareptan said to Elijah when her child died, ' Art

thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my

son ? ' 1 Kings xvii. 18. She looked upon that sad providence as a

judgment for her sins ; so it is if God awakeneth in us a spirit of bon-

dage. Besides, there is none of us but may justify God, that he is not

needlessly severe ; yea, some have so sinned, that though they be not

Jilii irce, children of wrath, yet they are Jilii suh ira, children under

wrath ; though they need no regeneration or conversion, yet they have

grieved the good Spirit of God by walking inordinately, therefore their

business is to submit to the authority of God, justly correcting and

punishing them for sins : Micali vii. 9, ' I will bear the indignation of

the Lord, because I have sinned against him.' And by unfeigned

repentance to renew their claim, and promise greater loyalty and

fidelity for the future : Jer. iii. 19, ' Thou shalt call me, My father, and

shalt not turn away from me.' They must get their wounds healed,

make up the breach between God and them, sue out their pardon in

the name of Christ, and get a renewed grant of it, and a sense of their

adoption.

5. If hitherto you have been quite strangers to God, such providences

may be an occasion to begin the relation before they are over, as they

are helps to repentance and recovery. Ui)on the serious working of

your souls, the Lord may be found as a father, and admit you into

his family. It is said, ' The Lord loveth whom he chasteneth,' Heb.

xii. 6. There is a twofold love in God — the love of benevolence, and

the love of complacency ; the one while we are sinners, the other after

he hath made us amiable. Some God chooseth in the fiie or furnace

of affliction : Isa. xlviii. 10, ' Behold, I have refined thee, but not with

silver ; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.' The hot fur-

nace is God's workhouse ; the most excellent vessels of honour are

formed there ; Manasseh, Paul, the jailer in the Acts ; when the pro-

digal began to be in want, he thought of returning to his father, Luke

XV. 17-19. if our ears be o})ened to discipline, we can own God in

the humbling, though not the comfortable way : ' Father, I have sinned

against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called

thy son.' Many that were never serious before are brought to bethink

themselves in their afflictions : 1 Kings viii. 47, 48, ' Yet if they shall

bethink' themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and

repent, and make supplications unto thee in the land of them that

carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done per-

versely, we have committed wickedness ; and so return unto thee with

all their heart and with all their soul.' The doors of God's family

SERMON UPON JOHN XVIII. 11. 11

are always open to believing penitents, and it is a fatherly providence

at last.

Secondly, What an advantage is it to patience and submission to

God.

1. God's fatherly relation showeth his love to us ; and so we know

that by all his chastisements he doth but seek our spiritual and eternal

good : Heb. xii. 9, 10, ' We have had fathers of our flesh, which cor-

rected us, and we gave them reverence ; shall we not much rather be

in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live ? for they verily for a

few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit,

that we might be partakers of his holiness.' Children, though they

take it ill to be beaten by others, yet they take it patiently when beaten

for their faults by their parents, who, under God, are the cause of their

being and maintenance, and ever in correcting seek their good ; much

more should we submit to our heavenly Father. Earthly parents may

err, wanting wisdom, or being blinded with passion, and so their chastise-

ments are arbitrary and irregular ; but there is more of compassion than

passion in God's rod ; all cometh from purest love, and is regulated by

perfect wisdom, and tendeth to the highest end, even our holiness and

happiness.

2. It inferreth great love from us to God again. No owning of God

is allowed but the practical owning of him ; and therefore none own

God as a father but those that love him as a father. Now love God

once, and nothing that he doth will be grievous to us; for as love

sweeteneth duties, so it sweeteneth providences. It cometh from my

Father ; that doth not only bespeak reverence or submission (Num. xii.

14, ' If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed

seven days?') but welcome; anything should be well taken at his hand.

III. It well becometh his people to endure willingly whatever God

calleth them unto.

1. From God. His sovereignty and power ; he is too great to be

questioned : Job ix. 12, ' Behold he taketli away, who can hinder him ?

Who will say unto him, What doest thou ? ' His justice ; he is too

just to do us wrong : Job xxxiv. 23, ' For he will not lay upon man

more than is right, that he should enter into judgment with God.'

There is guilt enough in every one to silence us : Ps, cxix. 137,

' Kighteous art thou, Lord, and upright are thy judgments.' His

goodness ; he is too good to do us harm ; he knoweth how to recom-

pense us : Ps. cxix. 71, ' It is good for me that I have been afflicted.'

Nothing but good can come from him who is goodness and love itself.

His wisdom and faithfulness ; he will afflict us no more than need re-

quireth, or will exceed our strength : 1 Peter i. 6, ' Wherein ye greatly

rejoice, though now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through

manifold temptations ; ' 1 Cor. x. 13, ' There hath no temptation taken

you but such as is common to man ; but God is faithful, who will not

suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the

temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'

2. With respect to Christ, whose example should be of force to us

both for suffering and patience in suffering. For suffering, there is a cer-

tain measure of affliction fitted and prepared for Christ and all his

12 SERMON UPON JOHN XYIII. 11.

followers ; the bitter cup goetli round from hand to hand ; the whole

wave dashed upon Christ, some drops light upon us : Col. i. 24, 'Who

now rejoice in my sufferings for j'ou, and fill up that which is behind

of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the

church.' And for patience in suffering : Heb. xii. 2, 3, ' Looking unto

Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set

before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at

the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured

such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and

faint in your minds ; ' 1 Peter ii. 21, ' Christ also sufifered for us, leav-

ing us an example, that ye should follow his steps ;' and ver. 23, ' Who

Avhen he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threat-

ened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.'

He hath trod the way before us, and his steps drop fatness : Mat. xx.

23, \* Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the bap-

tism that I am baptized with ; but to sit on my right hand, and on

my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it

is prepared of my Father.' There are two things ; if any would be

nearer in dignity to Christ than others, it is not in reigning, but in

suffering with Christ, in drinking Christ's cup ; but for preferment in

another world, and to have a larger measure of honour, that is given

to those for whom it is appointed. We are to prepare for the cross.

The other is, the new covenant engageth us hereunto, for there is an

allusion to the sacraments. Therefore Christ useth these notions.

Use 1. Showeth what provision the christian religion maketh for

patience : Rom. xv, 4, ' For whatsoever things were written aforetime,

were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort

of the scriptures, might have hope.' This patience and comfort of the

scriptures is a higher thing than what is learnt by the institutions of

philosophy. Tam m ipsis falsa erat patientia, quam et falsa sapieniia

— Cypr. Both their patience and their wisdom is false. The grounds

of patience from the christian religion are particular providence, adop-

tion, the example of Christ, the assistance of the Spirit, the desert of

sin, the fruit of afflictions, both as to the refining of grace and prepar-

ing us for glory: Heb. xii. 11, ' Now no chastening for the present

seemeth to be joyous, but grievous ; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth

the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised

thereby.'

Use 2. To exhort us to bear whatsoever God shall lay upon us.

1. Seek this grace of God, both the wisdom and the power to calm

the spirit: Col. i. 11, ' Strengthened with all might according to his

glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness ; '

James i. 5, ' If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.' Man's

strength is not the strength of bulls ; it doth not lie in brutish force,

but strength of reason. Our own reason is too feeble to encounter our

passions if not assisted by grace ; they are not healed by time, but

spiritual wisdom : Ps. xciv. 19, ' In the multitude of my thoughts

within me thy comforts delight my soul.'

2. Expostulate with yourselves, and cite all your passions before the

tribunal of reason : Ps. xlii. 5, ' Why art thou cast down, my soul ?

SEKMON UPON JOHN XVIII. 11. 13

why art thou disquieted within me ? ' God puts Jonah to the ques-

tion : chap. iv. 4, ' Dost thou well to be angry ? ' So should we argue

with ourselves : With whom are you displeased? Is it with God ? He

doth what he pleaseth ; he might cast thee into hell, and art thou

angry because of his temporal chastisement ? He hath bestowed many

mercies upon thee, and shall he not take his seasons to chastise thee ?

Art thou angry with man ? But is not God's hand in it ? Hast not

thou done so to others ? Eccles. vii. 22, ' For oftentimes also thy own

heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.'

SERMON UPON LUKE XXIII. 34.

FatTier, forgive them^for tliey know noiichaf tJieijdo. — Luke xxiii. 34.

The words of the dying are wont to be much observed. When men

depart out of the body, they are usually more serious and divine, and

speak with greater weight. As a man that is to take a journey trusseth

up his bundle or fardle, so when men are to take a journey to God, and

are upon the brink of the everlasting state, they are wont to gather up

whatever is of a divine and immortal nature. Especially the speeches

of the godly dying are to be regarded, who, having laid aside worldly

affairs and earthly thoughts, are wholly exercised in the contemplation

of heavenly things. Therefore in scripture we read of David's last

words, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, and of Joshua, chap, xxiii. 14, 'And behold,

this day I am going the way of all the earth ;' but before he goes he

would leave this testimony for God : 'Ye know in all your hearts, and

in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things

which the Lord your God spake concerning you, all are come to pass

unto yon, and not one thing hath failed thereof.' So Jacob, Moses,

Simeon : Luke ii. 29, 30, ' Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart

in peace, according to thy word ; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation,'

Paul : 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, ' I have fought a good fight, I have finished my

course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a

crown of righteousness, which the Loid, the righteous Judge, shall give

me at that day ; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love

his appearing.' Now certainly, if any man's dying speeches are to be

observed, Christ's are much moie. Job said, chap. xix. 23, 24, ' Oh,

that my words were now written ! oh, that they were printed in a book !

that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever ! '

It were well if Christ's words wei'e written, not in cedar, but in our

own hearts. They reckon seven short speeches of Christ upon the

cross, and this is the first; when he begins to break off his silence, it is

to pray for his persecutors : ' Father, forgive them, for they know not

what they do.' In which words there is —

1. Christ's request, 'Father, forgive them.'

2. The argument by which it is enforced, ' For they know not what

they do.'

I. Christ's request, ' Father, forgive them.' ' Father ' is a word of

confidence towards God and of love to his enemies ; he mentionetli

the sweetest relation. 'Father' is a word of blandishment, as children,

when they would obtain anything at their parent's hands, cry, Father !

SERMON UPON LUKE XXIII. 34. 15

Some observe that when he speaketh of his own desertion he crieth,

\* My God ! my God ! ' but now, when he prayeth for the pardon of

his enemies, he useth a more endearing relation, \* Father.' But the

observation is fond and nice ; for Christ in his own case useth the

same endearing title : Mat. xxvi. 39, ' my Father ! if it be possible,

let this cup pass from me ; ' and there is a special reason why in his

desertion he should say, ' My God ! my God ! ' as suiting the title to

his case, Eli ! Eli ! my strong one ! my strong one ! He wanted the

strong support and the sensible consolations of his godhead. It is most

comfortable to observe how Christ upon the cross calleth God ' Father.'

He felt him a judge, and believeth him a father. The special work of

faith in afflictions is to maintain the comfort of adoption : Heb. xii. 5,

' Ye have forgotten the exhortation that speaketh unto you as unto

children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord.' Those

that are under chastening may be sons. God doth not always put on

the person of a judge when he taketh the rod in his hand ; the change

of your condition doth not alter, nor make void your interest. God is the

God of the valleys as well as the God of the hills. Christ was now, as

a man, forsaken and rejected of God, left to the assaults of Satan and

scorns of men ; and yet in the height of his pains and passion he re-

taineth his confidence : ' Father, forgive them.' The whole world is

not worth the comfort that is wrapped up in that one word, ' Father.'

It is a great folly in the children of God to question his love merely

because of the greatness of their afflictions. We presently cry out, as

Job, chap. XXX. 21, ' Thou art become cruel to me ; with thy strong

hand thou o])posest thyself against me ; ' that he hath put off all

fatherly affection, because we judge of the cross according to the sense

of our own flesh. And therefore, merely to question God's love

because of afflictions is folly. Bather we may conclude the contrary of

the two. Bastards are left to a looser discipline than sons ; tlie

bramble of the wilderness is suffered to grow and spread when the

vine is cut, and pruned, and pared ; the stones that are to be set in the

building are most hewed and squared, others lie neglected in the quarry

and are left to their own roughness. Multiplied afflictions are a sign

God hath a care of you ; he will not suffer you to run wild. And

therefore, in defiance of the cross, learn to call God Father ; look

through the cloud of the present dispensation to the love of God to-

wards you.

\* Father, forgive them.' Christ speaks as foreseeing the danger

and punishment which they would bring on themselves as the fruit of

their madness and folly, and therefore he prays, ' Father, forgive them.'

This act was provocation enough to move God to dissolve the bonds

of nature, to cleave the earth, that it might swallow them up quick, or

to rain hell out of heaven upon them. Lesser offences have been thus

punished, and one word from Christ's mouth had been enough. But,

' Father, forgive them.' We hear nothing but words of mild pity.

When he says, ' Forgive,' he means also convert them ; for where

there is no conversion there can be no remission.

I shall look upon this prayer under a twofold consideration —

1. As an high moral act of an holy man.

2. As a taste of his mediation and intercession, where we shall con-

sider the public relation he sustained upon the cross.

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First, Let us look upon it as a moral action. He doth not threaten

fearful judgments, but prayed for his enemies ; there was no stain of

passion and revenge upon his sufferings : 1 Peter ii. 21, ' Christ also

suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his

steps.' And wherein ? ver. 23, ' Who when he was reviled, reviled not

again ; when he suffered, he threatened not ; but committed himself

to him that judgeth righteously.' One great use of Christ's death

was to give us lessons of meekness and patience and humble suffering.

In this act there is an excellent lesson. Let us look upon the neces-

sary circumstances that serve to set it off — (1.) For whom he prays ;

(2.) When he prays ; (3.) Why he prays ; (4.) In what manner.

1. For whom he prayeth ; for his persecutors, men that had done

him the greatest contempt and villany which their spite and malice

could invent. They had mocked and buffeted him, mangled his flesh

with scourges, led him like a public spectacle of shame through the

streets of the city, and by importunate clamours had gotten him to the

cross, and there placed him in the midst of thieves. They had cursed

themselves, and yet Christ prayed fm' them. In their rage they had

even appealed to and dared divine justice : ' His blood be upon us and

on our children ; ' but Christ saith, ' Father, forgive them.' Yea, and

which is more, they did all this to him when he came to serve the

world in a design of the greatest love. Of all things, men cannot

endure to have their love slighted. Holy David, when Nabal slighted

his kindness, vowed the destruction of him and all his house ; but

when Christ cometh with higher acts of kindness, he is despised and

rejected of men : ' He came unto his own, and his own received hira

not,' John i. 11. Nay, his own persecuted him, and despitefully used

him, and yet he prayeth forthem. They omitted no kind of cruelty. The

law saith, ' Breach for breach, e)^e for eye, tooth for tooth,' Lev. xxiv.

20 ; but when they cry, ' Crucify him,' he €ries, ' Forgive them.' Oh,

how may we wonder at this, who are so vindictive as we are !

2. When he prayeth; in the very extremity and height of his

sufferings. Then, when we are apt to forget our friends, Christ

remembereth his enemies; in the very height of his sorrows he mediates

for a pardon for them. A man would have thought that the sharp

sense of the afflictions wherewith he was exercised should have em-

bittered his spirit ; if he would make intercession for sinners in

lieaven, a man would have thought that he should not have interceded

upon the cross. We pardon when the misery is over, and, by the

course of affairs, that which was intended for a mischief proveth an

advantage ; as Joseph did his brethren : Gen. 1. 20, ' As for you, ye

thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass

as it is this day, to save much people alive.' But Christ in the very

act of his sufferings seeketh mercy for the instruments of his passion.

PendehcU, et tamen petehat, saith Austin ; their rage had brought him

to the cross, and tliere Christ mediateth to bring them to heaven.

3. AVho prayeth ; Jesus Christ. With honour enough to himself

he might have done otherwise; he could have destroyed them with the

breath of his mouth or with a beam of his glory. We forgive when

we cannot harm. Power efferateth the mind, and makes men fierce

and cruel. Many would be cruel enough, but they are restrained

SERMON UPON LUKE XXIII. 34. 17

either by want of power or opportunity. But here neither was want-

ing : Mat. xxvi. 53, ' Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray unto my

Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of

angels ? ' In man's eye that would have seemed a rare vindication of

the glory and dignity of his person ; but Christ doth not pray. Father,

send twelve legions of angels, but, ' Father, forgive them.' One angel

had been enough : 2 Kings xix. 35, ' The angel of the Lord went out,

and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and

five thousand.' It would have been more easy for Christ to come

down from the cross than to go up thither, that was the greater

miracle. Four nails could not have held the Lord of glory, if he had

not been nailed and fastened through by his own love and voluntary

condescension. But Christ would not be glorious now in acts of power,

but of mildness and charity, and therefore it is not, Father, destroy,

but. Father, forgive them.

4. How he prayeth for them. He pleadeth their case, and putteth

the fairest construction that can be made of an action so foul and

enormous ; they are poor ignorarlt people, led with a blind zeal. Christ

pitcheth upon the only circumstance that serveth to lessen the offence ;

of all excuses this is the most plausible : 1 Tim. i. 13, ' I obtained

mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief ; ' Acts iii. 17, ' And

now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your

rulers.' We are wont to strain and force actions to the most rigorous

interpretation they are capable of. Iracundia solei^s estfingendi causas

suifuroris — Seneca. Anger is witty to find out causes to justify itself ;

and if there be aught to justify censure, we omit those alleviating cir-

cumstances and necessary mitigations, whereby our asperity may be

taken off, and actions be more mildly considered. But Christ saith,

Poor creatures 1 they act out of a blind zeal, they know not what they

do ; Father, forgive them.

Use 1. Information.

1. It informeth us that the love of Christ is greater than we can

think or understand, much less express. If we be afflicted with any

pain in the teeth, head, or eyes, we are so overcome with the sense of it,

that we can think of nothing else ; we neither admit the visit of friends,

nor will we trouble ourselves with any business, our pain wholly engros-

seth and taketh up our minds and thoughts. But Jesus Christ, in the

midst of his agonies and painful sufferings, remembereth not only

friends, but enemies, and is solicitous about their salvation. Now if he

be thus affected towards persecutors, how is he to the persecuted ? They

cry, 'Crucify him ! crucify him ! ' but he saith, ' Father, forgive them.'

He might justly have called for vengeance, but he prayeth for mercy ;

nothing was so cruel but they were ready to think, and speak, and do

against him in this blind and inconsiderate fury ; but he doth not con-

sider their injuries against himself, but their sin against God, and would

have that pardoned ; and this at the time when they sought not pardon

for themselves, but were venting their malice against him. Which

surely is an encouragement to the penitent that he will not be hard to

be entreated by them that confess and forsake their sins, and fly unto

him for mercy. He seeks for pardon for them that sought it not, and

considereth not so much what they deserved, as what became himself,

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and the riches of his grace. They curse, and he blesseth ; they

vomit out scorns and slanders, but he poureth out prayers to God for

them.

2. That all sins, even the greatest, except that against the Holy

Ghost, are pardonable. What greater sin could there be than crucify-

ing the Lord of glory ? yet upon repentance it is forgiven. That it was

capable of pardon appeareth by this prayer of our Saviour, and that

it was actually pardoned appeareth by Acts ii. When they were

touched to the quick with the sense of this crime, and asked what

they should do, Peter adviseth them to this remedy, Acts ii, 38, 'Repent,

and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the

remission of sins ; ' and they found it effectual upon the use of it : ver.

41, ' Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the

same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.' And

that it is so in the general case, our Lord assureth us, Mat. xii. 31, ' All

manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the

blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men,'

There is no exception of any sin, though it go so high as blasphemy, but

the malicious blaspheming the operations of the Holy Ghost, those by

which he testified, manifestly and sufficiently, that he was the true

Messiah, and their imputing these operations to the devil. But of other

sins there is no exception ; speaking against the Son of man was not

believing him to be the Messiah ; that may be forgiven ; but blasphemy

against the Holy Ghost is resisting his manifestations, affirming them

to be done by the devil rather than God, and this shall never be for-

given. Well, then, let us conceive of God's mercy according to the

infiniteness of his nature, and of Christ's merits according to the

dignity of his person ; an ocean of water will wash one sink or filthy

hole clean.

3. That remission of sins is the free gift of God, and the fruit of his

pity and grace. Christ asketli it of his Father, ' Father, forgive them : '

he must be sought to ; we cannot merit it of ourselves. David addres-

seth himself to God, and usetli no other plea but grace and mercy : Ps.

Ii. 1, ' Have mercy upon me, God, according to thy loving-kindness,

according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my

transgressions.' Our work lietli with the Father of mercies and the

God of all compassions, that he may be reconciled to us, and seal up

his perfect pardon to our souls.

4. That pardon of sins is a special benefit. Christ asked no more

than, Father, forgive them. It is a special benefit, because it freeth

us from the greatest evil, wrath to come : 1 Thes. i. 10, ' And it maketli

us capable of the greatest blessing, eternal life : Titus iii. 7, ' That

being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the

hope of eternal life. It is purchased at the dearest rate, even the

blood of Christ : Rom. iii. 25, ' Whom God hath set forth to be a pro-

pitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for

the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.'

It is brought about by the highest power, the finger of God, or his

all-conquering Spirit, who by converting us, or giving us repentance,

maketh us capable of pardon : Acts ii. 38, ' Repent and be baptized

every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins ; \*

SERMON UPON LUKE XXIII. 34. 19

Acts V. 31, ' Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince

and a saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.'

It openeth the door to the ciioicest privileges, the favour of God and

communion with him in tlie Spirit ; therefore David pronounceth the

pardoned blessed : Ps. xxxii. 1, 2, ' Blessed is he whose transgression is

forgiven, Avhose sin is covered; blessed is the man unto whom the

Lord imputeth no iniquity/

5. That love of enemies, and those that have wronged us, is an high

grace, and recommended to us by Christ's own example. Sure it is

needful that we should learn this lesson, to be like God : Luke vi. 36,

' Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful ; ' that we may obey

God, who hath required this at our hands. Therefore we must con-

sider not what others have been to us, but what God will have us to

be to them, meek, patient, and merciful. Again, we hereby show the

purity and sincerity of our love ; nature will teach us to love those

that love us, but grace only teacheth us to love enemies. This is love

with self-denial. They who love us endear themselves to us, the other

alienate themselves from us ; yet for God's sake we can love them, and

seek to draw them out of the snares of the devil, that we may restore

them to God.

Use 2. Keproof of those that are cruel and revengeful. How differ-

ent are they from Christ who are all for unkindness and revenge, and

solicit vengeance against God's suffering servants with eager aggrava-

tions ! Oh, how can these men look upon Christ's practice without

shame ! How can they look upon these prodigies of love and grace,

and not blush ! Can there be a greater crime and wrong done to any

than was done to Christ ? And yet when he was whipped, crowned

with thorns, pierced with nails, lifted up upon the cross, he doth not

pray for revenge, but pardon ; he doth not cry, Justice ! justice ! but

Mercy ! mercy ! ' Father, forgive them ; ' he doth not by captious queries

and expostulations aggravate the offence, but he alleviates it by a sweet

interpretation, ' They know not what they do.' It is strange to think what

bloody principles many christians have espoused of late ; that we rage

against our brethren upon every offence, especially in matters of doubt-

ful apprehension, where men are more liable to mistakes. Oh ! it is

sad, when God is but a little displeased, to help onward the affliction. I

wonder where men learn that cruel and fell spirit into which we are com-

menced of late ; it was wont to be good doctrine, 'Be merciful, as youu

heavenly Father is merciful' What is become of all those good lectures .

of charity, and meekness, and gentleness, which are commended to us in

the rule of the gospel and the example of Christ? Certainly when the

spirit is exulcerated it argues some loss of peace with God. David was

never more cruel than when he had violated the peace of his own con-

science: 2 Sam. xii. 31, 'And he brought forth the people that were

therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under

axes of iron, and made them to pass through the brickkiln.' Certainly

matters are not right between us and God when men's principles and

practices grow bloody and cruel.

Use 3. To exhort us to imitate Christ in being meek, patient,

merciful, void of malice, doing good for evil, bearing the worst usage

without studying revenge. Surely the same mind should be in us that

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was in Christ Jesus. Head and members are acted by the same soul ;

so in the mystical body, Christ and we should be acted with the same spirit;

the same spirit of holy love, sweetness, and forgiveness that breathed in

Christ should breathe forth in our lives and conversations : Eph. iv. 32,

' And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another,

even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.' All his ordinances

imply this. In the word we hear of Christ's meekness ; his pattern is

set forth that we might be like-minded ; in prayer we are taught to say,

' Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.'

"We break our sponsion and promise solemnly given in this petition if

we do not pardon others. In baptism, ' we put on Christ,' Kom. xiii.

14 ; we put on his nature and qualities, that is, planting us into his

likeness. In the Lord's supper we come to renew our union and com-

munion with him, and to liken ourselves to Christ yet more and more.

Christ changeth the temper of thosy that spiritually feed upon him, as

natural meats communicate their qualities to us. The Israelites were

more generous because they were so long fed with manna ; Nero was more

bloody because he sucked the milk of a cruel nurse, who was wont to

besmear her dugs with blood ; Achilles was more valiant because he

was nourished with the marrow of lions. Men's dispositions are much

according to their food ; certainly those that eat tbe Lamb should not

be wolves, but meek as Christ was, and ready to forgive, and every way

transcribe their master's pattern. See how Stephen imitates his

master when he comes to die. First he prayeth for himself : Acts vii,

.59, ' Lord Jesus, receive my spirit ; ' as Christ did, Luke xxiii. 46,

' Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit ; ' and then he intercedeth

for his enemies : Acts vii. 60, ' Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.'

Here is not only an example of faith ; he committed his soul to Christ,

but of charity, he deprecatetli revenge from his enemies. Moses and

other holy ones of God have done so. Moses : Num. xii. 13, ' Heal her

now, Lord, I beseech thee ; ' when his sister Miriam was smitten with

a leprosy for doing him wrong. Aaron, when he was despitefully used,

and his calling maligned : Num. xvi. 47, 48, \* He ran into the midst of

the people, and behold the plague was begun among the people ; and

he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people ; and he stood

between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed.' David

fasted for his enemies when they were sick : Ps. xxxv. 13, ' But as for

me, when they were sick my clothing was sackcloth, I humbled my

soul with fasting.' We fast against them often, but seldom fast for

them. So Paul : 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13, ' Being reviled, we bless ; being

persecuted, we suffer it ; being defamed, we entreat.' When we are

looked upon and treated as evil-doers, we should bear it patiently, not

rage against instruments, but pray the Lord to open their eyes, that

they may see the greatness of their sin, in hating and opposing the godly.

You should not think the example of Christ an act beyond imitation.

You see the holy men of God have attained a great measure of self-

denial ; do you go and do likewise.

1. In private cases. A man shall meet with offences in the world.

All men have not faith; some are absurd and injurious. What a

comfort would a man have in his spirit when he can pity their blind-

ness and pardon their malice. They took away the life of Christ, and

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yet he saith, ' Father, forgive them ; ' he was slain by them, and yet

he prayeth for them. Certainly it is not comely for us to retaliate, to

hate, curse, revile, and pursue injury with injury. They that revenge

take an example from their enemies, and do them this honour to make

them their own pattern ; and what comfort can any have to make a

wicked man his precedent ! Besides, to revenge is to rush into God's

tribunal, and to take his work out of his hands: Prov. xxiv. 29,

' Say not, I will do to him as he hath to me ; I will render to the

man according to his work.' Solomon putteth it into such words as

are proper to God, that we may be sensible of the pride and usurpation

that is in revenge: and, Rom. xii. 19, 'Dearly beloved, avenge hot

yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath ; for it is written, Vengeance

is mine ; I will repay, saith the Lord.' We take upon us to be

rewarders when at least we should leave the case to God. You may

put it into the hands of the righteous judge: 1 Peter ii. 23, 'When

he was reviled, he reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened

not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.' Besides,

it will much interrupt your prayers. Our revengeful dispositions must

needs weaken our confidence, for we muse of others as we use ourselves.

How can you say, ' Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that

trespass against us,' when we are like vessels broken as soon as touched,

and are furious and raging upon every wrong, and the least offence done

to us ? Alas ! their offences to us are nothing like ours to God, either

for number or weight. Not for number ; no man can wrong us so

much as we daily trespass against God. How many neglects and

affronts doth mercy put up at our hands every day ! Luke xvii. 4, ' If

he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a

day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.'

Seventy times seven is a number too little for the transgressions and

offences of one day, and yet we grow peevish and passionate upon

every slight fault or wrong done to us. So for the weight ; the

naughty servant would not forgive a hundred pence when his master

forgave him ten thousand talents, Mat. xviii. 24, compared with the 28th

verse. There is a great difference between pence and talents ; the Roman

penny was sevenpence halfpenny, and their talent was one hundred and

eighty-seven pounds ten shillings. Their offences cannot be so heinous

as ours, because of our great obligations to God, and the dignity of his

essence ; theirs are against dust and ashes, their guilty fellow-creatures ;

ours are against the great God. It is proper to christians, that know such

an infinite pardoning mercy, to do something above heathens and

publicans : Mat. v. 46, ' If ye love them which love you, what reward

have ye? do not even the publicans so?' Christianity should raise

the affections to a greater self-denial, so that we are to love our very

enemies. Besides all this, consider the benefit of a meek patience.

Revenge is sweet, but you will find more pleasure in meekness. All

vexations disturb the peace and quiet of the soul, and I cannot do my

enemy a greater pleasure than to let him take away my contentment,

and, when I am wronged by others, to wrong myself. Will you hurt

yourself by passion and sin because others hurt you by slanders and

persecutions? He that will not forgive hurts himself more than he

that doeth the wrong ; for the injury offered reacheth but to the name,

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body, or goods, but the desire of revenge wounds tbe conscience, and

provokes God to wrath, and shuts the gate of his mercy against us.

The great motive that excites the devil to molest and disturb us by his

instruments is not to hurt your bodies, but to tempt your souls to

impatience and revenge, and to draw you to other sins ; and therefore

you do not conquer it as a temptation till you avoid the sin. Job was

robbed and plundered, but in all this Job sinned not ; to come off v/ith

a wounded conscience, this is to be foiled indeed. Besides, conscience

will take hold of all revengeful acts. David's heart smote him when he

cut off the lap of Saul's garment. Besides, consider the gain of others.

Sarfl wept when he saw David's tenderness: 1 Sam. xxiv. 16, 'And it

came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words

unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David ? And

Saul lift up his voice and wept.' Tenderness is expressed by heaping

up coals upon your enemy's head : Prov. xxv. 21, 22, ' If thine enemy

be hungry, give him bread to eat ; and if he be thirsty, give him water

to drink ; for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.' You may make

him pliable to your purpose, as lead or wax melted by fire. Such

charity doth often procure servants to God and friends to ourselves.

It is indeed said there, ' and the Lord shall reward thee.' There

are indeed some sour and crabbed pieces that will never be smoother,

but if distorted and depraved natin-es are not won, God will reward thee.

Endeavours of reconciliation are not lost with God ; though you get

nothing but scorn and contempt, you may comfort yourselves with your

sincerity, and God will not be wanting. Besides all this, consider the

honour of being above an injury : Prov. xix. 11, ' The discretion of a

man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.'

As it is the glory of God to pardon sin ; we think it a disgiace ; but

the Holy Ghost tells us it is the glory of a man. It is the devil's

design to suffer the world to miscall grace ; meekness is sheepish ness,

.and patience is a kind of weakness and servility ; an argument ignavi

■ingenii, of a slow dull temper, that hath no sense of things ; as astro-

nomers call glorious stars dogs and bears and dragons' tails. Oh,

consider this is an height proper to Christianity ! nature could not reach

it ; there is no greater servility than to be a slave to one's passions :

Ezek. xvi. 30, ' How weak is thy heart, saith the Lord, since thou doest

all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman ? ' There

are no spirits so feeble as those that are swayed by the rufHe of their

own passions.

2. In public cases. In these times of mutual provocation we are

apt to return evil for evil and word for word, and to curse and pray

against one another ; but we should labour to retiu-n good for evil, for

injury doth not justify revenge. Religious quarrels are usually carried

on with great hatred and animosity, for then religion feedeth the excess

of passion, and instead of being a judge, becometh a party, and that which

should be a restraint proveth fuel. Tiie quarrel between Christ and

his ])ersecutors was a quarrel of religion, and yet he prays, ' Father,

forgive them;' and if Christ did thus, why should not christians?

Oh ! consider it — (1.) As to open enemies ; (2.) As to the undue

carriage of brethren.

[1.] As to open enemies. Christ saith, Mat. v. 44, 'Love your

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enemies, bless tliem tliat curse yoit^ do good to them that hate you, and

pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.' Lest we

should excuse ourselves by a colour and show of religion, and so give

indulgence to the exorbitancy of our passions, Christ names 'persecutors,'

that are not only our enemies, but Grod's enemies ; you are to pray for

them, and wish them conviction of sin and reformation. And you see

how Christ practiseth his own doctrine, and so taught us not only

living, but dying. These were carried on by a blind zeal ; alas ! that

they have no more light nor better principles. I doubt in all our divi-

sions we have not plied this way of love ; if we did, they would be

soon cured and healed. We pray one against another, and seek each

other's ruin and destruction, but when have we commended our enemies

to God's grace and pity ? And after all, we are apt to baptize our

sufferings, which have been the effects of our pride and passion, with

the glorious name of persecution, and that exasperateth our spirits, and

we think it is but a duty to call for fire from heaven. We know not

what manner of spirits we are of. An angry zeal hath the less of God

in it, because it is so hastily kindled and so hardly suppressed.

[2.] As to undue carriage of brethren : James v. 10, ' Grudge not

one against another, brethren ; ' fx,r] aTevd^ere, groan not. When they

should commend each other to the grace of God, they groan one against

another. We should willingly bury the remembrance of their injuries.

There cannot be unity, sympathy, brotherly love amongst the Lord's

people, unless there be a heart to pity the infirmities of one another,

and a proneness of spirit to do good contrary to what they deserve at

our hands.

Quest. But is it not lawful to pray for revenge ? Zechariah, when

he was stoned between the temple and the altar, said, ' The Lord look

upon it and require it,' 2 Chron. xxiv. 22 ; and David in the psalms

prays that God would not pardon his enemies.

Ans. We cannot always imitate what the prophet did, who could

know by special revelation who had sinned unto death, and therefore

cannot use these imprecations unless conditionally. Their curses were

predictions, and uttered by the spirit of prophecy, not by any private

spirit. Meek and humble addresses to God, and wrestling for their

good, suit better with us and the example of Jesus Christ : 1 Peter

iii. 9, ' Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise

blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a

blessing.' It is more suitable to Christianity to wish good to them that

curse and injure you. If you will not imitate Christ, you are none of his

disciples, nor will he be your Saviour, nor must you think to live and

reign with him in heaven. You must overcome yourself, and corrupt

nature, that thirsteth after revenge : Prov. xvi. 32, ' He that is slow to

anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he

that taketh a city.' Overcome and shame the party that doeth the

wrong : 1 Sam. xxiv. 17, ' And he said to David, Thou art more

righteous than I, for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have

rewarded thee evil.' Look upon them as objects of pity and compas-

sion rather than of passion and anger : Eph. i. 32, ' Be ye kind one

to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for

Christ's sake hath forgiven you.' Consider what God hath done to

you that you may do the same to them.

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Secondly, The next consideration of this prayer of Christ is as a

taste and pledjj^e of his mediation and intercession. So it is prophesied,

Isa. liii. 12, ' He was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the

sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.' Christ was

placed in the midst of thieves, as the first chiuse is explained, Mark

XV. 28 ; and he made intercession, that is, prayed for his persecutors.

The whole chapter is a prophetical narration of the acts and sorrows

of Christ upon the cross. In this public sense and consideration, let

us see what may be gathered out of the clause, ' Father, forgive them.'

1. It is an instance of Christ's love and bowels to sinners ; he loved

mankind so well that he prayed for them that crucified him. Look on the

Lord Jesus as praying and dying for enemies, and improve it as a ground

of confidence. Upon the cross he would give us an instance of his

efficacy in converting the thief, and of his affection in praying for his

persecutors. We were as great enemies to Christ, and as deep in the

guilt of his passion, as they : Rom. v. 10, ' Wlien we were enemies, we

were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.' The enemies of his

kingdom are every way as bad as the enemies of his person. If Christ

did not say, ' Father, forgive,' what would become of us ? You will

say. We are christians ; but scandak)us sinners renew his sufferings,

and ' put him to an open shame,' Heb. vi. 6. Oh, let us adore God

for these experiences ! It is a mighty ground of hope that Christ hath

put in for a pardon ; he would not die till he had expressed his recon-

ciliation with his enemies.

2. See what is the voice and merit of his sufferings, \* Father, forgive

them.' This is the speech that Christ uttered when he was laid on

the cross. The apostle compareth Christ's blood and the blood of

Abel : Heb. xii. 24, ' And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh

better things than the blood of Abel.' Abel's blood was clam-

orous in the ears of God : Gen. iv. 10, ' The voice of thy brother's

blood crieth to me from the ground ; ' and so in the conscience of Cain

it crieth, Avenge ! avenge me ! Christ's blood hath another voice, it

speaketh to God to pacify his wrath, and to pardon us, if penitent and

believing siimers ; it speaketh to conscience to be quiet, God hath

found out a ransom. The blood of Christ may speak against us as

well as against the Jews, for by our sins we made Christ to die. Oh,

be not quiet till it speak peace in your consciences. Christ's blood was

spilt in malice, as Abel's was, and might have cried for vengeance on

the actors, who were not only the Jews, but we, and it yet speaketh as

Abel's did : Heb. xi. 4, ' By it he, being dead, yet speaketh.' It is a

speaking blood, and is yet speaking. The speaking of the blood is

interpreted according to the words in their mouth wherewith they died :

Mat. xxiii. 35, ' That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed

upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of

Zecharias the son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the porch and

the altar.' Our Lord gathers it from Zecharias' saying, ' The Lord

look upon it and require it,' 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. So the words of Christ

interpret his death.

3. In the mediatory consideration it hinteth the coupling of his

intercession with his satisfaction On the cross, there he dieth and

there he prayeth ; he was both priest and sacrifice. The high priest

under the law was not only to slay the sacrifice, but to intercede for the

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people ; first tlie beast was slain without the camp, and then the blood

was carried into the holy of holies, and there prayer was made with

incense ; but before that, Aaron, when he was goinf? into the holy

place before the Lord, was to cause the sound of his golden bells to be

heard under pain of death, Exod. xxviii. 35. To this I parallel this action

of Christ upon the cross. This prayer was as the sound of the golden

bells ; he would make his voice to be heard by prayer, and then he goes

into the holy of holies ; the Lord Jesus Christ, when he shed his blood

before the tribunal of God, he sendeth forth a prayer. God would

have our salvation carried on in a way of mercy and justice, and Christ

was to mingle entreaty with satisfaction ; as, Lev. xvi. 14, the high

priest was to bring the blood within the veil, and to sprinkle it upon

the mercy-seat. He must satisfy justice and make an address to mercy,

that we that have sinned with both hands may take hold of God with

both hands : Rom. iii. 24, ' Being justified freely by his grace, through

the redemption that is in Jesus Clirist ;' it is ' freely,' and yet ' through

the redemption that is in Jesus Christ ; ' these two sweetly accord.

4. This is a pledge of his constant intercession in heaven. The

ceremonies of the old law were not only types of Christ, but his visible

actions were a kind of types and pledges of his spiritual actions,

1 John ii. 1, ' If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father,

Jesus Christ the righteous.' He that could pray for enemies will pray

for friends, and he that got our pardon by his intercession will promote

our salvation. Certainly Christ's glorified soul loseth no affection ; he

is as earnest with the Father for his friends as ever he was upon the

cross for his persecutors : Heb. ix. 24, ' For Christ is not entered into

the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true,

but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.'

Christ doth appear as our advocate in court, not only in our name, but

in our stead.

5. It shows the nature of his intercession. It not only implies the

everlastingness of his merit, that his blood doth continue to deserve

such things at the hands of God as we stand in need of, but it is a

continual representation of his merit ; it is not a metaphor, but a

solemn act of his priesthood. Again, it is not by verbal expressions,

such as he used hereupon earth, ' Father, forgive them ; ' his became

the state of his humiliation ; but now he intercedes non voce, sed

misejxdione, not by voice, but by pity. What is it then ? Partly his

appearing in heaven as God in our nature : Heb. ix. 24, ' Christ is not

entered into the holy places made with hands,' &c., ' but into heaven

itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.' He is said to

appear before God for us, as the high priest came and presented him-

self before God with the names of the twelve tribes engraven on his

breastplate. Partly in his expressing an actual willingness, or the

desires of his holy soul concerning our salvation : John xvii. 24, ' Father,

I will that those whom thou hast given me may be with me where I

am ; ' and so he appears in our names, as well as in our nature.

Partly by some acts of adoration of the sovereign majesty of God ; some

address to God there is : John xiv. 16, ' I will pray the Father, and he

shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.'

He doth not only ask the enlargement of his own kingdom : Ps. ii. 8,

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'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and

the uttermost parts of the earth for tliy possession ; ' but the pardon,

comfort, peace, and supply of particuUir persons : 1 John ii. 1, ' If any

man sin, we have an advocate with tlie Father, Jesus Christ the

righteous.' Partly in his presenting our prayers and supplications :

Rev. viii. 3, ' And anotlier angel came and stood at the altar, having

a goklen censer ; and there was given unto him much incense, that he

should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar

which was before the throne ; ' and therefore he is called ' a minister of

the sanctuary,' Heb. viii. 2. This is the nature of Christ's intercession.

6. The success of Christ's intercession, ' Father, forgive them.' Was

he heard in this ? Yes ; this prayer converts the centurion, and those,

Acts ii. 41, above ' three thousand,' and presently after five thousand

more. Acts iv. 4. In the compass of a few days above eight thousand

of his enemies were converted. Christ is good at interceding ; his

prayers are always heard : John xi. 42, ' I knew that thou hearest me

always.' And therefore let us seek no other mediator ; God cannot

deny his own Son. Jesus Christ the righteous intercedes for us ; let

us put all our requests into his hands.

II. I come now to the argument used, ' They know not what they do.'

But you will say, Christ elsewhere complainetli of his enemies, that they

know him, and refused him out of malice : John xv. 24, ' Now they have

both seen and hated both me and my Father ; ' and therefore he saitli,

they had no cloak for their sin, but were utterly without excuse, for they

could not plead ignorance.

Ans. 1. This is not spoken of all, but of some onlj'-. The greatest

part were moved with the command, authority, and persuasion of the

priests, or blinded with a false zeal to preserve their old religion, and so

thought they did God service in crucifying Christ. Those that sinned

out of malice, Christ had told them their doom before : Mat. xii. 32,

' Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven

him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.'

2. They knew him to be a just man, though they knew him not to

be the Lord of glory, and that he did many signs which the prophets

foretold should be done by the Messias ; and therefore at least that he

was a great prophet, and as such they should have reverenced and

received him, so that they had the less cloak for their sin.

3. Christ excused not a tolo, but a ianto, not altogether, but only

showeth that they were capable of pardon because of their ignorance.

Christ excuseth the sin of his enemies in that manner that lie could

excuse them ; he could not altogether excuse the injustice of Pilate, nor

the cruelty of the soldiers, nor the envy of the chief priests, nor the folly

and unthankfulness of the people, nor the perjury of the false witnesses;

all that he could plead was some ignorance of the dignity of his person:

1 Cor. ii. 8, ' Which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they

known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.' The chief

men of the Jews did not understand the mystery of redemption, and

many were ignorant, not only of the divinity of Christ, but his innocency

also : ' Tiiey know not what they do.'

Doct There is a difference between sinners, and it is a more danger-

ous thing to sin against knowledge than out of ignorance.

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1. Some sin wittingly and wilfully, as Cain, Sanl, Judas, &c., who

against the apparent light of their consciences venture upon the foulest

actions,

2. Others sin out of ignorance ; either they do not certainly know what

they do to be sin, or do not expressly consider it. So Paul in persecut-

ing the church of God : 1 Tim. i, 13, ' Who was before a persecutor,

and a blasphemer, and injurious ; but I obtained mercy, because I did

it ignorantly, in imbelief.'

3. Some sin knowingly indeed, but out of infirmity, either arising

from some great fear of danger and present death, as Peter denied his

master ; it is done with a troubled mind : these may be recovered to

God, but with difficulty. Or else they are hurried to evil by the baits

of the flesh, and pleasing temptations : James i. 12, ' Every man is

tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.' Now

their case cannot easily be spoken to, for it needs much discussion. It

may be by surprisal, and that for one act, and none of the grossest : Gal.

vi, 1, ' Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual

restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.' The devil many times

leaveth no time for deliberation, and^bringeth his tempting baits not to

the fore-door of reason, but to the back-door of sensual appetite, which

being in a rage, blindeth the mind. But if they sin with a strong will,

their case is more dangerous ; especially if they live and lie in sin after

many experiences of the evil of it, their condition is deplorable.

This foundation being laid, let us see how far ignorance excuseth

from sin.

[1.] Whatever sin we commit, it is sin, and of itself deserveth dam-

nation. Sin is not determined to be sin by its being voluntary or

involuntary, but by its contrariety to the law of God : 1 John iii. 4,

' Sin is the transgression of the law.' Therefore the causal particle

for in the text doth not show the reason of pardon, but the capable-

ness of pardon. So Paul's ignorance was not the cause of God's mercy,

for sin cannot be the cause of mercy, but only the occasion of it. The

nature of sin is not determined by the voluntariness of it, but only the

degree of it.

[2,] Ignorance is either antecedent, concomitant, or consequent,

(1.) Antecedent, going before the act, as in the generality of the

Jews : Acts iii. 17, 'And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance

ye did it, as did also your rulers.' Out of ignorance and blind zeal

they crucified him whom God did make both Lord and Christ.

(2.) Concomitant. A man hath knowledge, but useth it not for the

present. It is one thing to sin with knowledge, and another thing to

sin against knowledge ; he that hath knowledge, but for the present

may be blinded by his lusts and carnal affections, sinneth not against

knowledge directly, but collaterally only, as he that stealeth or com-

mitteth adultery doth not this for sin's sake (for none can will evil as

evil), but he only attendeth to the profit and pleasure that is in adultery

and theft, but shutteth the eyes of his mind against the filthiness or

injustice that is in it ; and therefore he is like a man that leapeth from

an high place into the water, who first shutteth his eyes, and then

casts himself into the flood or stream,

(3,) Consequent ignorance is after the sin or act of the will, either

28 SERMON UPON LUKE XXIII. 34.

from the depraved disposition of the will : John iii. 20, ' For every

one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest

his deeds should be reproved;' or from the just judgment of God:

John ix. 39, 'For judgment I am come into the world, that they

which see not might see, and that they which see might be made

blind.' God inflicts a judicial blindness on men that will not obey

the truth.

[3.] Ignorance is either invincible or vincible.

(1.) Invincible ignorance is when there is not sufficient revelation,

when it is a thing we should know, but God hath not brought light

among us. Thus the heathens are punished for not glorifying God,

whom they knew by the light of nature : Kom. i. 21, ' When they

knew God, they glorified him not as God ; ' not because they believed

not in Christ, for he was not revealed unto them ; but christians shall

be punished for not obeying the gospel : 2 Thes. i. 8, ' In flaming fire,

taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the

gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

(2.) Vincible ignorance is when there are plentiful means and great

helps to overcome it ; then is our ignorance more culpable. This is

seen when either ignorance is voluntary and pertinacious, or when

there is gross negligence. When it is voluntary : 2 Peter iii. 5, ' For

this they are willingly ignorant of.' That they may sin more freely

and securely, they will not know what may disturb or trouble their

sleep in sin : Job xxi. 14, ' Therefore they say unto God, Depart from

us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.' The psalmist says

of them, Ps. xcv. 10, 'It is a people that do err in their hearts;

they have not known my ways.' They err in their hearts as well as

in their minds ; when they do not desire to know what they should

know, this ignorance is voluntary. Or else it is bewrayed jjy gross

negligence, when a man doeth a thing that, if he were not grossly

negligent, he might know to be sin : Eph. iii. 15-17, ' See then that

ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise ; redeeming the time,

because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but under-

standing what the will of the Lord is.' A christian is bound to use

all holy means to know all things that belong to his duty, and must

bestow much time and diligence upon it. If he is grossly ignorant, it

is a sign he hath a mind to put a cheat upon his soul.

Use. Let us beware of sin against knowledge ; these sins, of all

others, are the most dangerous, whether they be sins of omission ; to

omit duties that we know to be duties, this is very dangerous : James

iv. 17, ' Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not,

to him it is sin ; ' or sins of commission, to commit sins that we know

to be sins : Rom. ii. 21, 22, ' Thou therefore which teachest another,

teachest thou not thyself? Thou tliat pi-eachest a man should not

steal, dost thou steal ? Thou that sayest a man should not commit

adultery, dost thou commit adultery ? Tiiou that abhorrest idols, dost

thou commit sacrilege ? ' To commit sins that we know to be sins is

to involve ourselves in wrath and vengeance. Have a care then of

these sins ; if you are guilty of them, it cannot be pleaded for you,

' Father, forgive them ; they know not what they do.'

SERMON UPON JOHN XIX. 30.

He said, It is finished; and he boived his head, and gave up the

ghost. — John xix. 30.

This is one of the seven words which Christ uttered upon the cross,

the last save one ; for before his bowing of the head, and giving up

the ghost, those words must come in which are mentioned Luke xxiii.

46, ' Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit ; and having said

thus, he gave up the ghost.'

To make way for these words, we need go no further back than the

28th verse. It is said there, 'After this Jesus, knowing that all

things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled,

said, I thirst ; ' where we may observe —

1. The exact knowledge which Christ had of all his sufferings:

\* He knew that all things were accomplished ; ' namely, all the

preparative sufferings which were to usher in his death. All these

bitter sorrows were numbered out to him by the divine decrees, and

pre-signified in the prophecies ; Jesus knew all the exact tale and

account of them ; a circumstance that doth much commend his love

to us. Christ knew how dear the bargain of souls would be to him,

and yet he would show his obedience to the Father and his love to

mankind. He long since sat down and counted the charges, and

yet he came to do his Father's will. When a business proveth

hazardous and inconvenient, we are apt to say, If I had known it

would have cost me so much, I should never have undertaken it.

Christ went not to the cross blindfold ; he knew the work of our

redemption would be troublesome and painful ; that he was to give

his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to the nippers ; that he was to

be hurried from the garden to the courts of men, from the courts of

men to the cross, and there to endure acute pains and torments : Jesus

knew that all these things were to be fulfilled.

2. Observe, it is said he knew 'they were accomplished.' Christ

had a lively feeling of every part of his sorrows, and his senses re-

mained in full vigour to the last, and without any stupefaction. He

knew what hour the clock of the divine decree would next strike, or

what was the next circumstance whereby he was to discover himself to

be the true Messiah. David saith, 'Died Abner as a fool dieth?'

2 Sam. iii. 32. We may say so. Died the Lord Jesus as a fool dieth,

in a stupid senseless way, or as one merely passive? Extremity of

pain had now surprised the thieves which were crucified with him ; we

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hear no more of tliem ; but Christ's reason and senses are still exer-

cised, and his sorrows made more active by his own apprehension.

3. Observe, ' That the scriptures might be fulfilled, he said, I thirst.'

By fulfilling another prophecy God discovereth another note whereby

the Messiah might be known. All the passages of Christ's death were

appointed with infinite wis<lom and love ; either they were such as

were necessary parts of redemption, or some indications whereby the

Messiah fore-prophesied of might be discovered. Here is another

prophecy fulfilled in Christ's thirst. The prophecies alluded to are

two : one is Ps. xxii. 15, ' My strength is dried up like a potsherd,

and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws ; thou hast brought me to the

dust of death.' The other prophecy hinteth the act of the Jewish

malice : Ps. Ixix. 21, ' They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my

thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.' Here was light enough, or

conviction sufficient for any but those who resolved to shut their eyes.

4. He said, ' I thirst.' He had spent much time in watching, lost

much blood, his body was tortured with extreme pain, and his soul

scorched with a sense of God's wrath ; and therefore well might he cry

out, ' I thirst.' It is notable that Christ would not declare his thirst

till he knew that all things were accomplished ; that is, every sad

accident except his death. Certainly if we consider the agonies of the

garden, where he excerned blood instead of sweat, his scourging, his

being buffeted with the soldiers, his bearing the cross, all this might

make him thirst before ; but when wine mingled with myrrh, a stupe-

fying potion, was tendered to him before, he refused it : Blark xv. 23,

' And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh, but he re-

ceived it not.' But now, when all was accomplished, he saith, ' I

thirst.' He would take no natural refreshment till he had borne all

our griefs and sorrows, and every sad passage by which he might

promote our comfort was accomplished. He was so mindful of us

that he forgot himself. He saith that it was meat to him to do his

Father's will : John iv. 34, ' My meat is to do the will of him that sent

me, and to finish his work.' Though the cross-work was sad work,

yet that was as drink to Christ. After he had sweltered under the

torment of so many hours' drouth, he crieth out, \*I thirst.' Christ

would make his sufferings as fidl of merit as possibly he could, and

therefore would not receive the least draught of comfort till he had

paid our whole debt. We ' do evil with both hands earnestly,' Micah

vii. 3, and fill our actions with as much disobedience and rebellion as

we can possibly put into them : 'Behold thou hast spoken, and done

evil things as thou couldst,' Jer. iii. 5. Sin hath not been cheap to us;

we have bought the pleasure of it at a dear rate, with much loss and

self-denial ; and therefore Christ's sufferings were made as high and

extreme as possibly thejr could be.

Let us now see what they did to Christ when he had declared the

extremity of his thirst : ' Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar,

and they filled a spunge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and

put it to his mouth,' ver. 29. This fact of theirs is diversely construed ;

some say, they did it out of kindness, and that it was usual to provide

a vessel of vinegar, and to have it at hand under the cross of those

that were executed ; this is probable : others think it an act of spite

SERMON UPON JOHN XIX. 30. 31

and malice, partly because it is made an exaggeration of calamity : Ps.

Ixix. 21, ' Iti my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink ; ' and partly

because their courtesy to the dying was to give wine and myrrh, and

therefore it is said : Prov. xxxi. 6, ' It is not for kings to drink wine,

nor for princes strong drink ; ' and ver. 6, ' Give strong drink unto

him tha:t is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of an heavy

heart ; ' that is to say, it is not for the judge, but the condemned ; and

they mingled it with myrrh and hot spices, partly to attenuate the

blood, and so to despatch them the sooner, and partly to cause giddi-

ness, that their senses might be the sooner gone. But now, instead of

wine and myrrh they gave Christ vinegar and gall to increase his

misery ; and they prepared it in readiness in case he called for the

usual refreshment. And the conjecture of the Carthusian is not amiss,

■who imputeth it to the malice of the soldiers to change the wine pre-

pared by the charitable women into vinegar, for the greater spite and

mockage. And it is said, ' They filled a spunge with vinegar, and

put it upon hyssop.' The other evangelists say, ' They put it upon a

reed ; ' and it is hard to conceive then how they could put it upon hyssop.

It is probable that hyssop in these countries was tall, as mustard-seed

is said to grow up into a tree ; and Pliny saith they made staves of

mallows in Arabia, which with us is but a slender herb ; but hyssop

is put for a shrub. Solomon wrote of all herbs, from the cedar to

the hyssop, but that is wall-hyssop, which is dwarfish and tender, as

ours is.

Observe, when Christ stood in our stead, no comfort was granted to

him but what was devised to augment his grief. When his strength was

dried up like a potsherd, and his tongue cleaved to his jaws, ' They

gave him vinegar to drink,' when he was providing for us a cup of

blessings, a torrent and a river of pleasure, of which we might drink :

ver. 30, ' When he had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished ;

and he bowed the head, and gave up the ghost.' When he had

received it, that is, tasted it, for they put it into his mouth with a

spunge on the top of a reed, then he said, ' It is finished ; ' that is, as

much as was necessary for his humiliation, God's glory, and man's

salvation ; as much as was decreed, as much as was foretold. And he

saith, ' It is finished,' because he was now upon the last work, death,

which was coming upon him ; and therefore foldeth it in the expres-

sion with what is past, ' It is finished,' because the last act was at hand :

Mat. xxvi. 28, ' This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed ;'

that is, which is about to be shed : John xvii. 4, ' I have finished the

work thou gavest me to do.' All the sufferings were now completed

at death, which he was to suffer for our sins.

Doct. Christ closed not his sufferings till all was finished which he

had to do for us.

1. In what sense it is said, \* It is finished.'

2. The evidences and reasons thereof.

3. What comfort this is to the faithful.

I. Ifi what sense it is said, \* It is finished.'

1. All the scripture prophecies which spake of Christ's death and

sufferings were now fulfilled and accomplished ; as that he should

make his entrance into Jerusalem upon an ass in all humility ; this

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was prophesied of the Messiah : Zech. ix. 9, ' Behold thy Idng cometh

unto thee ; he is just, and having salvation ; lowly, and riding upon

an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass ; ' and fulfilled by Christ,

Mat. xxi. 4, 5, ' All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was

spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold

the king coraeth unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt,

the foal of an ass.' That he should be betrayed by one of his familiars,

his own disciple: Ps. Iv. 12, 13, ' It was not an enemy that reproacbed

me ; then I could have borne it : neither was it he that hated me that

did magnify himself against me : but it was thou, a man, mine equal,

my guide, and my acquaintance.' So Ps. xli. 9, ' Yea, mine own

familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath

lift up his head against me ; ' which was fulfilled, Mat. xxvi, 23,

' He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, he shall betray me ; '

and accordingly Judas came to attack him, Mat, xxvi. 47. That he

should be sold for thirty pieces of silver : Zech. xi. 12, ' So they weighed

for my price thirty pieces of silver.' Fulfilled, Mat. xxvi. 15. That

with these thirty pieces of silver there should be bought afterwards a

field of potsherds : Zech. xi. 13, \* And the Lord said unto me. Cast it

unto the potter : and I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them

to the potter in the house of the Lord.' Fulfilled, Mat. xxvii. 7, 'And

they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury

strangers in.' That being apprehended, he should be most barbarously

entreated by the Jews, and be beaten and buffeted, and his face defiled '

with spitting, according to that of Isaiah the prophet : Isa. 1. 6, \* I gave

my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off" the

hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.' Fulfilled, Mat.

xxvi. 67, ' Then did they spit in his face, and buffet him, and others

smote him with the palms of their hands.' That they would wound,

rend, and tear his body with scourges before they put him to death :

Isa. liii. 5, ' He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for

our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with

his stripes we are healed.' Fulfilled, Mat. xxvii. 26, ' When he had

scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.' And they did at

length put him to death according to the prophecy : ' The Messiah was

to be cut off, but not for himself;' Dan. ix. 26. That the death that he

should die was the death of the cross, unto which he was nailed hand

and foot according to that of David : Ps. xxii. 16, ' They pierced my

hands and my feet ; ' and that of Zech. xii. 10, ' They shall look upon

me whom they have pierced.' Fulfilled, Luke xxiii. 33, ' And when

they were come to Mount Calvary, there they crucified him.' That he

was crucified between two malefactors, one on the right hand and the

other on the left, according to that of Isa. liii. 12, ' He was numbered

with the transgressors ; ' Luke xxii. 37, ' For I say unto you, that this

which is written must yet be accomplished in me ; And he was

reckoned among transgressors, for the things concerning me have an

end.' He was to pray for his enemies and persecutors, according to

that of Isa. liii. 12, 'He made intercession for the transgressors ; ' and

this was fulfilled in that prayer, Luke xxiii. 24, ' Then said Jesus,

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' So Ps. Ixix.

21, ' In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.' Fulfilled as before.

SERMON UPON JOHN XIX. 30. 33

That they should divide his apparel, and cast lots for his upper garment:

Ps. xxii. 18, ' They part my garment among tliem, and cast lots upon

my vesture.' Fulfilled, Mat. xxvii. 35, ' And tliey crucified him, and

parted his garments, casting lots.' Well, then, all tliese particulars

foretold of the Messiah were exactly fulfilled in our Saviour, and so

conduce to settle our hearts in believing his person and office. Well,

then, might he say now, ' It is finished.'

2. That the substance of the types were accomplished in him, as that

of the brazen serpent, the paschal lamb, the daily and yearly sacrifices,

the offering of Isaac ; all which prefigured that Christ should die for

the sins of the world. As Abraham offered his only son Isaac to God

as a proof and demonstration of his faith and obedience : ' Now I know

that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only

son, from me,' Gen. xxii. 12 ; so God gave his Sou as a proof and

demonstration of his love : 1 John iv. 10, ' Herein' is love, not that we

loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation

for our sins.' Isaac carried the wood to the sacrifice of himself, so did

Christ his cross. The lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness,

that whosoever looked upon it should be healed : Num. xxi. 9, ' And

Moses made a serpent, and put it upon a pole ; and it came to pass

that if any serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of

brass, he lived ; ' this figured Christ lifted up upon the cross, that all

those bitten by the old serpent might by looking be cured : John iii.

14, 15, ' And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so

must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him

should not perish, but have eternal life.' The paschal lamb was slain

just at the time when Christ died, and his flesh eaten, not a bone broken,

John xix. 33 ; his blood sprinkled on the door-posts ; all which were

accomplished in Christ, who is ' the Lamb of God that taketh away the

sin of the world,' John i. 29. The daily sacrifice was offered morning

and evening, to show our daily use of Christ, who was ' a lamb without

spot and blemish,' 1 Peter i. 19. The annivei-sary sacrifice of the two

goats on the day of expiation. Num. xvi., when tliere was a live goat to

be sent into the wilderness, and the other was slain, and Aaron was to

put both his hands upon the head of the scape-goat, confessing the sins

of the people, and that scape-goat was to carry all their sins into

the land of forgetfulness ; all which signified the expiation of all our

sins by Christ dying for our offences, and rising again for our justifica-

tion. For the scape-goat was sent into the wilderness far from the

sanctuary, to show that all our sins are put far away out of God's sight ;

the other goat is said to be kept for the Lord, that it might be slain,

and be offered to him for sacrifice upon the altar. Well, now, these

and all othei- types were finished, that is, obtained their end and

accomplishment.

3. AH was finished that was necessary to make him a fit pattern of

patience to us ; for he had borne the extremity of his enemies' malice,

all that man or devils could by the permission of God execute upon

him ; for he saith, Luke xxii. 53, ' This is your hour, and the power

of darkness.' Yea, he had drunk up the cup which the Father had put

into his hands, to the very dregs. One end of Christ's death was to

give us an example: 1 Peter ii. 21, 'Christ also suffered for us,

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leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps/ Now here is

a full copy and pattern of the right way of suffering for all his own to

imitate.

[1.] From the matter. Are you tempted and opposed by Satan and

his instruments ? so was Christ. Have you discountenance from men ?

Christ had much more. Doth God seem to forsake you ? so he did

by Christ. Are you fain to lie on your knees crying for mercy ? Christ

'in the days of his flesh offered up prayers and supplications, with strong

cries and tears, to him that was able to save him from death, and was

heard in that he feared,' Heb. v. 7. Are you mocked, reviled, buffeted,

contumeliously used ? so was Christ. Are you scourged, put to death

by violence ? so was Christ.

[2.] From the manner ; with meekness and constancy. With meek-

ness, not as swine, but as sheep: Isa. liii. 7, 'As a sheep before the

shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth ; ' 1 Peter ii. 23, ' Who

when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened

not ; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.' Though

he had not in the least kind offended either God or man, yet he was

handled as a sinner ; and when foul crimes were laid to his charge, he

did not repay his slanderers in their own coin, but resigned himself

to God to deal with him and his persecutors as he saw fitting ; he

vented no carnal passion. So for constancy ; he continued till all was

finished, and ' became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,'

Phil. ii. 8. When he was tempted to descend from the cross, he would

not, but stayed there as long as it was necessary ; to show us that we

should not descend from our cross, and free ourselves from tribulation

by sin till all be finished. If God keepeth us long in an oppressed state

without relief or deliverance, do not make haste, but tarry his leisure.

If by providence you are unequally yoked, bear your cross as long as

God seeth fit to continue it to you. If it be a long imprisonment, a

long tedious sickness, or any other afiliction, do not descend from your

cross till God take it off, and help not yourselves by sin out of afiliction.

[3.] From the end ; the bitterest trouble will at length have an end.

Christ was a man of sorrows all his days, tempted, despised, persecuted,

censured, scourged, crucified, but at length the TereXearat,,' It is finished,'

coraeth, and there is a kind of triumph over all his enemies and

calamities ; to teach us to finish our course with perseverance and

patience, that at the last we may say we are come to the end of our

sorrows. His laborious pilgrimage was now over, and there will a

time come when ours shall be over also. Christ's life was a continual

cross and constant affliction, but at length all was finished, and the

sorrows of thirty-three years recompensed with glory and honour, and

great fruit and success in the affairs of his kingdom. What is a little

momentary suffering to the rest of eternity ? For a little while he

was the despising of men, and the leaving-otf of the people ; but after-

wards God exalted him, and gave him a name above all names. The

perfidious Jews rejoiced for a while, but a sad reckoning came after-

wards. Judas had small time to enjoy his thirty pieces ; Pilate within

a while rued his facility and yielding to the importunity of the Jews.

But as to afflictions holily suffered, stay a little, and all the bitter part

will be over.

SERMON UPON JOHN XIX. 30, 35

4. All was fulfilled winch God determined to be don« for tlie expia-

tion of sin ; so that no more ransom is to be paid ; our debt is satisfied ;

divine justice hath no more demand to us ; sin, Satan, and death are

spoiled and disarmed, and way is made for our salvation to be owned,

as coming: from Christ alone, This is the main circumstance, and

therefore I shall explain it a little — (1.) Negatively ; (2.) Positively.

[1.] Negatively; and there — (1.) In regard of Christ himself ; and

(2.) In respect of us.

(1.) In regard of Christ himself. Not as if all the necessary acts

of his mediation were now past. Death was just at hand, and was com-

prised in the expression ; his lying in the grave was but the continua-

tion of his abasement, till the time of his exaltation should come. But

in the way of satisfying justice he had no more to do; whatever was

done afterwards was by way of reward, not to satisfy justice, but to

satisfy the world of the dignity of his person. He was to rise from

the dead, and ascend into glory ; that is, for our more abundant com-

fort. His resurrection was his solemn acquittance ; our surety was let

out of prison ; Rom. iv. 25, ' Who was delivered for our offences, and

I'ose again for our justification.' His ascension was that we might

have a friend at God's right hand to appear for us : Heb. viii. 1,

\* We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the

throne of the majesty in the heavens ; ' Heb, ix. 24, ' For Christ is

not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures

of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God

for us ; ' that being in a glorified and exalted condition, he might power-

fully apply his purchase, and by his Spirit communicate the fruits

thereof to believers. And he is to come to judgment, to bless and

reward his people and to punish his enemies. But all the sufferings

are now completed, or about to be completed, which he was to suft'er

for our sins.

(2.) In respect of us. It is not so finished but that something is to

be done by the creature. Though the satisfaction be never so perfect,

yet there is a necessity of application. The sacrifice and atonement is

isufflcient, but it must be applied in the wny appointed by God. The

means of applying are partly internal, which qualify the subject, and

make us capable of the benefit of this atonement and satisfaction, which

are faith and repentance, and also new obedience as the consequent of

both ; for repentance is a returning to our duty to God, and faith a

thankful owning of our Redeemer, by whom we return ; and if we are

serious and real, all will end in new obedience and holiness, or else we

are liable to wrath still. Faith is necessary ; Rom. iii. 25, ' V/hom

God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.'

Repentance is necessary : Acts iii. 19, ' Repent ye, therefore, and be

converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' New obedience is

necessary : Heb. v. 9, ' He is become the author of eternal salvation to

all that obey him.' And partly external, by the word and sacraments.

The word : John xvii. 19, ' And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that

they also may be sanctified through the truth.' The word calleth upon

us to accept of Christ, and that life and mercy which is offered to us

in him ; the sacraments, which are baptism and the Lord's supper .

By baptism we profess and are obliged to put on Christ : Gal. iii. 27,

' For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on

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Christ ;' or to apply him to ourselves as a garment to the body, that he

may communicate to us his righteousness, life, and Spirit ; and by tiie

Lord's supper we come more abundantly to take part in this consola-

tion: 1 Cor. X. 16, 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the com-

munion of the blood of Christ ? The bread which we break, is it not

the communion of the body of Christ ? ' that is. hereby we are solemnly

made partakers of the body and blood of Christ, and the benefits

purchased thereby,

[2.] Positively ; that the work of our redemption, so far as related to

sufferings, was now about to be consuuj mated. Christ's sacrifice, which

he was about to offer for us, was no imperfect sacrifice. This appeareth

by his message to Herod : Luke xiii. 32, ' I do cures to-day and to-

morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected ; ' that is, the work of

his office was then fully to be accomplished : Heb. ii. 10, \* The captain

of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings.' Christ as

mediator seemed to lack something till the full number of his sorrows

was accomplished; then he was perfectly fitted to do us good. So

Heb. X. 14, ' By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are

sanctified.' As to an ottering, there needeth no more. A patched

salvation, of half of Christ and of half of the creature, will not do good ;

as if Christ must do a part and we must merit the rest ; this is in-

consistent with God's design. We must not part stakes with God ;

this is neither for our comfort, God's glory, nor our Kedeemer's welcome

to heaven. No ; Christ is a workman that needeth not to be ashamed ;

he could avouch his work before the tribunal of God ; all is finished.

Now he can plead his right at the bar of justice : Ps. ii. 8, ' Ask of me,

and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utter-

most parts of the earth for thy possession.'

II. The evidences and reasons of this complete satisfaction.

1, From the dignity of the person satisfying. Two things are re-

quired in our mediator that he might be a sufficient undertaker for us.

One is, that he should be perfectly holy and righteous ; for how could

he redeem us from sin, who, being defiled with sin, had needed to be

redeemed himself ? The second was, that he should be a divine and

infinite person ; for sin being committed against an infinite majesty,

therefore the suffering by which it must be expiated must be of an

infinite value. Now both these do perfectly concur in Christ ; for as

man, ' He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners/ Heb.

vii. 26 ; and died, ' The just for the unjust, that he might bring us to

God,' 1 Peter iii. 18. He was perfectly holy, even holiness itself:

Luke i. 35, ' That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be

called the Son of God.' As he was God over all, blessed for ever, he

was capable to give a value to his sufferings ; to which purpose God

is said to purchase the church with his own blood : Acts xx. 28, ' Feed

the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.'

In short, God was resolved to lose no glory by the fall ; and therefore,

whosoever was the redeemer, he was to restore what Adam took away

by the fall. God's authority was violated by the creatures' transgres-

sion, whose command was just, and our obedience reasonable. Now it

was meet that God should keep up the authority of his law. ^ His

majesty also was despised in slighting the threatening, and his holiness

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wronf^ed, as if he did not hate sin ; and his justice and truth, as if he

would not punish it ; his power lessened, for sin is an act of presump-

tion, and implieth a contest with God. Now in all these respects it

was necessary that God should vindicate his glor}^ and he no loser ;

which was fully hrought to pass hy Christ, to whom there is in scrip-

ture a douhle fulness and sufficiency attrihuted. A fulness of grace or

holiness : ' For it i)leased the Father that in him should all fulness

dwell, and hy him to reconcile all things to himself,' Col. i. 19, 20.

And therefore he is said, ' To he full of grace and truth, that of his

fulness we may all receive, and grace for grace,' John i. 14, 16.

Besides this, there is a 'fulness of the godhead that dwelt in him hodily,'

Col. ii. 9. Not mystically and spiritually, as in helievers ; not sym-

bolically, as in the sacraments ; not typically, as in the law ; but

bodily, that is, really and personally, as body is opposed to shadow, or

notetli a person. Well, then, the argument is strong. If the person

satisfying were not only holy and undefiled, but also infinite, the satis-

faction also must be infinite, and therefore most perfect and sufficient ;

for what can be greater and more perfect than what is infinite ? And

therefore all is finished ; if such a person will take a body, and die for

us, there needeth no other satisfaction.

2. I reason from the unity of the mediatory office, and that oblation

or sacrifice which was made by Christ by virtue of that office : 2 Coi-.

V. 14, ' If one died for all, then were all dead ; ' 1 Tim. ii, 5, ' There

is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.' And

as these |)laces ]:)rove that there is but one mediator, so there is but

one sacrifice : Heb. x. 10, ' By the which will we are sanctified,

through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all;' and

ver. 14, ' For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are

sanctified ; ' Kom, v. 18, \* By the righteousness of one, the free gift

came upon all to justification of life ; ' Heb. ix. 26, 'But now once

in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the

sacrifice of himself; ' ver. 28, ' So Christ was once offered to bear the

sins of many.' The scripture so emphatically insisting upon this term,

' once ; ' certainly all is finished ; there needeth no more to be done

by us to satisfy God's justice ; that is sufficiently done already.

3. From tlie greatness of the punishment imposed upon Christ;

for if he suffered all the punishments due to us, it cannot be that any-

thing more should be done to pacify God ; all is finished. Now Christ

omitted none of those things which divine justice required : he ' ful-

filled all righteousness,' Mat. iii, 15 ; ' Was obedient to death, even

the death of the cross,' Phil. ii. 8. Yea, and suffered all those things

which the law did put upon sinners, either as to loss or sense, as to

desertion or as to the curse ; and therefore he is said, \* To bear our

griefs, and carry our sorrows, and to be wounded for our transgressions,

and to be bruised for our iniquities,' Isa. liii. 4, 5 ; ' To be made a

curse for us,' Gal. iii. 15 ; ' To be made sin for us,' 2 Cor. v. 21. God

spared him not, but put him to grief, not out of hatred to his Son, but

love to our salvation. Hence those agonies of Christ, and prayers, and

tears, and strong cries.

4. From God's approbation of the person and sacrifice of Christ. If

God did so far approve the sacrifice of Christ as willingly to accept it

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for our redemption, that upon it lie groundeLl a covenant, and made

offers of terms of grace to us, and reconciliation with us, there is no

question but that upon Christ's death all was finished. No more was

necessary for paying the price and ransom, for God, the most just

judge, would not accept of an imperfect satisfaction, or give testimony

that he was well pleased with it. But that Christ's person and

sacrifice was approved of God is evident, not only as he appointed

it ; and surely he will accept what he hath appointed ; not only

also by the miracles which he wrought when alive, which evidenced

his commission: Acts ii. 22, 'Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved

of God among you by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God

did by him in the midst of you ; ' but chiefly by the resurrection

of Christ, which was not only a testimony of the truth and dignity of

his person : Rom. i. 4, ' And declared to be the Son of God with power,

according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead ; '

but it was a clear argument of the perfectness of his satisfaction ; for

unless he had abundantly satisfied God, how could God, who, as a

just judge, had appointed him to die for our sins, raise him up from

the dead ? Would an upright judge deliver a debtor or his surety

from prison unless first full payment had been made ? Would God

show himself willing to be reconciled to us if yet there remained any

wrath to be appeased, any farther ransom necessary to be paid for

us ? Now in the scripture Christ is sometimes said to rise from the

dead to show his divine power ; sometimes to be raised by God to show

the fulness of his satisfaction : Acts ii. 24, ' Whom God hath raised

up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that

he should be hoi den of them.' When Christ was raised, our surety

was let out of prison ; and the scripture hath delivered it to us under

that notion : Isa. liii. 8, ' He was taken from prison, and from judg-

ment, and who shall declare his generation ? For he was cut off from

the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he

stricken.' The Lord sent an angel to remove his gravestone, not to

supply any lack of power in Christ, but to show he was fully appeased

and satisfied. Therefore it is said, Heb. xiii. 20, ' Now the God of

peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great

shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.'

Mark, through the blood of the everlasting covenant he is become the

God of peace ; through the blood of the everlasting covenant he

brought Christ from the dead. He doth not only do us good, but lets

go our surety through the virtue of that blood. The phrase of ' bring-

ing again from the dead,' is emphatical. Christ did not break prison,

but was brought forth as the apostles. Acts xvi. 39 ; the magistrates

came to the prison ' and brought them out.' Christ rose not only by

his own power, but by the Father's authority. If our surety had

perished in prison, we could have no assurance ; or if he had continued

still under death, the world could have no discharge ; but Christ rose

again, and is not only taken out of prison, but carried up to God in

glory and honour : 1 Tim. iii. 16, ' Received up into glory.' It is

not avkdr], actively he ascended, but avaXi](^dr}, passively he was

raised up. God hath rewarded him ; and therefore he hath perfectly

done his work. God hath not only taken him out of the grave, but

taken him up to glory. Certainly God is well pleased since he hath

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^iven him not only a dischar£:e, but a reward. Christ imdertahins^

for us is somewhat like that of Keuben for Benjamin : Gen. xliii. 9, ' I

will be surety for him ; of my hand shalt thou require him : if I

bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the

blame for ever.' ' Let me see thy face no more.' Christ undertook

to carry it through, and failed not in the enterprise.

III. What comfort is this to poor sinners, since, though there be a

full satisfaction, conditions are required which we are not able to per-

form, ere we can have benefit ; and we find sin remaining in us, so

that it is finished, and unfinished as to us ?

I answer — There is great comfort in God's general grace, before it

be particularly applied and exhibited to us in the effects and sense

thereof. A sufScient sacrifice and ransom given for you is the founda-

tion of all solid peace, for it is the foundation of the gospel, or of the

covenant of grace. I shall prove it by these reasons —

1. Because this answereth the grand scruple which haunteth the

creature, and is at the bottom of all our fears ; namely, how God's

justice shall be appeased : Micah vi. 6, 7, ' Wherewith shall I come

before the Lord, and bow myself before the high -God ? Shall I come

before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a j'ear old ? will the

Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers

of oil ? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my

body for the sin of my soul ? ' The way of appeasing God's anger hath

been an old controversy, that hath troubled all nations ; and till it be

answered and fully determined, man is not ' perfect as appertaining to

the conscience,' Heb. ix. 9. Though God be infinitely merciful, yet he

is infinitely just ; and we can expect no more from his mercy than we

may fear from his justice. Guilty nature still presageth evil to us, till

there be something penal endured, and something of price and value

given to appease justice.

2. That God now looketh for no satisfaction at your hand ; it is all

done perfectly by Christ ; all is finished. He satisfied for us that we

might not be obliged to satisfy in our own persons : Heb. i. 3, ' When

he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the

majesty on high ; ' Isa. liii. 5, ' By his stripes we are healed.' It was

at his cost that our recovery was brought about.

. 3. In this provision we see the will of God putting forth itself for

our help in the most astonishing way that could be imagined : 1 Tim.

iii. 16, ' Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God

manifested in the flesh ; ' 1 John iv. 10, ' Herein is love ; not that

we loved God, but God loved us, and sent his Son to be the proj^itia-

tion for our sins.\* This is such an unusual expression of love, such an

engaging instance, so much surpassing our thoughts, that we cannot

sufficiently admire it. When God laid such a broad foundation, surely

he intended some notable grace to us.

4. Here is a full answer to those usual objections which are raised

by broken hearts, as the number, and greatness, and heinousness of

our sins ; for as such they shall not be your ruin. As great as they

are, God can with honour pardon them ; for barely to plead the number

of sins or greatness of sins, is to lessen the price. The Messiah came,

Dan. ix. 24, ' To finish transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to

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bring in everlasting righteousness/ There is no sin so great hut the

Eedeemer's meritcancountervailit. And no man shall perish for the want

of the payment of his ransom, or an expiatory sacrifice for his sins. He

may perish for his impenitency and unbelief, but not merely for the

greatness of his sin ; for what sin is so great tliat it is not or cannot

be expiated by the blood of Christ ? Christ's satisfaction maketh the

salvation of the worst possible; you may have peace with God if you will.

5. It bindeth our duty the closer upon us. No man shall perish but

for want of a willing heart to accept of the Redeemer, who hath paid

our ransom, and of the grace which he hath brought to us, by which

we may be interested and instated in the benefits of this ransom. All

things are ready if we are ready : Luke xiv. 17, ' Come, for all things

are now ready.' God's fatlings are killed, his wines are mingled ; if

we will not come to the feast, we perish through our own default. We

need confer nothing ; all is but to receive the benefits propounded and

offered ; victory over death, hell, sin, Satan, is ready ; yea, heaven is

ready, and all spiritual blessings are ready, if we are ready ; for the

merit and satisfaction of Christ is the great cause of all that blessedness

which is offered to the creature. God hath opened the way to all ; if

they will not enter into it, they perish by their own default. He hath

sent preachers into all the world : Mark xvi. 15, 16, ' And he said unto

them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

He that belie veth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth

not shall be damned ; ' Titus ii. 11, ' For the grace of God, that bringeth

salvation, hath appeared to all men.' Let us not refuse our cure, though

we must take a bitter potion, though we must enter in by the strait

gate of faith and repentance, and walk in the narrow way of self-denial,

and all holy conversation, and godliness ; yet because it is to life, and

the legal exclusion is taken off, let us enter and walk in it. Indeed, if

the door were shut against us by the sentence of the law, and there was

no way to remove the bars and bolts, our excuse were more just, be-

cause then our condition would be hopeless. But now all is finished,

salvation rendered possible ; now God hath taken away the bars and

bolts by wliich his law shut us out from all hope ; let us not set up bars

and bolts by our own unbelief and by our own cowardly fears. If man

were not man, but a beast, a fool, or a madman, it might more excus-

ably be allowed to them to be led by sense and appetite, and then it

were an intolerable thing to crucify the flesh, with the affections thereof ;

but man, having reason, doth know, or may know, that this command

of God is equal ; that God doth not only require, but help us to per-

form it, and prevent us by his grace.

6. It doth not only bind our duty upon us, but it encourages us to

repent and believe and obey ; for Christ is ' able to save to the utmost

all those that come to God by him,' Heb. vii. 25 ; and he is ' the

author and finisher of our faith,' Heb. xii. 2 ; and doth ' give repent-

ance as well as remission of sins,' Acts v. 31 ; ' For to you it is given,

on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer

for his sake,' Phil. i. 29, The first grace is his gift, and his resolved

gift to the elect, but all are to take their lot. If it were said to us

alone that we should strive to enter in at the strait gate, or that we

alone should deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow him, it

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were hard ; but when the same terms are propounded to all, and when

many, young and old, rich and poor, have received them, and have

tried God's ways, and it hath succeeded well with them upon trial, why

should we fear it ? If nobody had done it, or could do it, then we

might stick at God's terms. This argument Austin used to himself in

his conflicts of conscience, lib. viii. Confess, chap. 11. When he had long

withstood offers of grace, he would then propound to himself the ex-

ample of others : Cur non poteris quod isti, et isice f Isti et istce non

in se pouterwit, sed in Domino Deo suo — Why may not I, as well as

those holy men and those good women ? They did it not in themselves,

but in the strength of their God, and the power of his grace. The

yoke of Christ will be more easy than we think of, especially when it

is lined with grace.

7. When we have once accepted the condition, cleared up our title,

then we shall have cause to glory in the Lord, and be sensible indeed

that all things are finished which are necessary to our comfort and

peace, and that this was a full merit ; as Paul would glory in the cross

of Christ : Gal. vi. 14, \* God forbid that I should glory, save in the

cross of our Lord Jesus Christ ; ' Kom. viii. 1, ' There is now no con-

demnation to them which are in Christ.' Then we shall make the bold

challenge of faith : Eom. viii. 33, 34, ' Who shall lay anything to the

charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth; who is he that con-

demneth ? it is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is

even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' If

Christ had not made a full expiation of all our sins, we were under

condemnation still. He doth not say. There is nothing worthy of

condemnation in believers ; for as long as sin and the flesh remaineth

in us (which doth as long as we live in the world), there is a

potential guilt of damnation, an intrinsic merit in our actions of

death and condemnation ; yet the actual guilt or obligation is taken

away, because Christ is made a curse for us. Well, then, our solid

rejoicing to the last is in this complete satisfaction : Kom. v. 11, ' We

rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have

received the atonement ; it is Kavxc^/J^^voi, we glory in God.

Use. Let this raise in us —

1. An hearty thankfulness and admiration of the love of Christ, who

would not give over suffering till he could say, ' It is finished ; ' till he

had done enough to glorify God and save the creature ; enough for the

destruction of sin, as well as the abolition of the curse. Chi'ist did not

compound, but paid the utmost farthing. Oh, let us raise our thoughts

in the consideration of this love. His enemies interrupted him, and

tempted him to give over : \* Save thyself ; if thou be the Son of God,

come down from the cross,' Mat. xxvii. 40, 42 ; 'If he be the king of

Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.\*

But because he was the Son of God and the king of Israel, he would

not come down till he was taken down, and all was done that was neces-

sary: 'All God's works are perfect,' Deut. xxxii. 4. The Father ceased

not till, upon the sixth day, he had perfected the work of the creation,

and upon the seventh day he rested ; so Christ will not come down till

he had finished the work of redemption on the sixth day, and on the

seventh he rested in the grave, and rose early in the morning on the

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first day of tlie week, to sliow the truth of his satisfaction. And the

Holy Ghost's work is perfect; all the time of this life he continueth

increasing our graces, but in the everlasting sabbatism, when sin shall

be no more, his work is brought to an end ; and then he shall 'present

you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy,'

Jude24.

But what were the reasons why Christ would not give over till all

was perfected ?

[1.] Love to his Father : John xviii. 11, ' The cup which my Father

halh given me, shall I not drink it ? ' Christ loved the Father with

unspeakable love, and was in like manner beloved by him. Therefore

when this cup was put into his hands by his Father, he would drink

it off to the very bottom.

[2.] Love to the church : Eph. v. 25, 26, ' Even as Christ loved the

church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it

with the washing of water, by the word,' &c. ; and Kev. i. 5, 6, ' To

him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.'

The church was given for a spouse to Christ, but we were polluted

and defiled with sin ; he would not only cleanse it, but make it a

\* glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing,' Eph.

V. 27. Christ loved the church, and therefore it was not grievous to

him to wash it with his blood. Because Jacob loved Kachel, he served

seven years for her in heats and frosts by night and day, and ' they

seemed to him but a few days for the love he had to her,' Gen. xxix.

20 ; so the Son of God loved the church, and therefore endured all

these indignities and grievous passions.

[3.] He had respect to that eminent glory set before him : Heb.

xii. 2, ' Looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who,

for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the

shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God.'

Though the way was rough, the prize was excellent ; and so he ran

through all the pain and shame, and attained the eternal crown of

glory. He endured cruel pains in his body, and bitter sorrows in his

soul, such as never any man did suffer, never any angel could have

borne as he did ; so dear did it cost our Saviour to make a propitiation

for our sins. That which in all this did strengthen and encourage him

was the joy set before him, namely, that happy and glorious estate

which followed upon his sufferings, so that his burden was made the

lighter, and his sorrows much abated. Oh, let us think of this ! It is

not a lessening his love to us, for he needed not to put himself into

this condition. Herein he was our example, to teach us how to

sweeten the cross ; and as our Mediator he is gone to heaven to prepare

a place for us : John xiv. 2, 3, \* I go to prepare a place for you ; and

if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to

myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.'

2. Let it raise in us a confidence of the benefits purchased. For

Christ expresseth himself as a conqueror, and in a kind of triumph

over the devil and all the enemies of our salvation. The wrath of God

is appeased: Rom. v. 9, 'Much more then, being now justified by his

blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.' The law is satis-

fied: Gal. iv. 4, 5, ' God sent forth bis Son, made of a woman, made

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nnder the law, to redeem them that were under the law/ Satan is

vanquished : John xii. 31, 'Now is the judgment of this world ; now

shall the prince of this world be cast out.' Guilt is removed : Eph.

i. 7, ' In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgive-

ness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.' Sin is subdued :

Eom. vi. 6, ' Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him,

that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not

serve sin.' Death is unstinged : 1 Cor. xv. 55-57, ' death ! where

is thy sting ? grave ! where is thy victory ? The sting of death is

sin, and the strength of sin is the law ; but thanks be to God, which

giveth us the victoiy, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' The curse is

removed : Gal. iii. 13, ' Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the

law, being made a curse for us.' Surely where Christ beginneth he

will make an end. We cannot have too high thoughts of the blood of

Christ: Heb. ix. 13, 14, ' For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and

the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purify-

ing of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through

the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, cleanse your

consciences from dead works, to serve the living God.' Let us stand

still now, and behold the salvation of God, and echo to Christ's cry,

\* It is finished ! it is finished '! ' What can the law crave more than

the blood of the Son of God ? What will make us perfect as apper-

taining to the conscience if this will not ? Being justified by his blood,

we shall be saved from wrath through him. Christ hath so far

obtained pardon and acceptance for us, that he hath made an end of

sin for all that are willing to accept of his grace upon God's terms.

3. Let it quicken us to perseverance in our duty, notwithstanding

sufferings, till all be ended ; that, when we come to die, we may be

able to say, John xvii. 4, ' I have glorified thee on earth ; I have

finished the work thou gavest me to do ;' 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, ' I have

fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faitli.

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.^ If

Christ out of love to us would finish the work of our redemption,

'What shall separate us from the love of Christ? ' Eom. viii. 39.

4. It teacheth us how to comfort ourselves in death. It finisheth all

our labours and sorrows, as Christ showeth when he was about to give

up the ghost : Isa. Ivii. 2, ' He shall enter into peace ; they shall rest

in their beds.' Believers have a joy set before them as well as Christ,

The wicked cannot say, ' It is finished ; ' their evils are then begun,

5. Let us believe things to come. The event showeth that all those

things were true which the prophets had so long before foretold. The

Holy Ghost cannot be deceived, nor can God lie. We are certain that

things yet to come shall be fulfilled as well as these which are past.

Those who lived before Christ's time had not such an experiment of

God's truth as we have. We have seen the coming of Christ ; let us

so fix our minds on future things, as to draw them off from earthly.

He homed his head, and gave up the ghost. — I come to the latter

part of the text. Some read it that first he died, and then bowed the

head, there being no spirit left to support it ; but Christ first bowed

the head, and then died ; he did as it were beckon to death to come

and do its office : ' He yielded up the ghost ; ' his soul was truly

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separated from his body. The form of resignation we have, Luke

xxiii, 46, ' Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.' Wicked men,

because they die against their wills, their souls are said to be taken

away : Luke xii. 20, ' Thou fool ! this night thy soul shall be required

of thee ; ' Job xxvii. 8, ' For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though

lie liath gained, when God taketh away his soul ? ' But Christ

yieldeth it up ; and for a godly man to give up the ghost noteth his

iaith, submission, and willingness to depart out of the body. As the

prophet saith of Christ, Isa. liii. 12, ' He hath poured out his soul unto

death.' Death did not surprise him.

Doct. When all things were finished, Christ freely and willingly

gave up the ghost.

His life was not taken away, but resigned ; there was much of

violence, but no coaction. The term, giving up the ghost, doth not

imply the bare death of Christ, but that he died willingly and freely.

Nihil m hoc Chynsto est, 7iisi 'profusa liberalitas misericorcUce, et re-

missionis peccatorum — I can see nothing in this Christ but a prodi-

gality of love and mercy. He had freely emptied his veins in the

garden ; every pore became an eye, and wept blood for your sakes ; and

now he cometh to pour out his soul.

Reasons why Christ was so willing to die.

1. Out of obedience to his Father. The divine decrees had laid a

necessity upon him, and where the Father saith, Must, Christ saith, I

will : Mat. xxvi. 54, 55, ' Thinkest thou not that I cannot now pray to

my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of

angels ? ' (which was the just number of a Eoman army); ' But how

then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be ? ' Christ

willingly took this necessity upon him ; it was but necessitas ex hypothesi.

Had it not been for his eternal consent it would never have been said,

' Thus it must be ; ' Luke xxii. 37, ' This that is written must be

accomplished ; ' Luke xxiv. 46, ' Thus it is written, and thus it behov-

eth Christ to suffer.' It was a necessity of his own making ; he was

not compelled to accept of the conditions from God, nor forced by the

violence of man to yield up his life : John x, 18, ' No man taketh it

from me, but I lay it down of myself ; I have power to lay it down,

and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have

I received of my Father.'

2. Out of love to us. The Jews crucified him, but love made him

die ; we had else perished for ever. The law laid it upon us, but love

made Christ take it upon himself : Isa. liii. 4, ' Surely he hath borne

our griefs and carried our sorrows.' Justice demanded it of us, but

Christ said, I will be responsible ; exact it of me : Mat. xx. 28, ' Even

as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and

to give his life a ransom for many.' He took life to lay it down at the

demand of justice. Justice said, I must have a ransom ; Christ said,

Take it of me ; let these go: Job xxxiii. 24, ' Tiien he is gracious unto

them, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit ; I have

found a ransom.' The Father received it, and Christ paid it ; as the

angel said to Abraham, Gen. xxii. 12, ' Lay not thine hand upon the

lad, neither do thou anything unto him.' Justice would have reached

forth a deadly stroke to us, but Christ catched the blow.

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3. This would finish his labours. Death was Christ's last enemy,

of his person, as well as of his kingdom. He had been harassed and

worn out with sorrows ; the grave was a place of rest ; it was finished

as to him : Isa. Ivii. 2, ' He shall enter into peace ; they shall rest in

their beds.' Death was the end of Christ's journey, and all his labours

in the flesh. The grave was a dark dismal place till Christ went into

it ; ever since it is but a chamber of rest, and Christ keepeth the key

of it : Isa. xxvi. 20, ' Enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors

about thee ; bide thyself, as it were, for a little moment.'

4. This furthered his triumph, and made it every way more complete.

By dying, Christ carried the war into his enemies' land, and foiled

death in its own territory, and made death itself mortal by lying in the

grave. The cross and the grave were the means of Christ's triumph ;

by these the devil thought to foil him, and by these he triumphed : he

conquered Satan and sin when they seemed to have most power upon

him ; like angry bees, they stung him, and disarmed themselves : Heb.

ii. 14, ' That through death he might destroy him that had the power

of death, that is, the devil ; ' Col. ii. 15, ' And having spoiled prin-

cipalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over

them in it,' eV uvtm, i.e., aravpcp. On the cross : Eph. ii. 16, ' Hav-

ing slain the enmity thereby ; ' that is, by his cross, formerly spoken of.

When he was slain himself, then he slew death and the law. Christ's

crucifying was his exaltation and preferment. It is twice expressed by

lifting up : John iii. 14, ' So shall the Son of man be lifted up ; ' John

xii. 32, 33, ' I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men after me. This he

said, signifying what death he should die.' The grave was consecrated

and sanctified by Christ's lying there. Duo in cruce affixi intellir/unhcr,

saith Origen ; Christus visihiliter sfonte sua ad tempiis, diaholiis

invisihiliter invitus in perpetimm — There were two crucified at once ;

Christ visibly of his own accord, for a time only ; the devil invisibly,

against his will for ever. Christ received a slight hurt in his heel, but

he bruised Satan's head,

5. He was hastening to his own glory : Heb. xii. 2, ' For the joy

that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and

is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.' He was thinking

of his welcome to heaven. Oh, what sweet embraces there would be

between the Father and him ! Ps. ex. 1, \* The Lord said unto my Lord,

Sit thou at my right hand till I make thy enemies thy footstool ; '

Dan. vii. 13, 14, \*I saw in the night-visions, and behold, one like the

Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient

of days, and they brought him near before him ; and there was given

him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and

languages, should serve him ; his dominion is an everlasting dominion,

which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be

destroyed.' How the angels should usher him into glory, though there

were two left with shining garments to give satisfaction to his disciples !

Acts i. 10, 11, ' While they looked steadfastly towards heaven as he

went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, which said,

Ye men of Galilee ! why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? This same

Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so return in like

manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.' Christ was thinking

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how his Father would embrace him, put the crown upon his head, bid

him sit down at his right liand, and how there he was to be ro3'ally

attended. And this doth not derogate from his love to us, for he went

to prepare a place for us, and, as our forerunner, is entered into glory,

and because he lives, we shall live also.

Use 1. To commend the love of Christ to us.

1. That he should die, this was an incomparable condescension of

his love. Simeon suffered himself to be bound for his brethren, Gen.

xlii. 24 ; Lot proffers his daughters to save his guests, Gen. xix. 8 ;

but Christ would lay down his life. If it were in our choice, who

would die ? Who would be tumbled into a pit of darkness, a cold

hole, where he should see the sun no more ? We would live for ever.

It is not put to our choice, but it is in our wishes. But Christ might

have chosen whether he would die or no, and yet he died.

2. Christ had more reason to love his life than we have. He had a

delicate body, and the social presence of the Godhead. The poorest

worm in the world desires to keep its life : Job ii. 4, ' Skin for skin,

yea, all that a man hath will he give for liis life ; ' that is, a man would

part with all, for skins were the barter of those days. And the more

excellent the life is, the more desire men have to keep it ; as young

men, whose marrow is in their bones, to them life is life indeed. The

woman that was broken and spent with old age yet spent okov top

fiiov, 'all her living on physicians,' Luke viii. 43. Christ had reason

to love life upon a natural respect ; he was about thirty- three years old ;

and upon a spiritual respect, his human nature eujoyed the near pre-

sence of the godhead ; but when he was in his full vigour and strength,

he willingly died.

3. That death which he died was a sad bloody death, the saddest

death that any man could die. He was weakened with the agonies in

the garden: ' They pierced his hands and his feet,' Ps. xxii. 16. The

sinewy parts of his body were pierced with nails, his life dropping out

by degrees ; the irons opened a passage for his soul. And, which was

more than all, he suffered under the wrath of God : Mat. xxvii. 46,

' My God ! my God ! why hast thou forsaken me ? '

4. It was a shameful death ; he suffered as a malefactor : Isa. liii.

12, ' He was numbered with the transgressors.' He was crucified

between two thieves, in medio latronum, tanqiiam latronum maximus,

as if he were the greatest of them. He was treated as a sinner ; we

are made the sons of God. Job was called hypocrite by his friends^

but he would maintain his righteousness till death : Job xxvii. 6,

'My righteousness will I hold fast, and will not let it go ; my heart

shall not reproach me so long as I live.' Eusebius Vercellensis chose

rather to starve in prison than that it should be said he had eaten with

the Arians. Christ takes it patiently to die as a thief, an impostor, a

traitor : John xviii. 30, ' If he were not a malefactor, we would not

have delivered him up unto thee.' The high priest charged him with

blasphemy : Mat. xxvi, G5, ' Then the high priest rent his clothes,

saying. He hath s})oken blasphemy ; what further need have we of

witnesses ? Behold now ye have heard his blasphemy.' The disciples

began to doubt of him, and to look on him as an impostor : Luke xxiv.

21, ' We trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel.'

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By God himself, when he had taken our sins upon hini, he was dealt

with as a transgressor : 1 Peter iv. 1, ' He that hath suffered in the flesh

hath ceased from sin,' He was as a sinner before : Heb. ix. 28, ' So

Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many,' An ingenuous man

valueth his good name above all enjoyments ; there was enough to

clear Christ's innocency, yet in the repute of the world he suffered as a

malefactor. Oh, how unlike is Christ to the men of the world ! Christ

is innocent, and accounted a transgressor ; they are transgressors, yet

would fain be accounted innocent ; as Saul said to Samuel, 1 Sam, xv.

30, ' I have sinned, yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders

of my people, and before Israel,' We are more careful of credit than

conscience, and would not be accounted sinners, yet do not fear to be

so. What a comfort is this to believers, that Satan cannot lay more to

your charge than his instruments did to Jesus Christ,

5. He submitted to this death most willingly. He thirsted, and

longed to pay the ransom for us ; here was not so much pain and shame

as there was willingness : Gal. i. 4, ' Who gave himself for our sins,'

There was not only the acts of the Father in giving Christ, but a

peculiar act of Christ : ' He gave himself.' How freely did Christ

empty his veins, and let out his soul ! It was no more to Christ to

pour out his soul than for the minister to pour out the wine. We pray

as if we were afraid to be heard ; we hear as if we were loath to be saved ;

we serve God as if we were loath to please him ; there is a grudging in

our acts of duty ; but Christ was free, and willing to die for us.

6. His blood was spilt in malice ; it might have cried for vengeance,

yet it crieth for pardon ; it had the perfume of an infinite merit : Heb.

xii. 24, ' The blood of sprinkling speaketh better things than that of

Abel,' As to Abel's blood, that crieth for vengeance : Gen. iv. 10,

' The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.'

Christ's blood cries for pardon. As to the actors, his blood would not

liave been a curse to them if they had hearkened to the voice of the

gospel. But to speak of ourselves ; we by our sins had made our Lord

to serve and die, yet doth not his blood speak against us, as Abel's did

against Cain ; but it speaks to God, to pacify his wrath and to pardon

us. Our sins cry, Lord, forgive not : Isa. ii. 9, ' The mean man boweth

down, and the great man humbleth himself ; therefore forgive them

not.' They speak in our conscience, Ye deserve death ; but Christ's

blood speaketh words of peace and comfort to cleanse it, and make it

quiet. When wrath is ready to break out from justice, it still crieth,

Father, it is finished ; Christ's blood yet speaketh. When the

awakened conscience lies in fear of the offended judge, and is vexed

with the restless accusations of Satan, the blood of Christ speaketh

better things, viz., It is all forgiven ; it is all expiated by my merit.

Use 2. This affords much comfort to humbled sinners. Take Christ

as freely as he freely offereth himself for you. He resigned up himself

to death, and will not you resign up yourselves by flxith ? He poured

out his soul to death, and will not you pour out your souls into his

bosom ? Consider, all the persons of the Trinity are willing, and will

not you? The Father gave him: John iii. 16, 'God so loved the

world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,' Christ gave himself : Gal.

ii, 20, ' Who loved me, and gave himself for me,' The Spirit is willing ;

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he is grieved with your neglect and refusal : Mat. xxiii. 37, ' How often

would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her

chickens under her wings, hut ye would not ! ' Oh, pour out your

souls in foith and prayer, as Christ did his upon the cross.

Use 3. Let us learn to imitate Christ. At the close of his life he

said, ' It is finished,' and so ' bowed the head, and gave up the ghost.'

Believers have a joy set before them as well as Christ. It is not so

with wicked men ; they cannot say that with them it is begun ; their

heaven endeth wlien they come to die ; but God's people should take

death cheerfully, if they can say, as Christ, John xvii. 4, ' Father, I

have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work that thou

gavest me to do.' Let the death be violent or natural, it is all one

whether we are a peace-offering or a burnt-offering ; there is more of

man's malice in a violent death, but it cannot hurt us. But alas !

men generally do not live as if they did look to die, and therefore they

do not die as if they did look to live ; and so here they would not die.

and there they would not live.

SERMON UPON ECCLESIASTES VII. 29.

But they sought out many inventions. — Eccles. vii. 29.

There are two things in this scripture —

1. The righteousness of God in his work about men, ' God made man

upright.'

2. Man's perverse subtlety in inventing ways of backsliding and

apostasy from God, ' But they sought out many inventions.'

From this latter part observe —

Doct. That man fell from the integrity of his first estate, and is ever

since full of evil and fruitless inventions.

I. I shall speak to this point as it is represented in the text.

II. Give some considerations as to the general case.

1. The persons, ' they.' The expression was singular before, ' God

made Adam upright ; ' but now plural, not only to include both our

first parents, but all their posterity. Adam had his invention, and all

his posterity theirs. The devil inspired Adam with a sad and doleful

invention, to go about to find out another happiness than God had

appointed. Adam could not content himself with this kind of happi-

ness, but fancied to himself an higher perfection, and yielded to follow

these new devised ways of blessedness which Satan and his own deceived

heart did suggest to him ; and this invention hath invented and found

out all the sin and misery under which the world groaneth. As Adam

had his invention, so all his posterity theirs ; we are inventing still to

make ourselves more miserable. The least ebullitions of sin are

expressed in the old testament by ' imaginations ; ' in the new by

'lusts.' In the old testament by 'imaginations;' Jer. xviii. 12, 'And

they said. There is no hope ; but we will walk after our own devices,

and we will every one do the imagination of his pvil heart ; ' Gen. vi.

5, 'And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and

that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil con-

tinually.' In the new by 'lusts;' James i. 14, 'But every man is

tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed ; ' Titus

iii. 3, 'For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient,

deceived, serving divers lusts.' Not only the desiring, but the under-

standing faculty is corrupt ; therefore it is said, Prov. i. 31, ' They shall

eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices ; '

Jer. vi. 19, ' Behold, I will bring upon this people even the fruit of their

thoughts ; ' meaning the evil which their own devices and practices had

procured to themselves. Every one of us has our devices, ways,

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and haunts of sin, ^Yllereby we make ourselves more wretched and

sinful.

2. Their act, ' They sought out ; ' that showeth the voluntariness

and studiousness of man's defection ; it is their own act and deed, and

their hearts are set upon it. It is said, Jonah ii. 8, ' They that observe

lying vanities forsake their own mercies.' They set their minds a-work,

prostitute their reason to their senses. All men's projects, what do

they tend to but the satisfaction of their own lusts, to cater for the body,

and gratify the animal life ? ' Making provision for the flesh, to fulfil

the lusts thereof,' Rom. xiii. 14 ; ' Taking thought what they shall

eat or what they shall drink,' Mat. vi. 25. Their care is about the base

and brutish part more than about the soul, how to adorn the body and

gratify the body ; and for this the soul must be made a slave. There

is a perverse diligence in men to corrupt themselves.

3. The object, with its number, 'Many inventions.' There is some

difference in the translations. Ludovicus de Dieu, because the word

for ' many ' signifieth also ' great ' and ' mighty,' rendereth it, Ipsi

cmtem qucesiverunt cogitationes magnatum ; meaning by the ' mighty '

the angels who were not contented with their own station, but forsook

it, Jude 6. Certain it is the devil's first temptation was, Gen. iii. 5,

' Ye shall be as gods ; ' that is, advance into a more honourable and

noble condition than now you are in. These thoughts being suggested

by Satan, they ambitiously entertained them. The vulgar readeth it,

Se infinitis miscuit qucestionibus. Adam at first out of curiosity would

know good and evil, and ever since we have been sick of questions,

questioning this and questioning that, and have no clear light to guide

us. The Septuagint render it, i^ijTrjaav \oyia-/jiov<; ttoXXou?, they

sought out many ratiocinations. We grope in a maze of uncertainties,

and so entangle ourselves the more. Our heavenly wisdom is lost by

our sin and rebellion, and instead thereof we have gotten a false carnal

wisdom, which is 'enmity to God,' Rom. viii. 7, and only inclineth us

to a false happiness, James iii. 15, to the pleasures, honours, and profits

of the present world; and so are given up to an injudicious mind, and

are left in the hands of our own counsel, which is the heaviest plague

that can light ui)on a reasonable creature : Ps. Ixxxi. 11, 12, 'But my

people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me ;

so I gave them up unto their own hearts' lusts, and they walked in their

own counsels.' For our own wisdom is an ill guide and counsellor, and

will never guide us aright in the way to true happiness, but lead us into

bogs and pits, and iijto many foolish and hurtful lusts.

But keeping more closely to our own translation, let me a little open

this expression, ' They sought out many inventions.'

First, Observe that man is left to invent, and (since he left the

straight line of God's directions) to shift for an happiness for himself

Surely it was better for us when we needed only to accept or submit ;

we never sped well since we would be our own carvers, and would

follow those new ways to blessedness which Satan and our own hearts

suggest to us ; as a runagate child or servant, that is not content with

the father's or master's finding, is driven to a thousand shifts. All our

inventions may be disproved by a double reason —

1. They are insufficient to make us happy. We were made for God,

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and cannot be happy again till we return to God. Being fallen from

God, in whose favour alone true happiness is to be found, we invent

false ways wherein we seek to attain happiness ; but after all our vain

pursuits, we can nowhere find rest for our souls. We have but a little

vainglory for that eternal glory which we have lost, a little brutish

pleasure for that fulness of joy which we might have in God's presence,

perishing vanities for the true riches ; so that we do but go about : Jer.

xxxi. 22, ' How long wilt thou go about, backsliding daughter ? '

We do but weary ourselves as long as we keep off from God ; you

meet with a broken cistern instead of the fountain : Jer. ii. 13, ' My

people have committed two evils ; they have forsaken me, the fountain

of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can

hold no water,' You may drink many a puddle dry, and yet never

quench your thirst ; labour your hearts out, and yet not meet with that

which satisfieth : Isa. Iv. 2, ' Wherefore do ye spend your money for

that which is not bread ? and your labour for that which satisfieth not ?

Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let

your soul delight itself in fatness.' True rest and peace will only be

found in God reconciled to us in Christ.

2. They plunge us in farther misery. It is true both as to opinions

in religion and as to practice.

[1.] As to opinions in religion. If men apprehend some misery, how

vain are their inventions about the remedy ! All their devices show

how desperate the disease is. The philosophers, when they had found

out a god, yet were ' vain in their imaginations,' Kom. i. 21 ; when they

sat abrood on a religion, they hatched nothing but what was ridiculous :

'And professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.' The

Egyptians, who vaunted themselves to be the fathers of all sciences,

worshipped onions and leeks, and their gods grew in their gardens;

they were planted and cultivated by their labourers before they were

worshipped by their princes. The Komans, who excelled all nations

for their morality and civility, made gods of all things, for war and

peace, fears and passions, agues and fevers. And still the religion of

heathens, Turks, and pagans are so far from being the remedy, that

they are a part of the disease, and remove man further off from God.

All men's inventions to pacify God's wrath do further provoke him :

Micah vi. 6, 7, ' Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow

myself before the high God ? Shall I come before him with burnt-

offerings, with calves of a year old ? Will the Lord be pleased with

thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil ? Shall I give

my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of

my soul ? ' Go to, false christians ! it was never well with the world

since men were guided by inventions rather than institutions ; while

they hope by their own penances and exterior mortifications to appease

God, he is the more alienated from them.

[2.] So as to practice. Whilst instead of dependence and downright

simplicity they fly to their own shifts, and will help themselves rather

than trust God, they involve themselves the more. There is one prin-

ciple of sincerity, to depend upon God's all-sufficiency : Gen. xvii. 1,

\* I am the Almighty God ; walk before me, and be thou perfect.' But they

that do not trust God cannot be true to him. When men will be in-

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venting, and shift for their own happiness, they never carve to them-

selves a good portion, but have enough of their devices at last. Besides,

our false happiness which we pursue after, and our inventions about

it, are not only vain, but pernicious and destructive : John iii. 19,

' And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and

men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.'

If we love our own dark counsels rather than God's provision for us

and the remedy offered to us, our case is the more doleful.

Secondly, Observe, these inventions are many. Here I shall inquire

— (1.) What are these inventions ? (2.) Why many ?

First, What are these inventions ? We must distinguish —

1. There are profitable inventions for the good of society and benefit

of mankind, such as are civil arts and disciplines, manufacture and

occupations, which conduce much to the good of the present world, and

do repair those natural defects which were introduced by the fall. Now,

though these are not intended in this place, yet two things I shall say

upon this occasion —

[1.] The one is, that if man would have been contented to be at God's

finding, many of these would not have been needed ; such a deal of do

would not have been needful to man in innocency. It is sin hath made

so many necessities, and lust still multiplieth them.

[2.] The other is, that though since the fall we can find some remedy

for our natural defects, yet for the spiritual distempers of the heart we

can find no cure. By art man can melt the hardest metals, and make

them capable of any form, but to soften the heart, and make it capable

of God's image, that is past the skill of men or angels. There is no

creature so fierce but ' it is tamed and hath been tamed of mankind,'

James iii. 7 ; but yet man cannot tame his own heart ; it is God must

turn us, or we are never turned. How many inventions hath man

found out to repair the ruins of the fall ! Grammar and rhetoric to

polish our speech, logic to refine our reason, ethics to reform our

manners in civil converse, economics to govern families, politics to

model kingdoms and commonwealths ; but nothing to tame and subdue

the heart to God ? It is God that ' createth in us a clean heart, and

reneweth a right spirit,' Ps. li. 10 ; even he that made it at first.

2. There are sinful inventions, taken in a more limited sense, for

those exquisite studied ways of sin wherewith many please themselves ;

as we read of some that were ' inventors of evil things,' Kom. i. 30, who

find out such wickedness as the world was never acquainted with before ;

as new-fashioned oaths, lusts, torments. This argueth the height of

wickedness ; and such are the more corrupt of the corrupt sort of men.

These are not principally intended in this place, yet may be comprised

here.

3. The inventions here intended are such as by which we start away

from God and corrupt ourselves. This more general sense of the words

compriseth two sorts of inventions —

[1.] Those many crooked counsels and devices whereunto men are

carried by their own corrupt hearts, when once they had forsaken God

and the straight rule of his law. We read, Jer. xvii. 9, \* That the

heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ; who can

know it ? ' There is a bottomless, unsearchable depth of wickedness

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in the heart of man, which none can discover but God ; it is wily, fraudu-

lent, prone to deceive, full of windings and turnings, wiles and sleights ;

no creature in wicked subtlety and dissembling can go beyond him.

The scripture delighteth in this term, ' inventions ' and \* imaginations ; '

Gen. vi. 5, ' All the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart were only

evil continually;' and Jer. xviii. 12, \*We will walk after our own

devices, and we will every one do the imaginations of his evil heart.'

The heart of man is in continual action, framing and moulding things

within it'self ; and because there are many cunning fetches and secret

devices within the heart, by which they seek to put out their own eyes,

that they may not apprehend themselves to be so vile and filthy as

indeed they are, and a deceitful heart smooths evil, and presents it

under another notion, therefore they may be called, and are in scripture

called, ' devices ' and ' inventions.' There is so much remainder of light

and conscience since the fall, that there needeth a great deal of craft to

varnish sin, to insinuate it with any satisfaction to the conscience ; a

great deal of diligence to compass it, and a great deal of art to hide it

from the world, that it may not make us hateful or obnoxious to dis-

grace and disrespect ; and to hide it from ourselves, that we may live

ill it with greater leave and allowance from those remainders of reason

which are yet left within us. True wisdom is plain and simple 5 it

needeth no disguises to palliate it from the judgment of conscience or

the notice of the world : ' Wisdom is justified of her children ; ' Mat.

xi. 19, ' This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in

simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace

of God, we have had our conversation in the world,' 2 Cor. i. 12. But

with sin it is not so ; there are many inventions for the hiding, palliat-

ing, excusing, and defending of sin ; it is the great power of the word

to discover them : Heb. iv. 12, ' For the word of God is quick and

]wwerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the

dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and

is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' These are the

most secret acts of the soul. Intentions respect the end, thoughts

respect consultations about the means. There is an artificial dexterous

managery of sin : Eph. ii. 3, ' Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of

the mind,' 6e\7]fiaTa tt}? aapKO'? koI tmv StavoLwv, that is, imaginations

and lusts. Now of these inventions I shall say two things —

(1 .) The more studiously and dexterously any sin is carried on, it

argueth the worse temper of spirit, and the sin is the more aggravated :

' To be wise to do evil,' Jer. iv. 22 ; 'To devise iniquity, and work evil

upon our beds,' Micah ii. 1 ; ' The wicked plotteth against the just,

and gnasheth upon him with his teeth,' Ps. xxxvii. 12. The subtle

designer of sin is worse than he that occasionally lapseth into it. The

good may be overtaken or overborne, but to dig deep to hide our wicked-

ness, and sit abrood upon it, is the greatest evil.

(2.) That sinful inventions for the hiding and palliating of sin never

succeed well, but involve us the more. I shall not instance in the worst

of men, how they are forced to add sin to sin, and help out one wicked-

ness with another, which at last bringeth upon them the feared evil

with the greater violence ; but even in the best of men, that you may

the more loath these sinful inventions. David had many inventions to

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cloak his sin with Bathsheha, but how ill did they succeed at last !

When sin hath got a tie upon a man, and a man hath done some evil

from which he cannot well acquit himself but with some loss and

shame or other inconvenience, then it is a mighty snare, unless he cover

it or maintain it, or some other way help himself by adding some other

sin to it. Thus usually in this case men have their inventions, shift

off a l^iult with a lie, and imagine it in a sort necessary for their safety

to be evil ; and out of this seeming necessity heap and pile up sin upon

sin, and transgression upon transgression. This, I sa}^ was\* David's

case in the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah. Surely he had never pro-

ceeded to such black thoughts, to plot the murder of a person so worthy

and innocent, but to salve his credit and cover his dishonest act, when

other arts and shifts failed and took no effect. Admit one sin, and the

devil taketh this advantage, that he will force us for the defence of

that to yield to more. Thus Sarah's unbelieving laughter brought

forth a lie : Gen. xviii. 12-15, ' Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed

not ; for she was afraid.' Peter, when he had denied his master with

a plain single denial, ' I know not the man,' Mat. xxvi. 70, he proceedeth

after to a denial with oaths and execrations : ' Then began he to curse

and to swear, saying, I know not the man,' ver. 74. If he had pre-

vented the first sin with ordinary courage and boldness, he had not thus

entangled himself; but one sin must help out another, though still to

our loss and trouble. Eudoxia, wife to Theodosius junior, having

received of the emperor her husband an apple of incredible beauty and

bigness, gave it to one Paulinus, a learned man, whom she prized ; he,

not knowing whence the empress had received it, presents it as a rare

gift to the emperor, who thereupon sending for his wife, asked her for

the apple ; she, fearing her husband's displeasure if she should say she

had given it away, answered she had eaten it ; upon this afterwards

the emperor produceth it, and in his jealousy killeth innocent Paulinus,

and hateth his wife. If she had not told an untruth at first, she had

not fallen into the sin of lying ; but giving way a little, she is drawn

into a greater sin, her innocent friend lost his life, and she her husband's

favour ever afterwards. All this is spoken that we may beware of evil

inventions, which never succeed well, nor to the content of the parly

that useth them.

[2.] These inventions are put for our pursuits after a false happiness.

True happiness is only to be found in the favour of God, and in the

way appointed by God ; but man would be at his own dispose, and

would invent and find out an happiness for himself, and be sufficient

to himself for his own blessedness, without any dependence upon God.

Now, when man was thus fallen off from God, God was disobliged from

providing for him, and so man is left to his own shifts. But alas !

how ill doth he provide for himself ! This being the very thing

intended in the text, I shall a little more amply dilate upon it in

several ])ropositions.

(1.) When man fell from God, he fell from him tanquam aprincipio

etjine, from dependence upon him as the first cause, and respect to

him as his chief good and last end. His dependence was loosened,

because he distrusted God's provision for him, and would be a god to

himself, his own principle, rule, and end ; live from himself to himself,

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according to his own will. So that self-love came in the place of love

to God ; he that before sought nothing but God, began now to seek

himself, and thought he should find in himself what he lost in God.

(2.) Man being once off from God, never of himself cometh on again,

but rangeth infinitely, being guided by his own will and wit : Jonah

ii. 8, ' They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercies.'

Man being fastened to such objects as he liketh, keepeth aloof from

God, whom he liketh not, and will not come at him as long as he can

make a shift without him : Jer. ii. 31, 'We are lords ; we will come no

more unto thee.' And though he wandereth hither and thither, he

finds no rest for his soul, for he seeketh happiness where it is not to be

found, in the riches, honours, and pleasures of the present life.

(3.) Though he meet with often disappointments, yet he is unwilling

to return even after God hath showed a remedy, and brought life and

immortality to light in the gospel, in which way he may have peace

and happiness, and so rest for his soul. God hath showed us the way

to rest: Jer. vi. 16, 'Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and

walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls ; ' Mat. xi. 28, ' Come

unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you

rest.' But yet man is for his shifts still, till God changeth his heart

and giveth him counsel in his reins, and disappoints him in his worldly

inventions and pursuits, by blasting the creature, or occasioning some

wound in his conscience. God speaketh often in his word, but it is

disregarded till he speak by real arguments, and speak to the quick,

so as to force an hearing ; till he take away their comforts, or take away

their use of them, by some languishing sickness or anguish in their own

conscience, or both ; by smiting them with a rod dipped in guilt :

'When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest

his beauty to consume away like a moth,' Ps. xxxix. 11 ; so that then

they see the fruitlessness of all their inventions, their vain pleasures,

costly buildings, great honour and riches, how little these can stead

them against the wrath of an angry God. So loath is man to submit

to God's remedy ; he laboureth all that he can to patch up his sorry

happiness, and is very unwilling to confess his misery ; he turneth and

windeth every way, and seeketh help from the creature before he will

be brought to implore aid from grace ; he will use all means within

his grasp and reach, till his despair teach him to return from whence

he fell, and that it is better to seek God's favour than continue his vain

pursuits : Hosea ii. 7, ' I will return to my first husband, for then it

was better with me than now.'

Secondly, Why many inventions ?

1. In opposition to that one straight line which leadeth to true

happiness. Christ telleth us, ' One thing is necessary,' Luke x. 42,

namely, to serve and please God, and enjoy him for ever. To enjoy

God and please him is that one thing which is enough. But error is

manifold ; though there be but one path to heaven, yet there are many

ways of sinning and going to hell. Every man hath his several course

and way of sinning: Isa. liii. 6, 'All we like sheep hav^e gone astray ;

we have turned every one to his own way ; ' a'ccording to the several

constitutions and business and affairs of men. Velle suum cuique est,

nee voto vivitur uno. As the channel is cut, so corrupt nature in every

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man findeth an issue and passage. No sin cometli amiss to a carnal

heart, yet some are more kindly and suitable ; one is worldly, another

sensual, another proud and ambitious. It is our wisdom to observe

our own haunt, and the tender parts of our souls : Ps. xviii. 23, \* I was

upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.' All sin is

but carnal self-love disguised ; or many, with respect to the successive

entertainment of divers sins : Titus iii. 3, ' Serving divers lusts and

pleasures.' Sins take the throne by turns. By age and experience

men grow weary of former vanities, but others are adopted into their

room, and so their lusts are but exchanged, not abrogated. Now we

are fallen from our primitive happiness, we multiply means and cares ;

yea, at the same time the pleasures of the flesh draw the sinner several

ways : James iv. 1, ' Whence come wars and fightings among you ?

Come they not hence, even of your lusts, which war in your members ? '

Desire of riches contradicts idleness, and the toilsome cares and labours

of this world that ease which the flesh affecteth ; disgraceful lusts are

contradicted by ambition and pride.

2. Many inventions, in opposition to that simplicity and singleness

of heart which original rectitude did include. The heart of man was

originally of one constant, uniform frame ; but now, instead of simpli-

city, there is a multiplicity. The heart now is never right till it be

one with God. Therefore David prays, Ps. Ixxxvi. 11, ' Unite my heart

to fear thy name.' He begs a heart entirely fixed upon God, who, as

our great end, uniteth all our afi'ections in this one scope, that we might

jDlease him, and enjoy him as our chief good and last end ; that fixeth

man's mind ; which otherwise will be tossed up and down in perpetual

uncertainties, and distracted by a multiplicity of ends and objects, that

it cannot continue in any composed and settled frame. No one part

of our lives will agree with another. A divided heart breedeth an un-

certain life : James i. 8, 'A double-minded man is unstable in all his

ways ; ' the whole not firmly knit together by the power of the last end

running through all ; so that our lives are a mere lottery, the fancies

and appetites we are governed by being jumbled together by chance.

The heart by natural corruption is loosed from God, and distracted with

variety of vain objects, which offer themselves to our senses. The

interest of the world and flesh is taken into competition with God ; and

whilst the heart rangeth abroad, it is such a variable and double heart

as will never be true to God ; and while men are tossed from one

dependence to another, and do not firmly adhere to God, being weaned

from the vanities of the world, they are carried hither and thither by

their perverse affections, sometimes to one thing, sometimes to another.

3. With respect to that one object who alone was sufficient for us.

They that have left God, and would find happiness in the creatures,

need many creatures before they can patch up any sorry tolerable

happiness to themselves. One broken cistern can yield but little

refreshing, Jer. ii. 13 ; so many disappointments make them look more

about. God made man for himself, capable to enjoy him ; now he is

an infinite eternal good. We desire an infinite eternal good, still such

as may quiet and satisfy us ; therefore man being made capable of

enjoying God, who is infinite, and finding himself not satisfied with a

few or many things, always seeketh after new things. Here is his

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error, that he seeketh after that which is infinite, among those things

which are finite, and so wandereth up and down groping for an eternal

good : Acts xvii. 26, 27, ' And hath made of one blood all nations of

men for to dwell on the face of the earth ; and determined the times

before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations ; that they should

seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though

he be not far from every one of us.' As we depart from God, we are

gone from unity, and are left distracted and confounded in the multi-

tude of the creatures. • Quaerunt in varietate creaturarum, quod

amiserunt in unitaie creatoris — They seek in the variety of the

creatures what they have lost in the one God.

Use 1. Is to represent the misery of fallen man, that we may take

up a lamentation for him, and bewail our departure from life and

blessedness, and forsaking it for sin and misery. They have cast off

God, and set at nought his counsel, and given themselves over to many

fruitless and hurtful inventions. For alas ! man being left to the

counsel of his own desperately wicked and deceitful heart, what doth he

look after ? What may be expected from him but that all his thoughts

and projects should be for the satisfaction of his lusts, to serve his pride,

avarice, revenge, pomp, pleasure, and vanity ? God is not in all his

thoughts ; he cares not whether he be pleased or displeased, honoured

or dishonoured.

Here consider the disorder and danger of this state.

1. The disorder introduced hereby.

[1.] The creature is preferred before God ; for all their projects are

how to live at ease in the world, not how to please and enjoy God ; and

so they ' forsake their own mercies for observing lying vanities,' Jonah

ii. 8. They seek an happiness apart from God, who is 'their own mercy ; \*

that is, they might have had from him all that which the mercy of an

all-sufficient God can afford. And for what do they forsake him ? For

' lying vanities.' In regard of their emptiness they are vanities ; and

in regard of their disappointing our expectations, ' lying vanities.' They

do deceive us with a vain show, and in the issue miserable disappoint-

ments. And mark, these must be observed, followed after with a great

solicitude and care, whereas the other is freely offered to us ; it is our

own in the offer, and it is our own fault if it be not our own in the

choice. So Jer. ii. 13, ' My people have committed two evils ; they have

forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed them out

cisterns, broken cisterns, that will hold no water.' God is the well-

spring of all manner of good, a fountain that runneth constantly, and

never faileth ; and such would he have been to us if we had continued

loyal and dutiful to him. Besides the leaving of the ever-living, all-

sufficient, and ever-flowing fountain of all good, they have betaken

themselves to poor paltry vanities, that will yield them no real and solid

refreshment.

[2.] The body is preferred before the soul ; for all our inventions run

upon the body and the pleasing the flesh ; Eom. xiii. 14, ' And make

not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof But the precious

and immortal soul is little thought of and cared for. They sit down

well appaid'with carnal contentments : Luke xii. 19, ' Soul, take thine

ease, eat, drink, and be merry ; thou hast much goods laid up for many

years.' They do not rise to any thoughts of an higher life, never think

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of tlicat iminortal soul tliey carry about with them, but only use it to

cater for the body, that the body may be well fed, and clothed, and

adorned. Our business is to seek rest lor our souls ; if we would invent

and consider, we should look after that: Jer. vi. 16, 'Ask for the old

paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest

for your souls,' We are never in our wits again till this be the project

and design we travel with. But alas ! this is not thought of. The

neglected soul may easily complain of hard usage. What are our

thoughts but what shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and how shall

we make a fair show in the flesh ? If we look after the soul, it is to

adorn it with secular learning and wisdom, which is but to serve the

flesh in a more cleanly manner, and to gratify oiu- worldly ends, our

pride, or our interests. We look after flowers rather than fruit ; those

adornments of the soul which are for pomp rather than life, and for

present use rather than eternal benefit.

[3.] They prefer earth before heaven and time before eternity. All

their business is rather to make sure of the prosperity of the body than

the salvation of the soul. And though it is plain, and they do or may

know and see that this will not cure their diseases, nor ease their pain,

nor save them from the grave nor hell, yet because riches will help them

to live in pleasure and reputation with the world, and in plenty of all

things, and to have their will as long as they live, that is enough for

them, for they care not for the pleasures and happiness which are to be

enjoyed in the other world. Though death and the grave may put an

end to all they have here much sooner than they imagined, yet their

minds and hearts are set upon these things as their happiness, and will

not be diverted from them ; they have their portion in this world : Ps.

xvii. 14, ' From men which are thy hand, Lord ; from men of the

world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest

with thy hid treasure : they are full of children, and leave the rest of

their substance to their babes.'

2. The danger. As it is a base thing to act so disproportionably to

the light of reason, so within a little while it will be a bitter thing : Jer.

ii. 19, ' Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings

shall reprove thee ; know therefore and see, that it is an evil thing and

bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is

not in thee.' Sure it will be bitterness in the end to forsake the Lord,

and walk in the inventions and imaginations of thine own heart. You

are posting to your eternal misery, where a reflection upon your evil

choice will be the greatest part of your misery : Isa. 1. 11, ' Behold, all

ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks ; walk

in the light of your fire, and the sparks which ye have kindled : this

shall 3'e have of my hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow.' The allusion

is not to such a fire as burnetii and consumeth, but such as doth warm

and cherish. Those stakes wliich wicked worldlings rely upon for

succour will in time prove their greatest calamities, and those tufts and

fuzes which they promised the greatest comfort to themselves from

will occasion the greatest sorrow ; the brands which they heaped

together will affoixl them little heat and light, but smoke to vex

and choke them. He that will warm himself by his own sparks can

expect no other issue from his own rash folly and God's righteous

vengeance.

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Use 2. To exhort us not only to lament it, but to come out of this

condition. And here to this end —

1. Kenounce that crooked carnal wisdom which is man's undoing.

Man at first seeking to be wise, became a fool. Now ' he must be a fool,

that he may be wise,' 1 Cor. iii. 18 ; a fool to the flesh and the world,

that he may be wise to God.

2. Give up yourselves to God in covenant, as your Lord and felicity.

A man is never in his wits till he cometli to this : Ps. xxii. 27, ' All

the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord.' Our

misery is in departing from him, so our happiness is in putting ourselves

into his hands again. Now you must give up yourselves to him as

your supreme Lord and chief felicity or happiness, depending upon him

as your happiness, obeying him as your Lord ; obey his counsel though

against your own reason, and stick to his ways though they seem to be

against your present happiness. Remember that duty is safety, that

cleaving to God with loss is better than departing from him with

seeming gain ; and God, that outwits the subtle designer, doth take

care of and preserve the plain and simple person, that avowedly adhereth

to him, when all the contrivances of foolish and worldly-minded men

prove vain and unprosperous. Your obedience will be your safety.

Dependence and obedience do mutually cherish one another ; the more

we depend, the more we obey ; and the more we obey, the more we

depend ; and so they discover one another. Let us show our depen-

dence on God, that in all the changes of this life, by a firm, fast adhe-

rence and resolution, we stick fast to God, whatever comes of it, using

no means but what he allows, and counting his favour our happiness.

They that depend not on him are left to their own inventions.

3. Your great design must be to approve yourselves to God : 2 Cor.

T. 9, ' Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may

be accepted of the Lord.'

Use 3. It showeth what need we have to give up ourselves to the

conduct of God's word and Spirit. Man is so full of his own inventions

that none can be safe but they that depend upon God for direction :

James i. 5, \* If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.' Such a

fallible ci'eature as man is in point of truth, such an impotent creature

is he in point of power, such an indigent creature in point of happiness

and self-sufficiencies, such a sinful corrupt creature, so full of imagina-

tions and lusts, so many crooked dispositions in his heart, so many wiles

to justify his irregular choice, so many temptations, and they represented

with such sophistry, that he should be willing to accept of direction.

Yea, the people of God themselves have need of the direction of the

word, in regard of the weakness of their understandings and the per-

verseness of their affections.

1. Our understandings are so weak, that we are ignorant of many

things necessary to be known ; for we know but in part. If we know

something in general, we fail in particular application ; both in general

and in particular. If we know things habitually, we do not actually

consider them, being hindered by multitude of business, or the violence

of temptations, or lulled asleep by the pleasures of the flesh : Eccles. v.

1, 'They consider not that they do evil.'

2. Our affections are perverse, and so addicted rather to be led by

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sense than right reason, that there is great danger lest, seeing and ap-

proving that which is better, we follow what is worse, contrary to our

knowledge and conscience : Kom. ii. 18, ' And knowest his will, and

approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of

the law.' And therefore the best had need to pray with David : Ps.

cxliii. 10, ' Teach nie to do thy will, for thou art my God : thy Spirit

is good ; lead me into the land of uprightness.'

SERMON UPON ECCLESIASTES XII. 7.

Then shall the dmt return to the earth as it loas, and the spirit shall

return unto God that gave it. — Eccles. xii. 7.

In the beginning of this chapter Solomon presseth us to remember our

creator while yet young : many have been too late acquainted with

God, but never any too soon. His arguments are —

1. From the wearisome evils of old age, very rhetorically described

in ver. 2-6, ' While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars be

not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain : in the day when

the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow

themselves, and the grinders cease, because they are few, and those that

look out of the windows be darkened ; and the doors shall be shut

in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low ; and he shall

rise up at the voice of the bird ; and all the daughters of music shall

be brought low : also when they shall be afraid of that which is high,

and fear shall be in the way, and the almond-tree shall flourish, and

the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail ; because man

goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets : or ever

the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher

be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.' That

is a time of expense, and needeth cordials rather than work and service.

Therefore, while the prints of God's creating bounty are fresh upon us,

it is best to exercise ourselves to godliness.

2. From the certain approach of death, as the final issue of the pre-

sent life; therefore we should prepare for this change, think of God

betimes, and secure a better life before this come to the last period.

This argument is in the text, ' Then shall the dust return to the earth,'

&c. Man consists of a body and a soul ; the text telleth you what shall

become of both.

1. Here is represented the state of the body after death.

2. The state of the soul.

1. The state of the body ; it shall be resolved into the matter out

of which it was made. Dust it was in its composition, and dust it

shall be in its dissolution : \* Then shall the dust return to the earth as

it was.'

2. The state of the soul in the other world : \* And the spirit shall

return to God that gave it.' Where —

[1.] The nature of it, or what kind of substance the soul is ; it is a

spirit, or an immaterial substance.

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[2.] The author of it, who is God ; he gave it ; he gave us the body

too, but the soul in a more especial manner.

[3.] The disposal of it, or in what state it remaineth after death ; it

returneth to God. It is not extinguished when the body is dissolved into

dust, nor doth it vanish into the air, but returneth to God.

All true wisdom consisteth in the knowledge of God and ourselves.;

we cannot know ourselves unless we know the parts of which we do

consist. This text giveth you a right notion of them both ; for it telleth

you what they are, and what shall become of them. They are con-

joined, but distinct ; and therefore, when the union betwixt them is

dissolved, they go several ways. We are concerned in them both, but

more in the soul, which hath the pre-eminence above the body. The

one is visible, and therefore its changes are known ; but the other is

invisible, and therefore more unknown ; but the state of both is equally

certain, for as certainly as the body returneth to the dust, so doth the

soul return to God.

First, For the first branch, ' Then shall the body return to the earth

as it was,' I shall not stay upon it.

1. It giveth you the right notion of the body ; it is but dust moulded

up into a comely shape, which is an effect of God's wisdom and power,

to make such a curious frame out of the dust of the ground. We read

in the history of the plagues of Egypt, that the magicians were not

able so much as to bring forth lice out of the dust of the ground, Exod.

viii. 18, 19 ; but God could raise such a beautiful structure as man's

body is. But though it speaketh God's power, yet it showeth our frailty.

Our body is here called ' dust ; ' it is not brass, or iron, or stone, or

stiff clay, but dust, and shall return to the earth as it was. Dust hath

no coherence or consistence, but is easily scattered with every puff of

wind ; so is our earthly or dusty tabernacle with every blast of God's

displeasure : Gen. xviii. 27, ' Behold, now I have taken upon me to

speak to the Lord, who am but dust and ashes ; ' Isa. xl, 15, ' Behold,

the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and they are counted as the

small dust of the balance.'

2. What shall become of it ? ' It shall return to the earth as it was ; '

Gen. iii. 19, ' Dust tliou art, and unto dust shalt thou return ; ' Ps. civ.

29, ' Thou takest away their breath ; they die and return to their dust ; '

Ps. cxlvi. 4, ' He returneth to his earth.' Which should teach us to

take care for a better estate : 2 Cor. v, 1, ' For we know that if our

earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of

God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' The

soul dwelleth now in an earthly house ; it should look out for a more

glorious mansion.

Secondly, Of the soul three things are spoken, which are so many

arguments to prove its immortality, which is the subject I mainly

intend —

1. The kind of it ; it is a spirit. The matter of which the body is

made is the earth, and so it is still maintained : ' He bringetli forth food

for them out of the earth,' Ps. civ. 14 ; and so breedeth and casteth

out corruption every day ; but the soul is a simple substance, not com-

pounded of corruptible principles, and therefore cannot be resolved into

any. The body liveth by the soul and from the soul, but the soul de-

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pendetli upon nothing but God. The argument is good ; it is incor-

poreal and immaterial, therefore immortal ; for mortality hath reference

to some compounded substance, which hath in itself some principle and

cause of motion, as well as a material and' passive part, that may be

moved by that principle, and signifieth no more but a capacity of the

material and passive part to be deprived of the inward and active prin-

ciple of its motion. In short, if the soul die, it must be from the violence

of some external power, or some principles of corruption within ; not

by violence without : Mat. x. 28, ' And fear not them which kill the

body, but are not able to kill the soul.' And it hath no principles of

corruption, whereby it should destroy itself, for it is a spirit.

2. The author ; 'God gave it.' Our bodies are also his v/orkmanship,

but the soul is immediately framed by God, both in the first creation

and the continual propagation of mankind. At the first creation, we

read the body was created out of the earth or the dust of the ground,

but the soul out of nothing, but immediately breathed into Adam by

God : Gen. ii. 7, ' And the Lord formed man out of the dust of the

ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became

a living soul.' And still the soul is immediately created by God :

Zech. xii. 1, ' He stretcheth forth the heavens, and laid the foundation

of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.' The creating

of the soul is reckoned among the works of his omnipotency : Heb. xii.

9, ' Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us,

and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in sub-

jection unto the Father of spirits ? ' The fathers of our flesh are

distinguished from the Father of spirits. Our natural parents under

God are the instruments of our natural and earthly being, as they

procured the matter out of which our bodies were derived ; they are

T^9 (TapKo<i '7raTepa<i, ' the fathers of our flesh,' but God is irdrrjp irvev-

fidvcov, ' The Father of our spirits.' The spirit of man runneth not in

the material channel of fleshly descent; it is not educed out of the

power of the matter, but immediately made by God.

3. The disposal of it. When it flitteth out of the body, ' it returneth

to God ; ' that is, to God as a judge, to be disposed of by him into its

everlasting estate. God challengeth souls as his, or belonging to his

government, as universal king and judge of the world : Ezek. xviii. 4,

' All souls are mine.' He will give to every one according to his works,

adjudging and sentencing them either to heaven, the mansion of the

blessed, or 'spirits of just men made perfect,' Heb. xii. 23, or to hell,

the place where damned spirits are kept in prison : 1 Peter iii. 19,

' He went and preached unto the spirits in prison.' The body is not

said to return to God, but to return to the earth as it was ; but the

soul is said to return to God ; therefore the whole man dieth not, and

is not extinguished with the body. All these particulars import the

immortality of the soul.

DocL That the soul of man is immortal, and dieth not when the

body dieth, but remaineth in that estate into which it is disposed by

God.

First, There is a threefold immortality —

1. An essential immortality, which iraporteth an absolute necessity

of existence ; so it is said, 1 Tim. vi. 16, ' God only hath immortality.'

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2. There is a natural immortality, which hath a foundation in tlie

being of the creatures ; so the angels and spirits of men are in their

nature immortal, so as they cannot be destroyed by any second cause,

and have no principle of corruption in themselves, though by the power

of God they might be annihilated.

3. A gratuitous immortality, or by gift and courtesy ; so the body

of Adam in innocency, non conditione corporis, but henejiiio condiioris ;

not by the condition of his body, but the bounty of his maker : so the

bodies of the faithful after the resurrection shall be immortal.

Secondly, Let us prove this, that the soul is immortal, and subsisteth

after the separation. The point is necessary to be discussed ; for till

we are established in the belief of this truth, we shall fear no greater

judgments than what do befall us in this world, nor expect greater

mercies than what we enjoy here ; and so never take care to reconcile

ourselves to God, or to deny the profits of the world and the pleasures

of sense, that we may attain a better estate. An holy life will never

else be endeavoured or produced to any good increase ; for such as

men's belief is of an immortal or never-dying condition in heaven or

hell, such will the bent of their hearts and course of life be ; there-

fore the salvation of our souls is said to be the end of our faith : 1

Peter i. 9, 'Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your

souls.' There the ' end ' signifieth either the scope or the event ; if

you take it for the scope, the great end of faith is to lead us from all

worldly happiness to an estate after this life : Heb. x. 39, \* But we are

not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to

the saving of the soul.' Sense saith, Spare the flesh ; but faith saith,

Save the soul. This is the scope and mark to which it tendeth. If

you take it for the event and issue of things, all our believing, praying,

enduring suffering, rejoicing, pleasing, and glorifying of God, endeth

in this, the saving of our souls. Therefore let us see how it may be

proved, both by scripture and by the light of reason.

I. By scripture, which is the proper means to beget faith. Dives

desired one to go from the dead to tell his brethren of an everlasting

estate of torment and bliss : Luke xvi. 27, 28, ' I pray thee, father,

that thou wouldst send him to my father's house ; for I have five

brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this

place of torment ; ' intimating thereby that the cause of his own sin

and theirs was unbelief, or a not being persuaded of a world to come.

Alas ! we have but an obscure prospect of an estate after this life, and

therefore indulge sensual delights. But what cure and remedy? Dives

thought a spectre or apparition would be the best cure of this atheism ;

but Abraham or Christ thought otherwise : he referreth them to Moses

and the prophets ; that is, the holy scriptures, for all the books then

written and received in the church are comprised in that expression.

Since we arc sick of the same disease, this will be our best remedy.

We are told, 2 Tim. i. 10, that Christ ' hath brought life and immor-

tality to light through the gospel' It is the privilege of the divine

revelation to represent this truth with more clearness and certainty.

1. With more clearness. There is a mist upon eternity, which is

only dispelled by the light of the gospel. Reasons from nature may

in some measure acquaint us with an everlasting estate, yet what kind

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of happiness it is that attendeth the godly, and what misery shall befall

the wicked, it telleth us but little ; but the scripture sets down enough

to invite our hopes and awaken our fears. Heathens had some conceits

of Elysian fields and places of blessedness, and some obscure caverns

appointed to be places of torment, fitted to work men into a blind

superstition ; but the word of God hath given us such clear discoveries

of future happiness and misery as that we may know what to hope

for and what to fear ; and if well improved, will breed in us a true

spirit of godliness.

2. In regard of certainty. Nature may give us some dark guesses

and uncertain conjectures, so as the heathens, that had no other light,

were ready to say.and unsay in a breath what they had spoken con-

cerning our estate to come ; but the gospel is a sure word, apt to beget

faith, not a wavering opinion. Go to sense, which judgeth by the

outside of things : Eccles. iii. 21, ' Who knoweth the spirit of a man

that goeth upward, and the spirit of a beast that goeth downward to

the earth ? ' By sense we see mankind, as the beasts, to be conceived,

foriiied in the belly, brought forth, nourished, to grow in strength and

stature, wax old, and die ; by the eye we can discern no external sen-

sible difference ; so that if we consult with mere sense, all religion and

hope is gone. Go to reason, and that will tell us indeed that there is

a difference between a man and a beast; that man knoweth and desire th

things which the beasts do not and cannot ; and that the reasonable

soul hath operations independent of matter and of the body, and there-

fore it is probable it can subsist without the body ; for the manner of

working showeth the manner of being. But there is cold comfort in a

bare may-be. The gospel showeth it shall be. As a glass, it doth

discover this state to us ; as a rule, it guideth us to the enjoyment of

it ; as a motive, it persuadeth us to seek after it ; as a charter and grant,

it doth assure our title to it : it is full fraught and thick sown with this

kind of seed.

Therefore let us see what the light of scripture saith to this point.

[1.] It discovereth to us everywhere the doctrine of the eternal

recompenses, two places, and two estates, wherein souls abide after death,

heaven and hell : heaven, the mansion of the just : John xiv. 2, ' In my

Father's house are many mansions.' And hell, the place of torments:

Mark ix. 44, ' They are cast into hell, where their worm dieth not, and

the fire is not quenched.' And as soon as the soul passeth out of the

body, it is in one of these : Luke xvi. 22, 23, ' And it came to pass that

the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom ;

the rich man died also, and was buried : and in hell he lifted up his

eyes, being in torments.' He had a pompous funeral here upon earth;

for it is said, ' he died, and was buried,' which is not said of Lazarus.

These are truths not spoken of once or twice, but everywhere.

[2.] The covenant showeth it, which is God's solemn transaction with

his subjects, and consists of precepts or laws, invested with the sanction

of promises and threatenings. Christ argues thus : Luke xx. 37, 38,

' Now, that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he

calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the

God of Jacob; for he is not the God of the dead, but of the living.'

He proves the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body.

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(1.) His commands ; all of them imply such an estate, and some of

them express it. All imply it ; as faith in Christ. We believe in his name

to obtain eternal life: John xx. 31, ' But these things are written, that

you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that

believing you might have have life through his name ; ' and John v.

24, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath

everlasting life.' Kepentance : Acts iii. 19, ' Repent ye, therefore, and

be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of

refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.' Therefore it is

called ' repentance unto salvation,' 2 Cor. vii. 10 ; and ' repentance to

life ; ' Acts xi. 18, ' Then hath God also to the gentiles granted repent-

ance unto life.' So new obedience : Heb. v. 9, ' He became the author

of eternal salvation to all that obey him ; ' Acts xxvi. 7, ' Unto which

promise the twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to

come.' And some express it : He hath commanded us ' not to labour

for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto

everlasting life,' John vi. 27 ; ' Not to lay up treasures upon earth,

where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal ;

but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven,' Mat. vi. 19, 20 ; and

\* Strive to enter in at the strait gate,' Luke xiii. 24. Now, if there were

no such thing, all these commands would be in vain. Would God

flatter us into a fool's paradise, and command us to look after a thing

of nought ?

(2.) The sanction. And there — (1.) The threatening, which is dam-

nation, or the second death : Mark xvi. 16, ' He that believeth not shall

be damned.' Is this a vain scarecrow ? and need God govern his sub-

jects by a cheat or a lie ? (2.) The promises ; he promiseth eternal

life to them that obey the gospel and seek after this immortality : Eom.

ii. 7, ' To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for

glory, honour, and immortality, eternal life ; ' Eev. ii. 10, ' Be thou

faithful to death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' Be faithful in

making good your baptismal vow, improving talents, withstanding

temptations. So to comfort us against fears, losses, and sorrows :

Luke xii. 32, ' Fear not, little flock ; it is your Father's good pleasure

to give you a kingdom.' Now, would God overreach us, and lead us

with chimeras and vain hopes ?

[3.] The mediator of the new covenant showethit; his coming from

heaven, the place of souls, the region of spirits, and his going thither

again at his ascension.

(1.) His coming from heaven. Wherefore was Christ incarnate, and

clothed witli our flesh, but that we might be apparelled with his glory ?

John X. 10, ' I am come, that they might have life, and that thoy

might have it more abundantly.' To lay a foundation for our eternal

happiness.

(2.) His going to heaven, his entering into that glory he spake of,

and so giving a visible demonstration to the world of the reality of it :

1 Peter i. 21, ' Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from

the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope may be in God.'

There he remaineth at God's right hand, to open heaven to all believers.

Christ, when he died, recommended his spirit to the Father : Luke

xxiii. 46, ' Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' And so

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do believers to Christ : Acts vii, 59, ' Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'

If the soul did perish with the bodj, why should we commit it to

Christ?

[4.] The Holy Spirit is given to form and prepare us for this estate,

therefore by consequence to assure us of it : 2 Cor. v. 5, ' Now he that

liath wrought us for this self-same thing is God, who hath also given unto

us the earnest of the Spirit.'

(1.) Look to the graces of the Spirit. We are made partakers of

the divine nature to draw us off from the world to heaven : 2 Peter i.

4, ' Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that

by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped

the corruption that is in the world through lust.' Now will God fit the

soul for such a blessed estate when this life is ended ; and shall we

never enjoy it ? If we consider the soul not only as being an inward

principle of life and sense, but also of reason, it proveth the immortality

of it, much more as sanctified and ennobled by grace : Eom. viii. 10,

' The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of right-

eousness.' Believers have a life wrought in them by the Spirit, which

is the pledge and beginning of eternal life ; for they are sanctified and

purified, and fit to be brought into the sight and presence of God. The

apostle doth not draw his argument there from the immortality of the

soul, for that is common to good and bad ; the wicked liave a soul that

will survive the body, but little to their comfort ; their immortality

is not an happy immortality ; but he taketh his argument from the

new life wrought in us by the Spirit, which is the beginning and

earnest of a blessed immortality : the new life is an eternal principle of

happiness.

(2.) Look to the comforts of the Spirit, from the love of God and the

hopes of glory : 1 Peter i. 8, ' Whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom,

though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice witli joy unspeak-

able and full of glory ; ' Eom. v. 2, ' And rejoice in hope of the glory

of God.' Now is it a fancy that holy men rejoice in ? Look, as the '

terrors of a wounded conscience are the foretastes of hell-torments,

called somewhere the pains of hell, so the comforts of the Spirit are the

first-fruits of heavenly joys, to set us a-longing for more : Rom. viii.

23, ' And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits

of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the

adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.' Now by all these things

let us rouse up a drowsy faith, and triumph over that carnal atheism

and unbelief that worketh in our hearts. Is the whole scripture false,

and the christian religion a well-devised fable, our Eedeemer an impos-

tor, and the covenant of God a dream, and the comforts of the Spirit

fanatical illusions ? And were they all deceived that embraced the

christian religion, that took such pains in subduing the flesh, so freely

hazarded their interests, and life itself, on the promises of Christ and

the hopes of another world ? Are the wisest men the world ever saw

fools, and the ordinances of Christ a customary superstition, and these

rejoicings and foretastes of the children of God a mere deceit and im-

posture ? Surely it cannot be. Therefore this is true, that the soul

dieth not with the body, but is in that estate into which God dispos-

eth it.

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IL By the light of reason.

First, I shall urge such arguments as the scripture directeth us to.

1. From the nature of the soul. It is a spirit, and such a principle

of life as hath light in it : John i. 4, ' In him was life, and the life was

the light of men/ The soul of man differeth from the soul of a beast,

for that hath only life and sense in it ; but this hath light, and there-

fore was designed to more noble and glorious ends than merely to

quicken and enliven the body. The soul of the beast is murtal, because it

is created only to serve the body, and knoweth nothing, desireth nothing,

delighteth in nothing but what belongeth to the pleasure and welfare

of the body ; but now the soul of man apprehendeth things past, pre-

sent, and to come, is capable of tongues, arts, and sciences, and things

abstract from bodily sense ; it can discourse about God, angels, and all

kind of spiritual beings, about eternity and immortalit}^ and propound

and debate questions and doubts concerning the world to come. The

beasts look only to their food and the propagation of their kind ; they

know nothing, and can conceive nothing, of man's affairs; but now man's

soul is not only capable of being ennobled and improved by moral

virtues, and such things as fit us for human society, but is capable also

of conformity to God, by being made holy and upright, and of com-

munion with him in holy duties and acts of grace : 1 John i. 3, ' And

truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.'

The beasts desire not the company of men, as we do of God and of the

blessed spirits. In short, there is a greater affinity between the souls

of men and angels than between the souls of beasts and men : Ps. viii.

5, ' Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels.' Well, then,

can it be imagined the souls of men, furnished with such capacities of

understanding, are nothing but a little puff of air, that is dissipated in

dying, or a little vital heat, that is extinguished with the corj)oreal

matter, or only the vigour of the blood ? That soul that can so much

soar aloft above the interests and concernments of the body, and take

such a marvellous delight and contentment in spiritual things as the

view of all manner of truths, must that follow the state of the body ?

Shall that creature that cometh so near the angels die like the beasts ?

or rather, become like the angels of God that always behold his face ?

Yea, that creature that draweth so near to God in the majesty of his

person and the abilities of his mind, that was created after God's own

image, and for the worship and service and enjoyment of God, shall he

die as the beasts that perish ? It cannot be imagined.

2. The scripture mentions words that imply its independence of the

body, or that it doth not so wholly depend on the body that it cannot

subsist and act without it ; they go several ways, as in the text :

3 John 2, ' I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be

in health, as thy soul prospereth ; ' 2 Cor. iv. 16, ' For which cause we

faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is

renewed day by day.' And experience teacheth the truth of these

things, that the body and soul seem sometimes to have no communion

with one another, so different are their functions and offices. You

shall often see men decrepit in all the members of the body, who yet

have the motions of their minds as strong and as nimble as when in

perfect health ; and when they are upon the borders of death, without

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vigour and pulse, their understandings are more sublime than before,

and their thoughts more refined. It is true the indispositions of the

body clog the soul in things that are to be acted by the body ; but in

what the soul acteth apart, in the midst of aches and pains their

strength of mind is entire, and their comforts never more raised than

in bodily weakness. Therefore it lives and acts apart from the body.

3. The scripture directs us to this argument, that this is the general

persuasion of all mankind, tliat there is a life after death; and it

instanceth in that that is most sensible, and of every day's experience,

our desires and fears.

[1.] Desires. The soul hath a natural desii-e of immortality, which,

if it should not enjoy, that desire were in vain ; but God doth nothing

in vain. The apostle intimateth this, how men feel about for some-

thing eternal and infinite : Acts xvii. 27, ' That they should seek the

Lord, if haply they might feel after him.' Every man would be happy,

and eternally happy ; for otherwise he would be tormented with a fear

of losing that which lie counteth his happiness. See Ps. iv. 6, ' Who

will show us any good ? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy counte-

nance upon us;' Mat. xiii. 45, 46, 'The kingdom of heaven is like unto

a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one

pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it; '

John vi. 34, 'Lord, evermore give us this bread;' Num. xxiii. 10,

' Let me die the death of the righteous.' Other creatures besides man

are satisfied with what they have here ; but the soul of man is satisfied

with nothing but the eternal enjoyment of what is good, an immortal

estate, an infinite good. Every one that loveth himself would be

liappy, and, if he could, everlastingly happy. The saints, and those

that are taught of God, pitch upon the right way: Ps. xvii. 15, 'As

for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness ; I shall be satisfied,

when I awake, with thy likeness.' But this is the universal inclination

of all mankind. Whence cometh this desire to be so universal, if there

be nothing to satisfy it ? Every natural appetite was given us for

seme purpose, and have things designed for their satisfaction ; and

therefore there is that immortality we all seek after, not in our bodies,

they must return to their earth ; not in fancy, that is a shadow ; this

is like the pleasure which those take that want children in playing

with little dogs : it lieth in the soul, in the eternal enjoyment of God.

[2.] Fears, which presage and foretell such an estate to our great

disquiet. Conscience fears a judgment after this life : Kom. i. 32,

' Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such

things are worthy of death.' And a state of misery to come : Heb.

ii. 1.5, 'Who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to

bondnge.' At death these fears ai-e more active and pungent : 1 Cor.

XV. 56, 'The sting of death is sin;' and surprise the guilty soul with

greater horror and disti'action ; then they are summoned to their great

account. If the soul were mortal, why should men be afraid of tor-

ments after death? They anticipate the miseries of tlie life to come,

not as it puts a period unto their natural comforts, but as it is an

entrance into everlasting miseries.

4. The scripture directs to this argument, the justice of God for

the comfort of the faithful : 2 Thes. i. 5, ' Which is a manifest token

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of the iif;litcoiis judgment of God.' The sufferings of the faithful are

a demonstration of a future estate. There is a God : if there be not a

first and fountain-being, how did we come to be? for nothing can

make itself; or how did the world fall into this order? This God is

just, for all perfections are in the first being. If we deny him to be

just, we deny liim to be God and the governor of the world : Eora.

iii. 5, G, 'Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance ? God forbid ; for

then how shall God judge the world?' Now it is agreeable to the

justice of his government that it should be well with them that do

well, and ill with them that do evil, or that he should make a differ-

ence by rewards and punishments between the wicked and obedient.

It secmeth uncomely when it is otherwise: Prov. xxvi. 1, 'As snow

in summer, and as rain in harvest ; so honour is not seemly for a fool.'

When the wicked are exalted, men look on it as an uncouth thing.

Now this reward and punishment is not fully dispensed in this world,

even in the judgment of them that have no great knowledge of the

heinous nature of sin, and the judgment competent thereunto. Yea,

rather, the best are exercised with poverty, disgrace, scorn, and all

manner of troubles, their persons molested, their names cast out as

odious, when the wicked live in pomp and ease, and oppress them at

their pleasure. Therefore, since God's justice doth not make such a

difference here, there is another life wherein he will do it ; otherwise we

must deny all providence, and that God doth not concern himself in

human affairs, and that a man may break his laws, oppress his people,

and no great harm will come of it : Zeph. i. 12, ' The Lord will not do

good, neither will he do evil ; ' and God would seem indifferent to good

and evil ; yea, rather partial to the evil, and to favour the wicked more

than the righteous, which is blasphemy, and a diminution of God's

goodness and holiness : Ps. xi. 6, 7, ' Upon the wicked he shall rain

snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest ; this shall be the

portion of their cup. But the righteous Lord loveth righteousness,

and his countenance doth behold the upright.' Obedience would be

man's loss and ruin, and so God would be the worst master : 1 Cor.

XV. 19, ' If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men

most miserable.' They that forsake the sinful pleasures of this life,

hazard all their natural interests, row against the stream of flesh and

blood, would be ill provided for by their religion. Therefore there

is another life wherein God will reward his people.

Secondly, I shall urge other arguments for the immortality of the

soul.

1. The capacity of the soul argueth the immortality of it. Now it

is capable — (1.) Of civil arts ; (2.) Of owning the distinction between

good and evil; (3.) Of knowing immortality and matters of everlasting

consequence; (4.) Of knowing God and his attributes; (5.) Of the

divine nature, which consists in the knowledge and love of God ;

(6.) Of a sweet familiar communion with him. Let us see how all

these capacities will pi'ove the matter in hand.

[1.] The being capable of civil arts will prove the soul's spiritual

substance, far excelling the beasts in dignity ; for it is capable of all

kind of learning and witty inventions ; as grammar, and the knowledge

of tongues and rhetoric, to form and polish our speech ; logic, to refine

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our reason ; ethics, to order our manners ; medicine, to cure the dis-

tempers of our bodies ; by physics, or by natural philosoi)hy, it knoweth

all kind of things, all ranks of beings, from God and angels to the

smallest worm ; yea, it acquireth such skill as to make use of all

creatures for its own benefit : James iii. 7, ' For every kind of beasts,

and of birds, and of serpents, and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath

been tamed of mankind.' The power and skill of man is large, and

reacheth through the whole creation ; by one means or other man

mastereth them. Now what doth this signify but that man hath a soul

different from the souls of the beasts? Job xxxv. 11, 'He teacheth

us more than the beasts of the field, and maketh us wiser than the

fowls of heaven.' And that Avill contribute much to the matter in

hand. Solomon puts the question, Eccles. iii. 21, ' Who knoweth the

spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of a beast that goeth

downward to the earth ? ' Mark, there he asserts that the spirit of the

man goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast goeth downward ; there

is an ascent ascribed to the one, and a descent to the other ; upward

implieth heaven and heavenly things ; downward, the earth and earthly

things. The human soul ascendeth to God, the universal judge of all

the world, whose throne is in heaven; but the soul of the beasts

taketh its lot among all earthly things, which are at length resolved

into earth, water, and air. In the creation, God is said to breathe into

man the spirit of life ; not so of the beast. So in the dissolution ; the

one returneth to God, the other leaveth off to exist, and when they

die, they are no more.

[2.] It is capable of owning the distinction between moral good and

evil. He that doth not acknowledge it is unworthy the name of man ;

for to love or hate God is not indifferent ; nor to kill a neighbour, or

hunt an hare in the woods ; to use lawful matrimony, or for a man to

pollute himself either with promiscuous or incestuous embraces. Now,

if our souls differed not from the soul of a beast, they could have no

such apprehension or conception. The beasts know pain and pleasure,

but they have no knowledge of virtue and vice, as is sensible to every

one that considereth them; but man hath: Eom. ii. 14, 15, 'For when

the gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained

in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which

show the work of the law written in their hearts.' Well, then, man

hath a life beyond this, a further end of his actions than a beast, which

is to approve himself to God, to whom he must give an account,

whether he hath done good or evil ; for a conscience supposeth a law,

and a law supposeth a sanction both of reward and punishment, and a

sanction a judge, to whom a man is accountable. And if man were

but an higher and wiser sort of beast, he would but differ gradually

from a dog or a swine. Now no man woidd be used as a beast, and made

a slave to any one that can master and tame him, and sold in the

market as a beast ; if this be his lot by his infelicity in the world, he

would look upon it as an uncouth thing, and that it would be to sin

before God to use him so. Therefore there is a distinction between men

and beasts ; men die not as the beasts die.

[3.] They are capable of the knowledge of immortality, and can frame

curious disputes and accurate debates thereof, which showeth they are

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not altogether incapable of the thing itself ; for the beasts know no

other life beyond what they enjoy, and mind no other, and care for no

other ; and therefore the estate of man will be different from theirs.

[4.] Man is capable of knowing God and his attributes, which the

beasts are not, because they were never made to enjoy him : ' He hath

given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true,'

1 John V. 20. Tliey are capable of knowing their relation to God as

his creatures and subjects, and so are obnoxious to his judgment, and

that nothing here can make them happy, and that God alone can do it :

Ps. iv. 6, 7, ' There be many that say, Who will show us any good ?

Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put

gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their

wine increased.' That happiness lieth not in what men ordinarily seek

it in, riches, honours, and pleasures, but in the favour of God ; that here

we do not enjoy him to the full, and that therefore we must seek after

another life ; here we seek God, in the world to come we find him, and

therefore cannot rest in this partial enjoyment. Man is ever seeking

after an immortal blessedness. Now this capacity is not in vain ; the

soul is restless till it find him.

[5.] Man is capable of a divine nature, which consists not only in the

bare knowledge, but love of God : 2 Peter i. 4, ' Whereby are given to

us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be

partakers of the divine nature.' He is capable of the image of God :

Eph. iv. 24, ' And that ye put on the new man, which after God is

created in righteousness and true holiness.'

[6.] Man is capable of a sweet familiar communion with God and

friendship with him: 1 John i. 3, 'And truly our fellowship is with

the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.' Therefore the state of man

dying must needs be different from that of a beast, who hath no

knowledge, no desire, no love to God, no capacity of communion with

him, unless it be in respect of receiving the effects and bounty of his

common providence.

2. The dignity of man : ' God made him a little lower than the angels,

and crowned him with glory and honour,' Ps. viii. 5. Now if he were

not immortal, he would be of all creatures most miserable ; his reason

only would serve to make him capable and apprehensive of the greater

calamity and trouble. Sure it is that man is the masterpiece of this

visible world, in respect of the majesty of his person, the abilities of his

mind, and his sovereignty over all the works of God's hands, all which

are marks of special favour of the creator to man above other creatui-es.

Now, if God hath given to man the next place in order of dignity to the

angels above his other creatures, what would his love signify if he be

in a worse condition than the beasts, and liable to so many cares,

encumbrances, grief, and remorse of conscience, which the beasts are

freed from ? Alas ! considering the calamities of his life, infirmities

of his body, perplexities of his mind, his reason is a sad privilege

to liim, and his torment rather than his blessedness, whilst it only

givetli him a doleful remembrance of what is past, a care about what

is present, and awakens fears of what is to come. The beasts indeed

have a sense of what is present, but no remorse for what is past, no

presage of what is to come ; but man hath all these, a bitter remem-

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brance of sins past ; and for present evils, they are more than those of

the beasts, such as poverty, banishment, imprisonment, slavery, loss of

estate, sundry sicknesses and diseases, and man hath a more bitter sense

and apprehension of them. And for time to come, he hath a foresight

of the end, which the beasts have not : so that we have twenty-fold

more cares and labours than they have, who live in tranquillity and

liberty, and free from those disquiets which vex mankind, and have no

I'emorse to sour their pleasures, either from the afflictive remembrance

of what is past, or solicitude about what is to come. Therefore if our

happiness were here only, man would be less happy than the beasts,

many of whose lives are longer and sweeter, who have a more sincere

use of bodily pleasures. But here is their happiness ; God had pro-

vided some better thing for them to be enjoyed in the other world. It

cannot be imagined that he hath made his noblest creature in the world

with a nature that should be a necessary misery and vexation to itself,

above the calamities incident to the rest of the creatures. The very

apprehensions and desires that a man hath of an higher good would

be a torment and burden to him if there were no calamity else, for he

seeth a better estate which he cannot enjoy ; as an horse tied up from

the provender which is near unto him and cannot reach it. Our nature

inclineth us to know and love that we cannot obtain : we can think

aforehand of our death and abode in darkness, which beasts cannot,

for they are not troubled with these thoughts : yea, we fear miseries

after death, and know not how to be exempted from them. Now it is

incredible that God should make his noblest creature most miserable,

by setting before his eyes a certain death, and possible torments and

miseries after death, and provide no remedy against these things.

3. God governeth men by the hopes and fears of another life, and

therefore such a life there is, and so the souls of men are immortal.

The reason is, because God needeth not to govern the world by deceit

and lying : this would be against his holiness and benignity, and

would destroy the very government he would establish ; for it would

tempt us to insincerity, and to cheating and deceiving others ; for men

are no better than their religion, it were well if they were as good.

The foolish, bad, and ignorant may use such arts; but the wise, holy,

and good would not. In ludicrous things we fright our children with

bugbears and names ; but in such a serious thing as the government

of the world, it cannot be imagined that God should use such an

artifice.

[1.] That God governeth the world by the hopes and fears of another

life is evident, not only by the tenor of the christian religion, where the

covenant between God and men is established by such threatenings and

promises, but by the consent of all nations where government is secured

and upheld by such a persuasion. Now if the soul be not immortal,

and there be not firm reasons to induce us to believe that it is so, why

hath such a conceit been rooted in the minds of men of all nations and

all religions, not only Greeks and Eomans, but barbarians, and people

least civilised ? They all received this opinion from hand to hand,

from their ancestors ; and the nearer men trace it to the oj-iginal of

mankind, the more clear and pressing hath been the conceit thereof.

Lapse of time, which ordinarily decayeth all things, hath not been able

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to deface it out of the minds of men ; the sense of an immortal con-

dition after this life hath ever been accounted the great bridle upon the

world ; and being spread throughout the universe, hath with all for-

wardness been received among all nations, and hath borne up against

all encounters of sin, and hath maintained itself in the midst of those

revolutions of human affairs wherein other truths are lost.

[2.] There is a necessity of this government, as suiting best with

the nature of man, which is much moved by the hopes and fears of

good and evil after death. That man is governed by hopes and fears,

common sense teacheth us ; that the hopes and fears of the present

life are not sufficient to bridle carnal nature, and withstand tempta-

tions, and keep us in the true obedience and love to God to the end,

experience also showeth, because for the satisfaction of our lusts we can

dispense with temporal evils, as the lecher in the Proverbs, chap, v, 11,

' And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.'

Besides, if it were so that these motives of temporal good and evil were

sufficient, man were more to be feared than God, which killeth and

stabbeth all religion at the heart ; for man useth this engine of tem-

poral punishments and inconvenience : they do execution on those that

break their laws. Now Christ teacheth us : Luke xii. 4, 5, ' I say unto

you, my friends. Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after

that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom

you shall fear : Fear him which, after he hath killed, hath power to

cast into hell ; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.'

[3.] The necessity to it appeareth to meet with secret sins, such as

fornication, privy atheism, malice, adultery, murder, perjury, hypocrisy,

treachery, theft, deceit. He that believeth not a life after this may

secretly carry on these sins without impunity. Man cannot see the

heart, or make laws to govern it, therefore no man can know or punish

these secret sins ; therefore, if men can but hide their sins, they are

safe. So for the sins of men powerful in the world ; for who can call

them to an account here for their filthiness or cruelty ? Job xxxiv. 18,

' Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked ? and to princes, Ye are

ungodly ? ' There is no restraint to those who have none above them ;

and all secret wickedness would be committed without fear. So that

to deny the immortality of the soul, or a life after this, would take

away all honesty, and open the flood-gates to all villany and evil

practices. Who would make conscience of entire obedience to God,

enter in by the strait gate, walk in the narrow way, row against the

stream of flesh and blood, work out their salvation with fear and

trembling, and consecrate their time to God, if there were no other

life after this nor happiness to be there expected ? Alas ! we plainly

see the contrary. Who are so lewd and hardened in their sensualities

as they that are tainted with this conceit ? That not only the denial,

but the forgetfulness of this estate worketh this effect. They make

the best of the present life : 1 Cor. xv. 32, ' Let us eat and drink,

for to-morrow we shall die.' Such atheistical thoughts are very

common : ver. 33, ' Be not deceived ; evil communications corrupt good

manners.' But a deep sense of this immortal estate is the fountain of

all sobriety, righteousness, and godliness ; and all that is virtuous and

praiseworthy hath been done in the world upon this account. There-

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fore, who are tlie better men, those that believe the immortality of the

soul, or those that believe it not ? And who are likely to be ia the

right, wicked wretches, or holy, serious, and considering men ?

[4.] The duties which God requireth of us show it. Man is obliged

to divers duties which are difficult and displeasing to the flesh, and

which we should never perform without a serious belief of the soul's

immortality ; such as these, to forsake the sinful pleasures of the world,

to mortify and tame the flesh, diligently to exercise ourselves to godli-

ness, to suffer the loss of all outward comforts, yea, of life itself. All

these are commanded ; the mortification and keeping down the body.

Col. iii. 5 ; diligence in the heavenly life, Phil. iii. 13, 14 ; fortitude

and patience under the greatest trials, as Moses is propounded for an

example, Heb. xi. 24-26 ; not to faint in the greatest tribulations, 2

Cor. iv. 16-18 ; yea, to expose life itself, Luke xiv. 26. Now would

God, who is so loving to mankind, bind us to displease the flesh, and

enjoin us so many duties which are harsh and troublesome, yea, some

of them hurtful and detrimental to the body, if he had not provided

some better thing for us ? Would he, all whose precepts are for our

good, and who hath made self-love so great an help to our duty, be so

hard to us, but that he knoweth how to recompense this diligence and

self-denial ? He saith, ' Take no thought for your life, what ye shall

eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put

on,' Mat. vi. 25 ; but he saith, ' Keep the soul with all diligence,' Deut.

iv. 9. Would he be so earnest in pressing us to look after the soul,

and strengthening and adorning the inward man, if the soul were to

perish with the body ? Surely, if all depended upon the body, the

body should be more cared for ; but it is quite otherwise. Scripture

and reason show the body is only to be cared for in subordination to

the soul, and that our chiefest work should be to furnish our souls with

knowledge and grace. And they are the worthiest men who do most

busy themselves about divine and heavenly things ; whereas they are

the basest who care so much for the body, and make a business of

those things which they should do only by the by. Certainly if there

were an end of us when the body faileth, we should abhor nothing so

much as death, desire nothing so much as the good of the body ;

nothing would be so dear to us, but we would part with it to keep off

the death of the body, for then there would be an end of us. Death

would be the chiefest evil we could suffer, and that which would

deprive us of all other good ; nothing should be feared and abhorred

like death, and we should lie, forswear, or do anything to avoid it.

But this principle would not only destroy all generous actions, but

introduce all dishonesty and sin into the world ; for as we should never

venture our lives upon any reason and inducement, though never so

just, so we should stick at no evil to preserve life, and the conveniencies

which belong thereunto.

[5.] The desires wrought in us by the Spirit of God, to see and

enjoy God, argue the immortality of the soul : Eom. viii. 23, ' And

not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the

Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adop-

tion, to wit, the redemption of our bodies ; ' 2 Cor. v. 2, ' For in this

we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which

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is from heaven.' We prove another life, not only by the inclhiation,

instinct, and disposition of nature towards happiness in general ; the

universal desire of all mankind is to be everlastingly happy, this

proveth it ; for this desire being universal and natural, is not frustrate ;

nature doth nothing in vain: but the desires and groans of the sancti-

fied do much more prove it, for they do more forcibly direct and carry

our hearts to a certain scope and end ; and they are excited by the

Holy Spirit, for he imprinteth a firm persuasion of this happiness, and

stirreth up these desires after it ; and that in our sober and severest

moods, when we are solemnly conversing with God in his holy worship,

in the word, prayer, meditation, and the Lord's supper, and all other

holy duties, then he most raiseth these affections towards heavenly

things ; and also he leaveth this heavenly relish upon our hearts at

other times, as the reward of our eminent obedience to God ; and the

more serious and holy any are, the more do they feel of this. Now

these desires being of God's own infusing, they will not be disappointed ;

therefore those who make the hopes of the world to come their happi-

ness, desire, and joy, will one day be partakers of the blessedness of it ;

their groaning, seeking, and longing, will not be in vain, for God will

give the satisfaction where he giveth the desire.

Use 1. Is terror to the wicked and ungodly. Your souls die not

with the body, but must enter into endless torments. The body per-

isheth, but the immortal substance will for ever subsist in a slate of

woe or weal. Now how brutishly and much beneath a man do they

live who wholly give up themselves to carnal pleasures and worldly

pursuits, that live as if their souls did die with their bodies, and they

should never hear of them more ! They make no provision for their

everlasting estate. Three evils I charge upon these men —

1. These men do not believe that which scripture and reason showeth

to be certainly true, and so do not show themselves either christians

or men. The great design of scripture is to give them a pros])ect of

another world, and to assure them of a life after death. And will you

not receive God's testimony ? Are God's threatenings a vain scarecrow ;

are the promises a golden dream ? Go and reason, if the soul abidetli

not after it flitteth out of the body, it is either because it cannot be or

act, or because God will not suffer it to be or act, or hath not clearly

declared it shall be so, so that no certainty can be had thereof or hath

declared or expressed himself to the contrary. Now none of these

things are true.

[1.] Not the first. The nature of the soul is such that it showeth

plainly that it can live without the body. A spirit can subsist by itself ;

that which God hath fitted to endure for ever, he hath designed it to

endure for ever. Now the soul as a spirit is fitted to live lor ever, and

it can live without the body, for it is dvTOKLvrjro';, it doth of itself

move itself. Is it the body that supports the soul, or the soul that

supports the body ? Heathens have thought so upon this aigument,

and will not you ? Cuin venerit ille dies, qui mixtum hoc divini

Jmmcmique, secernat, corpus hie tihi inveni relinquam, ipse me diis

redeam — When that day shall come, when the divine spirit shall be

severed from the human body, I shall leave the body where I found it,

and yield up my S2)ii'it to the gods.

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[2.] Is it because God will not permit it to be, or act without tlie

body ? Whence doth that appear ? To us christians he hath appointed

a mediator to receive our souls.

[3.] Or is it because he hath doubtfully expressed his mind ? You

are not sure there is no such life ; it is impossible you should know or

prove the contrary. The question between the infidel and the christian

is not whether there be a world to come ? but whether he can prove

there is none ? You cannot prove the falsity of the christian hope by any

sound argument that there is no heaven nor hell ; for aught you can

say or know there are both, and it were best to take the surer side.

In a lottery, men will venture some small matter. Some of the

heatliens that disputed against it or doubted of it, yet acknowledged it

to be a supposition conducing to virtue and goodness.

[4.] God hath not declared his mind to the contrary, but plainly

told us that it is so. It is easy to presume that a thousand to one

but it is so. Natural reason, consent of nations, fears of a guilty con-

science, or presages of eternal punishment, the whole drift of the

christian religion, the example of Christ, all prove it. Those wretches

that outface religion accuse Christ of a lie, and the wisest men of the

world of folly, their own consciences of imposing a cheat upon them to

check their vain pleasures, and, in defiance of light within and without,

smother all conceits of a world to come.

2. They do not consider these things, and weigh them, that they

may come to understand what is their end and business here. Alas !

are we so near everlasting joy or misery, and yet neglect it ; yea, it

may be, scorn and oppose those that make it their chiefest care and

labour to prepare for it ? How long have you lived in the world, and

scarce ever asked the question or thought seriously, What shall I do

to be saved ? You are desirous to give full and ample satisfaction to

your dying part, yea, have pampered it, and over-clogged it ; but your

business is not to pamper the body, but to save your souls. Now you

should show yourselves men : Isa. xlvi. 8, ' Remember this, and show

yourselves men ; bring it again to mind, ye transgressors ! ' Think

aforehand, Wliat would poor deluded souls, that are in their everlast-

ing estate, give if they might be trusted with a little time again, if

God would but try them once more, that they might mend their past

folly ? They have lost their souls for poor temporal trifles. But alas !

now, though we are daily drawing near to our long home, yet we little

think of it ; we are almost come to our journey's end, and we never con-

sider whither we are going.

3. They do not improve these things, nor live answerably, which is

a further degree of brutishness : Ps. xlix. 12, ' Man being in honour,

abideth not ; he is like the beasts that perish ; ' Jude 10, ' What they

know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt them-

selves.' They are strangers to the heavenly mind, and wholly governed

by carnal sense ; they live as if the soul did serve for no other use but

to keep the body from stinking. Their principles have no influence

upon their practice ; they talk of the immortality of the soul, yet spend

all their care upon the body.

Use 2. Is caution.

1. Do not hazard your souls for things that perish. Let nothing

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entice us to forfeit or hinder our endless happiness : Heb. x. 39, ' We

are not of them wlio draw back unto perdition, but of thera that believe

to tlie saving of the soul ; ' Mat. xvi. 26, \* What is a man profited if

he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? or what shall a

man give in exchange for his soul ? '

2. Do not betray the souls of others for a little pelf, as ignorant and

careless ministers do, so they have the maintenance. Love to souls is

the great thing we learn of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself

' a ransom for them,' Mat. xx. 28. Ministers should have the bowels

of Christ : Phil. i. 8, ' For God is my record how greatly I long after

you all in the bowels of Christ ; pity those that are going to hell, and

ready to perish everlastingly.

Use 3. Is exhortation, to persuade you to make it your mark and

scope to look after this immortal state of blessedness. Let us leave

things that perish to men that perish : John vi. 27, ' Labour not for

the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to ever-

lasting life.' Surely this argument should persuade us to heavenly-

mindedness. Earthly things are of short duration, and shall quickly

leave us, and when they are gone, they are to us as if they had never

been, a shadow, a dream, or something that is next to nothing ; but

the fruit of godliness abideth for ever : 1 John ii. 17, ' The world

jiasseth away, and the lust thereof ; but he that doeth the will of

God abideth for ever.'

Motives.

1. You know more of the dignity of man, who is created after the

most perfect pattern, the image of God himself : Gen. i. 26, ' So God

created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.'

Kedeemed at the dearest rate, the blood of the Son of God : 1 Peter

i. 18, 19, ' Forasmuch as ye are redeemed, not with corruptible things,

as silver and gold, &c., but with the precious blood of Christ,' and

designed and ordained to the highest end, the glorifying and enjoying

of God : Kom. xi. 36, ' For of him, and through him, and to him are

all things.' Surely they should be more sensible of their immortality,

and serve God more than the rest of his creatures.

2. You profess that religion which hath brought life and immor-

tality to light, and the end of which is the saving of the soul. Now,

though you have the profession of christians, you have not the spirit

of christians if this be not your daily business and scope. What have

you done for the saving of your souls ? if all your business, cares, and

fears are about the body and the interests of the bodily life, you have

the spirit of the world, not of God, Are not your souls worth the look-

ing after ? that which is the scope of your religion should be the

business of your lives and actions, that a christian may correspond and

answer to his Christianity, as the impress doth to the seal.

3. You are God's witnesses : Isa. xliii. 10, ' Ye are my witnesses,

saitli the Lord.' What proof do we give of a reasonable immortal

soul ? Heb. xi. 7, ' By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not

seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his

house ; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the

righteousness which is by faith.' Do we propagate carelessness and

atheism, or a mindfulness of the world to come ?

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4. If we are satisfied with present things, we have no more to look

for : Ps. xvii. 14, ' From men of the world, which have their portion

in this life ; ' Mat. vi. 2, ' They have their reward;' Luke vi. 24, ' Woe

unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation ; ' Luke

xvi. 25, ' Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good

things.' It is sad to be put off with these things, with riches, honour?,

favour of men, and a little temporal greatness.

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SERMON I.

And from Jesus Chnst, luho is tlie faithful witness, and the first

begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.

Unto him that loved us, and ivashed us from our sins in his

01071 blood, and hath made lis kings and priests unto God and

his Father ; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Amen. — Rev. i. 5, 6.

The sacrament is an abridgment of the gospel, and we sliall best suit

the end of it when we lay before you the sum of the gospel in one

entire view. This scripture presenteth us with the principal parts of

it. It carrieth the form of a doxology or a thanksgiving; wherein

observe —

1. The person to whom this doxology is directed, \* To him ; ' that

is, to Jesus Christ, ' the faithful witness, the first begotten from the

dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.'

2. The reasons or matter of it. Wherein — (1.) The moving cause

of all that Christ hath done for us, ' He loved us.' (2.) The benefit

obtained for us, ' He hath washed us from our sins in his own blood.'

(3.) The fruit of it, \* And made us kings and priests unto God and his

Father.'

3. The doxology itself, ' To him be glory and dominion for ever and

ever. Amen.'

Doct. That the Lord Jesus deserveth everlastingly to be honoured,

lauded, and praised by all the saints that make mention of his name.

Jolm having occasionally mentioned Christ, falleth into this

doxology.

Beasons. (1.) From what he is ; (2.) For what he hath done for us ;

(3.) For the fruits and benefits we have thereby.

I. From what he is. He is described — (1.) To be 'the faithful wit-

ness,' who hath made known the will of the Father with all fidelity and

certainty. (2.) As one who, being crucified, rose from the dead as our

first-fruits, ascertaining our resurrection : ' The first begotten from the

dead.' The apostle saith, Col. i. 18, 'The first-born from the dead.'

The resurrection is a kind of birth, and Christ is the first-born or first-

begotten, because he was the first that rose from the dead in his own

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strengtli, and vanquished death. Others were raised before him, but

to die again ; they were raised in their own single persons, he as a

public person : ' But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become

the first-fruits of them that slept,' 1 Cor. xv. 20. And he will by the

same power raise again all his members to immortality and life. (3.)

He is ' the Prince of the kings of the earth ; \* one that hath all power

given him in heaven and in earth, and is superior to all princes of the

world, not only in regard of eminency, as a far greater prince than they,

but authority and power over them ; he is their Lord and sovereign as

well as ours: as it is said, Dan. iv. 17, ' The Most High ruleth in the

kingdoms of men, and giveth them to whomsoever he will.'

1. Observe, these titles are given to Christ with respect to his three

offices of king, priest, and prophet. (1.) His prophetical office is

implied in that term, ' The faithful Witness ; ' one that hath brought

the gospel out of the bosom of God, and plainly and clearly revealed

it to the world, and hath confirmed the certainty of it by divers

miracles, especially by his death, from which he rose again, and

ascended, and poured out the Spirit upon the disciples for a testimony ;

and still continueth that dispensation in part of giving the Spirit, so

far as to assure the hearts of his people that this is the truth, (2.)

His priesthood is implied in that expression, ' The first-begotten from

the dead.' He died, and so offered himself as a sacrifice of atonement

to God ; he rose again, and is entered within the veil, to continue the

exercise of that office by his constant intercession. (3.) His kingly

office is implied in that other expression, ' The Prince of the kings of

the earth.' They are all his vicegerents, absolutely at his dispose, and

can do neither more nor less than he will have them : Mat. xxviii. 13,

' All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.' He hath supreme

and absolute authority given him over all things, both in heaven and

earth, for the good of the church ; and in the church he is the only

head and king, to appoint and maintain the way and means of gather-

ing, preserving, ruling the church, and ordering all the affairs thereof

to the world's end.

2. Observe, that all these titles are suited to the present occasion of

this prophecy, which is to encourage his people to suffer persecution

for the gospel's sake. (1.) As he was ' The faithful Witness,' it assured

their cause to be right. The gospel is called ' The testimony of Jesus

Christ,' ver. 2. He declared nothing to us but the will of "God. The

flesh hath such a value for and tenderness of its interests, that men

will soon distinguish themselves out of their duty if there be the least

doubtfulness in the cause for which they suffer, or any suspicion of it.

Therefore now, when dreadful troubles attended the profession of the

gospel, he setteth forth Christ as ' The faithful Witness,' to heighten

their zeal. As also, Rev. iii. M, 'These things saith the Amen, the

faithful and true Witness.' (2.) As he was ' The first-begotten from

the dead,' it still encourageth them more, by assuring them of a joyful

resurrection if their lives should flill in this quarrel and conflict. This

should allay all the fears of death. Christ is not called the first-born

of the living, but the first-born from the dead, to own a relation to us

in every condition, dead as well as living: he, as the first-born, rose

as a pledge and pattern of what should be done to us. (3.) As 'Prince

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of the Icings of the earth,' of whose power and persecutions they were

80 much afraid, but needed not ; for they are not only accountable to

Christ at last, which those adverse powers little valued, having not

embraced the profession of the gospel ; but were held in by the reins of his

government for the present, so as they could not so much as touch an

hair of their heads without his leave. So that here was much

encouragement for suffering christians, who at that time were to con-

flict with great difficulties, and exposed to the slaughters and butcheries

of cruel enemies.

3. Observe, all these titles serve to beget a reverence and great respect

in our hearts to the person that owneth them ; he is ' The faithful

Witness.' The great Prophet of the church should be regarded by us :

\* This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye him,'

Mat. xvii. 5. We are to hearken to him, believe him, obey him, as

knowing that we must stand or fall at the sentence of his word. He

is the greatest and most excellent of all the prophets, and far above

them all, who knew more of God and of his mind than all they joined

in one ; and hath declared his will more fully, clearly, and powerfully;

and shall we set at nought his counsel ? Some that despised the

counsel of an ordinary prophet smarted for it : Heb. x. 28, 29, 'He

that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three wit-

nesses : of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought

worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God ? ' who came out

of his bosom on purpose to teach us the way of salvation. If he require

repentance and faith, with a promise of righteousness and eternal life,

and a commination of eternal death unavoidable, if we believe not, nor

repent, we are to believe it with all certainty, to set about this work

with all care and diligence, and continue therein with all constancy

and perseverance : Heb. xii. 25, ' See that ye refuse not him that

speaketh ; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth,

much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speak-

eth from heaven.' Christ came from heaven at first, returned to heaven

again, from heaven sent down the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, and

by that Spirit enabled them to preach the gospel with success. Oh,

surely we should attend to his doctrine, and receive it with firm assent,

and obey it with humble submission.

Again, he is ' The first-begotten from the dead.' That he died

should render him dear to us, for it was for our sakes, as I shall show

by-and-by. That he rose again was for our sakes, for our justification :

'Who was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justifica-

tion,' Eom. iv. 25 ; for it showeth that his sacrifice was accepted as

sufficient for our atonement. Yea, for our blessed resurrection : 1 Cor.

XV. 20, ' But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-

fruits of them that slept ; ' as the whole harvest was blessed and

sanctified in a little handful of the first-fruits offered to God. But I

urge it now as an argument why we should give him glory, as deserv-

ing it by the greatness of his person. This made it evident that he

was the Son of God : Rom. i. 4, ' Declared to be the Son of God with

power, by the resurrection from the dead.' The true Messiah, and

judge of the world : Acts xvii. 31, ' Because he hath appointed a day

in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man

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whom he hath ordained ; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men,

in that he hath raised him from the dead.' If he had been an impostor,

neither could he have raised up himself, being a mere man, nor would

God have raised him up ; for we cannot imagine that divine providence

would co-operate to countenance a lie or cheat. As then you would

not be found enemies to Christ in his imperial day, give him glory and

dominion. If you slight him, you despise one that is evidently declared

to be the Son of God. And there is no medium ; either he must be

your loving Saviour or your terrible judge. If you neglect him, he

will not be the first-born from the dead to you, nor the first-fruits to

you — the first-fruits did not bless the tares, or the cockle, or darnel, or

filthy weeds, but only the good corn — though raised again you shall be

by his judicial power.

Again, he is ' The Prince of the kings of the earth,' and therefore

liighly to be respected. Respect to great ones and fawning upon great

ones is the practice of all the world ; all will seek the ruler's face. As

all rivers run to the sea, so do all the respects of the world to the great

and the mighty ; and is not the Son of God worthy of our respects,

that is set down at the right hand of majesty above all ? If we did

live by faith as much as by sense, we would s^e it is our interest as

well as our duty to honour Christ ; we would not fear a mortal man,

that can threaten us with a prison, but Christ, who can threaten us with

hell ; nor be dismayed at the frowns of men when Christ smiles : ' Who

would not fear thee, Lord, and glorify thy name ? ' Rev. xv. 4. We

would yield up ourselves to be his willing subjects, and obey his laws,

who can reward us, not with temporal dignities, but eternal life. The

authority and power that all others have is but derived from Christ,

and subordinate to him ; therefore, if he smiles, whose frowns need we

fear? He is the one lawgiver, that hath potestatem viice et necis^

power of life and death ; he is able to destroy absolutely, and you may

be safe in his protection. Well, then, if we consider what he is, he

deserveth everlastingly to be honoured.

II. What he hath done for us, ' He loved us, and washed us from

our sins in his own blood.' And there we begin —

First, With the fountain and bosom cause of all, and that is Christ's

love : ' To him that loved us.'

1. Christ's love is the ground of man's redemption ; that stirred all

the causes, and set them a-work, that concurred to this end. Other

attributes were manifested in the redemption of mankind, as God's

wisdom, power, justice, holiness ; but they are all subservient to love :

but love is at the upper end of all causes, subservient to nothing but

itself. If you ask a reason of other things, it may be assigned ; but if

you ask a reason of his love, that cannot be given but from itself If

the question be, Wherefore did God discover such riches of wisdom,

goodness, and power, for the saving poor worthless creatures ? He

loved us : John iii. 16, ' God so loved the world, that he. gave his only-

begotten Son.' Wherefore did Jesus Christ submit to such bitter

agonies, such an accursed death ? He loved us : Ei)h. v. 2, ' Walk in

love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an

offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour ; ' Eph, v.

25, ' Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it ; ' and Gal. ii. 20,

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' Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live

by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'

But now put the question. Wherefore did he love us ? Love only is

the reason of itself ; he loved us because he loved us : Deut, vii. 7, 8,

' The Lord did not set his love on you, nor choose you, because ye were

more in niuiiber than any people, &c., but because the Lord loved you.'

2. As it is the fountain cause, so it was that property that shined forth

most conspicuously in the work of redemption : Rom. v. 8, ' God com-

mendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ

died for us.' And therefore this is that which we should most admire

and be ravished with in our thoughts. Here, next to the description of

the excellency of Christ's person, the first thing mentioned in the

doxology itself is this, ' To him that loved us.' This is a comfortable

word, as if Jesus would be described and known by nothing so much

as by his love. What was the Son of God but love incarnate, love born

of a virgin, love conversing in the world, and preaching salvation to

poor sinners ; love going about and doing good ; love relieving the

diseased and the possessed, curing the deaf, and the dumb, and the blind,

and the lame ; and finally, love dying and hanging on the cross ? \* God

is love/ 1 John iv. 8. iThe angels in heaven adore this love, though

spectators, not parties interested ; he came not for their sakes, but ours

only. We have a little notional knowledge of it, but could we once find

the saving effects of God's love in Christ, impressed upon our hearts by

the Spirit, how would you be melted and ravished, and evv^r be thinking

what glory and honour you might bring to him that thus loved you ?

You and 1 may discourse of it ; it is not a few cold thoughts of the love

of Christ will work on us, but ' the shedding of this love abroad in

your hearts by the Holy Ghost,' Rom. v. 5. There is no knowledge

like the experimental knowledge which ariseth from the felt and known

eff'ects of this love ; this would awaken your hopes, fill you with solid

comfort, excite j^ou to your duty: 2 Cor. v, 14, ' For the love of Christ

constraineth us.' However, till you have this, the means you must use

are sound belief and serious consideration.

[1.] Embracing by faith the love of God in Christ, and the good

things prepared by it, as they are revealed and offered in the gospel ;

that is the way to get this fuller insight and experimental knowledge

and feeling of this love ; for so the apostle prayeth, Eph. iii. 17-19,

\* That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; that ye, being rooted

and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what

is the breadth, and length, and de])th, and height; and to know the

love of Christ, which passeth knowledge;' 1 John iv. 16, 'We have

known and believed the love which God hath to us. God is love ; and

he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.'

[2.] The serious contemplation and meditation of it. It is your duty

to study it with the deejiest, serious, and most ponderous thoughts you

can use : Eplo. iii. 18, ' That we may comprehend the breadth, and

length, and depth, and height of it.' We are not to content ourselves

with a superficial view of God's love in Christ, but must take an accu-

rate inspection of it, in all the dimensions thereof, upward, downward,

on the right hand and left. Nairow thoughts and shallow apprehen-

sions do little good, either as to God's glory, or our solid comfort, and

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that earnest constraint or encouragement to duty which it is wont to

j)roduce in the heart. We must neither do it slightly nor seldom. Our

hearts are too narrow to understand it all at once ; it is so vast and

boundless, so rich and unsearchable, yea, infinite. We never know so

much but there remaineth more still to be known. Therefore we must

often renew the meditation, and continue it so long, till the heart be

warmed, and ready to break out into praise ; and till our wonder and

admiration be raised, and we see the object too big for the fticulty, for

it is beyond all created understanding ; till we be swallowed and over-

whelmed in this deep and bottomless ocean, and through a penury of

thoughts cry out, Oh, the depth of the riches of the mercy and love of

God ! For the present I shall content myself with four properties of

this love.

(1.) It was a free love : ' I will love them freely,' Hosea xiv. 4. If

he did not love us with a free love, how could he love us at all ? What

could he foresee in us but what was the effect of his own grace ? We

were neither loving nor lovely. Not loving ; we did not prevent God.

To love those that love us, it hath notliing singular ; that is the ordi-

nary courtesy of the world. By nature we were God's enemies, and

what could an enemy deserve ? Not lovely ; all that grace that is

wrought in us afterward is his gift ; therefore this was at first a free

love, that had no motive nor foundation but within itself. He loveth

us, not because he seeth anything lovely or amiable in us, but only

because he will demonstrate the absoluteness of his own will, and self-

inclination to do us good.

(2.) It was a real love, not an empty complimenting love ; it rested

not in good wishes ; there was great proof and manifestation of it :

1 John iv. 9, 10, ' In this was manifested the love of God towards us,

because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we

might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but

that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'

It was such a love as made him leave the height of his glory, and

assume our nature, and die in that nature, and shed his blood, and by

it wash us from our sins. There was a benevolence in it, and a benefi-

cence also. A man may wish health when another is sick, and supplies

when another is poor ; but Christ did not wish us well only ; but as

fire showeth itself by heat and by light, so love by the real effects of it.

Perhaps thou sayest to another, Believe that I love thee ; but while

this is only professed in words, he may believe it, but he cannot see it ;

but if upon occasion you do anything for him, or expose yourself to

danger for his sake, then he saith. Now I see that thou lovest me. So

God to Abraham : Gen. xxii. 12, 'Now I know that thou fearest God,

seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.'

Here is a plain proof and signal evidence. So here ; Christ hath

demonstrated the leality of his love ; the man seeth it.

(3.) It was eminent and transcendent love. Compare it with the

love of one creature to another, and in all the world you cannot find a

parallel to equal it : John xv. 13, ' Greater love hath no man than this,

that a man lay down his life for his friend.\* But where is that rare

instance of friendship ? Rom. v. 6-8, ' For when we were yet without

strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a

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righteous man will one die ; yet peradventure for a good man some

would even dare to die. But God coramendeth his love towards us, in

that, while we were yet enemies, Christ died for us.' He died, the just

for the unjust, the judge for the offender, God for sinners. It can he

resembled by no love upon earth ; therefore he himself compareth his

love to lost sinners with the Father's love to him : John xv. 9, ' As the

Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.' It is eternal, incompre-

hensible, and unchangeable.

(4.) It was a full love, removing our misery, procuring all blessings

for us, to make us completely happy ; for as it fetched us from the

lowest hell, it leaveth us not till it bringeth us to joys and happiness

in the highest heavens : 1 Thes. v. 9, 10, ' For God hath not appointed

us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ ; who

died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together

with him.' Well, then, if I should stop here, I hope you have so

much ingenuity and sense of your Kedeemer's affection to you as to say,

\*To him be glory and dominion, even to him who loved us.'

Secondly, The signal act of his love to us : \* He washed us from our

sins in his own blood.'

1. Observe, this is put as the great instance of his love. We cannot

know the love of God by any other fruit and benefit till this be done.

By the bounty of his general providence he provideth for all his

creatures, and feedeth them, and maintaineth them in that kind of

being unto which he hath raised them out of nothing. So he supplieth

the young ravens and the beasts of the field ; much more is he good to

mankind ; he giveth them food and raiment convenient fur them, and

beareth with them notwithstanding their renewed provocations : Acts

xiv. 17, ' Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he

did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling

our hearts with food and gladness.' The heathen might trace God by

acts of bounty rather than acts of vengeance. But hereby they can

have no assurance of God's special love to them ; for ' No man knoweth

love or hatred by all that is before them,' Eccles. ix. 1. Thou canst

not say, God giveth me riches, therefore he loveth me ; or sendeth me

poverty, therefore he hateth me. No ; he may give these things to his

enemies, and deny them to his friends; but you may undoubtedly

conclude, He loveth me, for he hath washed me from my sins. Clear

this once, and you have a full and concluding proof of God's special

love to you.

2. The value and worth of this benefit is exceeding great. This

will appear if you consider —

[1.] The necessity of it. We were all defiled with sin, which is such

a filthiness and stain as cannot easily be washed away. The party dis-

pleased and provoked is God, and the party defiled is the immortal soul

of man, which being subject to the power of God, and bound by his

laws, upon disobedience is conscious to itself of the merit of death and

punishment, and debarred from all communion with God. And it can-

not have any sound peace till it knows that God is satisfied, and that

it shall be admitted again into terms of grace and favour with him.

That sin hath made us filthy and loathsome to God, that we cannot

please him, nor be accepted with him, the word doth not only assert it :

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Ps. xlv. 2, 3, ' The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children

of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is

none that doeth good, no not one ; ' Job xv. 14, ' What is man, that

he should be clean ? and he that is born of a woman, that he should

be righteous ? ' Job xiv. 4, ' Who can bring a clean thing out of an

unclean ? not one.' But conscience is in part sensible of it, so that a

sinner hath a secret dread and shyness of God, especially upon the

commission of actual sins : 1 John iii. 20, 21, ' For if our heart con-

demn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards

God.' I know generally man looketh to the foulness and cleanness of

the body, but is insensible of the stain of the soul. Yet we cannot

always exempt, no, not the worst, from a secret sense of this. How-

ever, our misery and happiness dependeth upon God's judgment, not

our own ; if in the eye of God all of us are polluted and unclean, lying

in our blood, defiled with the guilt of sin already committed, and the

filthy vileness of sin )'et indwelling. This is evident, we were miser-

able enough till God found out a remedy ; and this misery is the deeper,

because man lovetli what God loatheth ; as the swine loveth wallowing

in the mire, and therefore it is a creature loathsome to us. We count

sin a bravery, when it is the greatest impurity, a filthiness deeply

ingrained in our natures, and therefore not easily washed away, both as

to the guilt, as also to the stain and blot.

[2.] This being our misery, Christ came to wash us, and with no

other laver than his own blood, as a priest offering himself a sacrifice

for our sins. The remedy for so great a mischief must have a noble

and excellent cause. That blood was necessary appeareth by the types

of the law, for the typical expiation was made by the blood of bulls and

goats offered in sacrifice. And that no blood but the blood of Jesus

Christ would serve the turn is evident, if you consider the party dis-

pleased and provoked, who was God ; the party defiled, the immortal

spirit of man; and the heinous nature of the ofience, which was a

breach of his righteous and eternal law. Therefore it is said, 1 John

i. 7, 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin;'

Heb. i. 3, ' He by himself purged our sins ; ' and Heb. ix. 13, 14, ' If

the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling

the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more

shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself

without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve

the living God ? ' There is virtue and efficacy enough in the blood of

Christ, partly from the institution of God, and its own manifold worth

and value, as being the blood of God ; partly by the way and manner

in which it was offered, by an act done in our nature, of the greatest

obedience and self-denial that ever was or can be, and so God is fully

repaired in point of honour.

[3.] This sacrifice thus offered was accepted of God in the behalf of

sinful man, as a full price and merit to procure for us both justification

and sanctification. We needed both, being polluted both with the

guilt and stain of sin. Both are a trouble to a sensible conscience or

an awakened sinner, who is in the next capacity to receive this sacrifice :

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1 John i. 9, ' If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive

us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness/ As a man

that hath broken his leg is not only troubled with the pain, but would

have it set right again. Both are implied in this washing, and both

are effectually accomplished by virtue of his bloody death and sacrifice :

1 Cor. vi. n, 'And such were some of you ; but ye are washed, but ye

are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus, and

by the Spirit of our God.' And Christ hath obtained both by virtue

of his bloody death and sacrifice for our pardon and restitution to God's

grace and favour : Rom. v. 1, ' Therefore, being justified by faith, we

have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' As also the

gift of the Spirit, to sanctify and renew us to the image of God : Titus

iii. 5, 6, ' Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but

according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and

renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through

Jesus Christ our Saviour.'

[4.] Besides the impetraticn of this benefit, we must consider the

application. The sacrifice had power to purge us and wash us from

our sins, as soon as it was offered and accepted of God. The procur-

ing of the power is the impetratiou, which was antecedent to actual

pardon and sanctification ; therefore it is said, ' When he had by him-

self purged our sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on

high,' Heb. i. 3. Then he interposed the merit ; then was the first

grant made or liberty given. But then for the application : It is

applied when we submit to those terms that are agreed upon between

our Redeemer and God, as our supreme judge and lawgiver. As when

this sacrifice is believed and depended on, and pleaded in an humble and

broken-hearted manner, and improved to thankfulness, and resolutions

to return to the obedience of our creator, then is sin actually pardoned,

and our hearts cleansed. He did not pardon, nor cleanse, nor sanctify,

as soon as this blood was shed upon the cross, until it be effectually

applied to the filthy soul by a lively faith : Acts xv. 9, ' Purifying their

hearts by faith ; ' and a serious and broken-hearted repentance : 1 John

i. 9, ' If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our

sins,' We must bewail our sins, depend upon the sacrifice of Christ,

sue out the virtue of it by prayer : Ps. li. 2, \* Wash me thorougldy

from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.' Extinguish the love

of sin by godly sorrow and all holy means, and mortify the flesh by the

help of the Spirit : Rom. viii. 13, ' If ye through the Spirit mortify the

deeds of the body,' &c. ; and more and more interest ourselves in his

cleansing.

[5.] Because the application is a difficult work. Besides the purchase

of the gift of the Spirit, Christ hath instituted the help of the word and

sacraments, to bring us into possession of this benefit : Eph. v. 26, \* That

he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.'

The merit of his death falleth upon these means, that we may use them

with the more confidence : John xv. 3, \* Now are ye clean through the

word which I have spoken unto you.' The word is the glass wherein

to see corruption, which sets a-work to seek purging ; by that our sense

of our natural impurity is revived, the means and causes of our cleans-

ing set down, that we may with deep humiliation confess our sin, humbly

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sue out tlie grace offered, and wait for it in the conscionable use of all the

means of grace. And for the sacraments : As the word containeth

the charter and grant of Christ and all his benefits to those that will

receive him, so this is the seal of the grant : Rom. iv. 11, ' He received

tlie sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith ; ' whereby

we are more confirmed in waiting for the Spirit, and excited to look for

this benefit from Clu-ist. Well, then, we must still lie at the pool of

the word and sacraments.

And now j^ou have my second argument why Jesus Christ should be

honoured, lauded, and praised by all the saints ; because he hath done

so great an office of love, and procured so great a benefit for us, as the

washing away of our sins in his blood, that we might be admitted to

communion with God.

III. The fruits and benefits that we have thereby : ' He hath made

us kings and priests unto God, and to his Father.' This doth oblige

us the more to ascribe, and give glory and dominion to him for ever

and ever, since he hath brought us into communion with God, and set

us apart as consecrated persons, such as kings and priests were of old,

to perform daily service to God.

In this third thing —

1. Observe the order. We must be washed from our sins before we

can be kings and priests, or minister before the Lord. Aaron and his

sons, though they were formerly designed to be priests, yet they could

not officiate and act as priests before they were consecrated. So must

we be consecrated and made priests to God, and that by the blood of

Christ. They were seven days in consecrating. This whole life is the

time of our consecration, which goeth on by degrees, and will be made

complete, both for body and soul, upon the resurrection, when we shall

be fit to approach the throne of glory, and serve our God in a perfect

manner, in the eternal temple of heaven. For this life, though our

consecration be not finished, yet here we are styled an holy priesthood,

to minister before the throne of grace, though not before the throne of

glory. Now, if we be washed from our sins in the laver of regenera-

tion, we may draw near to God, as the priests under the law were

washed in the laver, and then came to the altar. It holdeth good both

in this life and in the life to come, that none but the washed can come

so near to God, either before the throne of grace or throne of glory.

The throne of grace : Heb. x. 22, 'Let us draw near with a true heart,

in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil con-

science, and our bodies washed with pure water.' So Heb. ix. 14, ' How

much more shall the blood of Christ, who, tiirough the eternal Spirit,

offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead

works to serve the living God ? ' In the state of glory : Rev. vii. 14, 15,

' These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed

their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore

are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his

temple.' The persecuted saints, who came out of great tribulation, they

first washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, before they were

admitted, as priests, to stand before the throne of God, to serve him

day and night in his temple. Sanctification must go before conse-

cration; and the more sanctified, the more consecrated. When our

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sanctifiCcation is finished, then our consecmtion is consummate ; and

then we shall have a full communion with our God, a clear vision of

his eternal beauty, and as great a fruition of his godhead as we shall

be ca}>able of, in a state of full contentment, joy, and blessedness.

2. The privileges are exceedingly great, to be consecrated to so high

a dignity ; that we should be consecrated or set apart for God, to be

objects of his special grace, and instruments of his glory and service.

Much more, that we should be advanced to so great a dignity as to be

kings and priests to God. We share in Christ's own dignity. He was

a king and a priest, so are we ; he had an unction, so have we ; he was

Christ, we are christians : by virtue of our union with him, we are

partakers of his kingdom and priesthood. The church of Israel was

called ' a kingdom of priests,' Exod. xix. 6 ; and believers in the new

testament are called ' a royal priesthood,' 1 Peter ii. 9 ; not to disturb

civil kings, or the order God hath instituted in the church ; for it is

kings and priests ' to God,' not to the world. Let us consider these

privileges asunder.

[1.] Kings. King is a name of honour, power, and ample possession.

(1.) Here we reign spiritually, as we vanquish the devil, the world,

and the flesh in any measure. It is a princely thing to be above these

inferior things, and to trample them under our feet in an holy and

heavenly pride. An heathen could say, Bex est qui meiuit nihil, rex

est quicupii nihil — He is a king that fears nothing, and desires nothing.

He that is above the hopes and fears of the world. He that hath his

heart in heaven, and is above temporal accidents, the ups and downs

of the world, the world beneath his heart and affections, this man is of

a kingly spirit. Christ's kingdom is not of this world, neither is a

believer's : Kev. v. 10, ' Thou hast made us unto our God kings and

priests, and we shall reign on the earth,' viz., in a spiritual way. It is

a beastly thing to serve our lusts, but kingly to have our conversations

in heaven, and vanquish the world : 1 John v. 4, 5, ' Whosoever is born

of God overcometh the world ; and this is the victory that overcometli

the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but

he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ? ' To live up to our

faith and love with a noble royal spirit.

(2.) Hereafter we shall reign visibly and gloriously, when we shall

sit upon thrones with Christ, at his last coming to judge the world, and

angels themselves : Mat. xix. 28, 'Verily, I say unto you, that ye which

have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit

on the throne of hisgloiy, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging

the twelve tribes of Israel ; ' Luke xxii. 29, 30, ' I appoint unto you a

kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me ; that ye may eat and

drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve

tribes of Israel.' This was spoken at the Lord's supper, which is a

pledge of it : ' The upiight shall have dominion over them in the

morning,' Ps. xlix. 14.

(3.) They shall be kings eternally in heaven : Luke xii. 32, ' Fear

not, little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the

kingdom ; ' 2 Tim. ii. 12, 'If we suffer, we shall also reign with him;'

that is, in heaven. With respect to this right, title, and interest, so

they are made kings. We are heirs in Christ: Rom. viii. 17, 'If

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children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ : if we

suffer with him, that we may he also glorified together.' We are heirs

of a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

[2.] Priests. That was a great dignity among the Jews. To this

all christians are now advanced : 1 Peter ii. 5, ' Ye are an holy priest-

hood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.'

Our sacrifices are not expiatory, but gratulatory ; not sin-offerings, but

thank-offerings ; not typical, but spiritual. Jesus Christ is the only

sin-offering. Our thank-offerings are either ourselves : Kom. xii. 1, ' I

beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present

your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your

reasonable service.' Or our duties, which are spiritual offerings. We

offer not beasts, which were typical, but the calves of our lips, our

prayers and praises : Heb. xiii. 15, \* By him therefore let us offer the

sacrifice of praise to God continually ; that is, the fruit of our lips,

giving thanks to his name.' Or alms : ver. 16, ' But to do good, and to

communicate, forget not ; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased ; '

Phil. iv. 18, \* But I have all, and abound ; I am full, having received

of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you ; an odour of a

sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.' Now this is

a great honour, that we should be separated by the Lord from all the

rest of the world, and admitted into such a nearness and access to God

with boldness, and hope of being accepted through Christ.

Use 1. In the general, all this should stir up our hearts to give

continual praise and glory to Christ our blessed Redeemer. So doth

the apostle here ; that is the use he maketh of it: \* To him be glory and

dominion for ever and ever. Amen.' It is a thing to be reproved in

christians that we take so little time to admire, honour, and praise our

Eedeemer, which yet is a great part of our work. Surely if you had a

due sight of his excellency, or a sense and taste of the riches of his

goodness and love, you would be more in this delightful work. Usually

praise is a stranger to our worship ; and however we are enlarged in

confession of sin or supplication for such things as we want, yet we are

straitened in our gratulations. Surely lauding and praising God in

Christ is as necessary as the other parts of worship : Ps. xxii. 3, God

is said to ' inhabit the praises of Israel ; ' that is, in Israel, where he is

praised. The great end of worship is not the relief of man so much as

the honour of God ; therefore we should not only ask things needful

for ourselves, and mind merely the supply of our necessities, but the

honour of Christ : Ps. 1. 23, ' Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me.' If

God will account it an honour to be well thought of and spoken of by

his creature, we should more abound in this work. Why are we then

so scanty in praises and thanksgivings ? The reasons of this defect are

self-love ; we are eager to have blessings, but we forget to return to

give God the glory. Prayer is a work of necessity, but praise is a work

of mere duty. Self-love puts all upon prayer, but the love of God

upon praise. Again, stupid negligence ; we do not gather up matter

of thanksgiving, nor watch in our prayers, nor seek after matter for it:

Col. iv. 2, ' Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanks-

giving.'

2. More particularly, let us take our example from this doxology, ' To

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him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.' We can but

ascribe to Christ what he hath already, but we must do it heartily.

Observe here — (1.) The things ascribed to Christ, ' Glory and dominion.'

(2.) The manner of ascription ; it is imperative. (3.) The duration,

' For ever and ever/ (4.) The seal of all, in the word ' Amen.'

[1.] The things ascribed to Christ, 'Glory and dominion,' In other

places it is honour and power everlasting : 1 Tim. vi. 16, ' Who only

hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach

unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and

power everlasting, Amen.' In the Lord's prayer more fully : Mat. vi.

13, ' For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.'

Where by ' kingdom ' is meant right and authority to dispose of all

things according to his own pleasure ; by ' power,' strength and all-

sufficiency to execute what he pleaseth ; by ' glory,' his honour, which

is the result of all that he doth. Clara cum laude notitia — Excellency

discovered with praise. We desire that he may be more honoured, and

brought into request and esteem in the world. Here we have but

two words, ' glory' and ' dominion.' ' Glory,' that is, just praise and

esteem ; gracious hearts think they can never set Christ high enough

in their esteem and praise ; this is all they can return to him for liis

great benefits. ''Glory/ that he may have the honour, as they the

comfort. ' Dominion ' implieth lordship and sovereignty ; this they

Avould have given to Christ as his due by his own purchase and God's

assignment : Rom. xiv. 9, ' For to this end Christ both died, and rose,

and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.' It

was God's end : Phil. ii. 10, \* That at the name of Jesus every knee

should bow.'

[2.] The form is imperative, as binding themselves and others to

give him glory and dominion. Themselves in the first place, and that

not only with the tongue, but with the heart ; not only in word, but

in deed. So they would give him glory, praise him with their lips,

and honour him with their lives. They would make that their work

and scope, that this may be the real language of their hearts and actions,

which speak much louder than words. These ' show forth the praises

of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light,'

1 Peter ii. 9, that really they may be the glory of Christ : 2 Cor. viii.

23, \* They are the messengers of the churclies, and the glory of Chi'ist ; '

2 Thes. i. 12, ' That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified

in you.' So for dominion ; the practical acknowledgment is better

than the verbal : Luke vi. 46, ' Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do

not the things that I say ? ' Mat. vii. 21, ' Not every one that saith

unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he

that doeth the will of my Father which is in heav^en.' Christ was

mocked when they cried, ' Hail, king of the Jews ! ' Mat. xxvii, 29,

and yet they crucified him. If we would have dominion given to

Christ, we must look upon ourselves as not our own, but his ; not live

to ourselves, or use ourselves for ourselves, but resign up ourselves

absolutely to him. Then for others, sucli is their love to Christ and

the souls of men, that true christians desire that Christ may not only be

glorified by themselves, but others ; that he may be known, worshipped,

and believed on in the world, especially those about them ; as fire

turneth all thin^rs about it into fire.

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[3.] The duration, 'For ever and ever.' In all doxologies a long

duration is expressed. They desire not only the present age may gloiify

God, but the future. When we are dead and gone, the Lord remaineth,

and they would not have him remain without praise and honour. It is

the comfort of their souls, when dying, that God shall have a people to

praise him ; and they prize their own salvation the more, that they shall

live for ever to glorify God ; that, as God's blessings are everlasting, so

shall be their praises.

[4] It is ratified by a solemn attestation, 'Amen.' It is noia

desiderii et sicppUcationis ; by it we testify our fervent affection, and

strength of desire after the glory of Christ. We should have an Amen

for our praises as well as for our prayers ; not only to say, ' Jesus,

master, have mercy on us, Amen ; ' but, ' To him be glory for ever and

ever, Ameu.'

SERMON II.

And hath made us Icings and priests unto God and Ms Father.

Rev. i. 6.

I SHALL take up this subject again, and speak of our priesthood, when

we shall be admitted into the immediate presence of God, and praise

him for evermore. There is a ministration before the throne of grace,

or before the throne of glory ; before the throne of grace we minister

in this life, before the throne of glory in the life to come. Of the

latter I shall now speak, because it is a truth commonly overlooked.

Boct. That the priesthood which we have by Christ concerneth our

ministration in the heavenly temple.

I shall prove it by these arguments —

1. Because a christian is conformed to Christ, and made like him in

all things. Christ must irpcoTevetv, first it in all things : Col. i. ] 8,

' That in all things he might have the pre-eminence ;' Rom. viii. 29,

' Whom he did foreknow, he did also predestinate to be conformed to

the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born amongst many

brethren.' Now if I shall prove to you that Christ was not consecrated

to his everlasting priesthood till he died, then it is very congruous

that it should be so with a christian ; for our office dependeth upon

his, and is carried on in a way of conformity to his. Now, that Christ

was consecrated at his death, I prove by these places : Heb. v. 9, \* And

being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all

them that obey him ; ' that is, when he had ' learned obedience by the

things which he suffered,' ver. 8. And Heb. ii. 10, ' The captain of

our salvation was made perfect through sufferings ; ' that is, fully con-

secrated, and fitted to be a priest, to perform that ofiice to our comfort.

His death is expressed by a notion of perfection : Luke xiii. 32, ' Behold,

I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-monow, and the third

day I shall be perfected ; ' that is, shall suffer death. It is good to

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inquire in what sense, in these and in many other places, Christ is

said to be made perfect ; it is not meant of his personal perfection, but

official. As to his person, as he was Cod, he was perfect from all

eternity ; as God-man, he was perfect from the first moment of his con-

ception. The word TeXeicodeh, ' being made perfect,' relateth to his

office, and may be rendered ' consecrated,' as well as ' made perfect ; '

' being consecrated, he became,' &c. ; and ' it behoved the captain of our

salvation to be consecrated through sufferings,' The word signifieth,

in its first sense, to finish and accomplish a thing. That which is

brought to an end is perfected ; so was Christ as a priest perfected ;

that is, fit to minister before God as a priest. But that it should be

rendered consecrated I prove —

[1.] Because the word is rendered consecrated elsewhere : Heb. vii.

28, ' Consecrated for evermore.' In the margin, ' perfected,' reTekeico-

fMevov. What is in the old testament, ' Thou shalt consecrate Aaron and

his sons,' Exod. xxix. 9, the Septuagint render, kol reXetcocret? 'Aap(ovo<i

ra? %et/Off?, thou shalt perfect, or fill the hand of Aaron and his sons.

And the sacrifice of consecration is called dvaia t^? Te\ecco(T€(o<;, the

sacrifice of perfecting or completing, because the priest was to pass

through some ceremonies ; and these being done, he is said TeXeiovadat^

to be consummate, or made perfect, or fully authorised to perform the

priest's office.

[2.] I prove it from the context in Heb. v. There the apostle is

discoursing of Christ's everlasting priesthood, and his being made

perfect is with respect to that office. He was not perfect or fitted for

that work till he stood before God with a sacrifice in his hand, till he

had offered up himself with prayers, and tears, and strong cries, and

had learned obedience by the things which he suffered ; but then he

was made perfect, for the rites of his consecration were over ; that is,

his agonies and bloody sufferings ; then he was fully consecrated and

completed to be a priest. So that Christ's solemn consecration was

at his death.

[3.] The reason of the thing showeth it. Jesus Christ was to be ' a

merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make

reconciliation for the sins of the people,' Heb. ii. 17. These two

attributes, ' merciful' and ' faithful,' refer to God and us. Merciful to

help and relieve sinful miserable man ; faithful with respect to God,

in performing all things which belong to his sacerdotal office, and

going through with his work given him in charge, till he hath fully

finished it. The best and most merciful high priest that ever was

must be made in the best and most convenient manner. Well, then, he

is made perfect when he hath had a thorough sense of our misery, and

took the course prescribed to remove it ; when his heart was entend-

ered, and his hand was filled with the purest sacrifice that ever was

ofiered ; and so by his agonies and bloody sufferings he was perfected,

consecrated, and fully qualified to minister before the Lord, and to

intercede for poor creatures, and to bless them with the blessing of

eternal life. His priestly actions after the order of Aaron were his

consecration to liis everlasting blessed priesthood after the order of

Melchisedec. Without these sufferings he could neither be a faithful ■

nor a merciful high priest, nor satisfy his Father's justice, nor have a

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full feeling from experience of the creatures' misery. "Well, then, as

Christ was consecrated at his death, so is a christian who runneth

parallel watli Christ in all his offices. As Christ had an inauguration

into that priesthood he executed upon earth at his baptism, so hath a

christian for his spiritual priesthood ; as soon as washed in the laver

of regeneration, but for his everlasting priesthood at death.

2. My next argument is, this suiteth with the other privilege of kings.

We are made kings as well as priests. Now, as our kingly office is

not perfect till we come to heaven, so neither our priestly ; and there-

fore it mainly respecteth our ministration in the heavenly temple.

How is a poor christian a king here, unless in a riddle, eV amy/ji'arc,

as he vanquisheth the devil, the world, and the flesh? as it is a

princely thing to be above inferior things, and to trample them under

our feet. The heathen could say, Bex est qui metuit nihil, rex est qui

cupit nihil — He is a king that is above the hopes and fears of the

world, that feareth nothing and desireth nothing. This is indeed, in

a metaphor, a kingly spirit, to have our hearts in heaven, and to look

upon all sublunary things as beneath our care and affections. Christ's

kingdom is not of this world, neither is a believer's. Here upon earth

we reign only in a spiritual way ; but the privilege cometh fully to be

verified when we tread Satan under our feet, and triumph over

enemies, and reign visibly and gloriously, sitting upon thrones with

Christ at his coming, judging the world and angels themselves : Mat.

xix. 28, ' Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in

the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his

glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes

of Israel ; ' Luke xxii. 29, 30, ' I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my

Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table

in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel ; '

Ps. xlix. 14, ' The upright shall have dominion over them in the

morning;' and 1 Cor. vi. 2, 'Know ye not that we shall judge the

world ? ' and ver. 3, \* Know ye not that we shall judge angels ? ' neither

will this kingdom be terminated and ended at the day of judgment, but

they shall be kings eternal in heaven : Luke xii. 32, ' Fear not, little

flock ; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom ; ' 2

Tim. ii. 12, ' If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him ; '

that is, in heaven. With respect to this title, right, and interest, we

are said ' to be made kings.' Now proportionably, the other privilege,

of ' being made priests,' must be expounded also. We are spiritual

priests upon earth ; we have our sacrifices of prayers, praises and alms,

and devoting ourselves to God ; but this office is not completed till we

come to heaven, and do immediately minister before the Lord. Then

we have entrance into the holiest : Heb. x. 19, ' Having therefore,

brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.'

Not in spirit, but in person ; for if the chief part of our kingly office

be yet behind, why not the chief part of our priestly office also ?

3. Then we are qualified and prepared. Sanctification must go

before consecration ; and the more sanctified, the more consecrated ;

and when our sanctification is finished, then our consecration is

consummated, and not till then. Now in this world our justification

and sanctification is imperfect ; we are not got above our legal fears,

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and grace is very weak in ns. You know before we can serve the

living God ' our consciences must be purged from dead works,' Heb.

ix. 14, as the high priest was not to approach God without his washings

lest he die; and we are bidden to 'draw nigh to God with a true heart,

in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil

conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water,' Heb. x. 22. If we

have the privilege of priests, we must perform the duties of priests.

Now we are not perfect as appertaining to the conscience, nor are we

fully cleansed and sanctified, till the veil of the flesh be removed, and

we be presented to God without spot and wrinkle. Somewhat is begun

indeed, that will tend to, and end in, perfect sanctification, enough to

qualify us for our ministration at this distance from God. There is

enough done on Christ's part, by way of impetration and merit:

Heb. X. 14, ' For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that

are sanctified,' or consecrated ; he hath paid the price ; but as to the

application, that is by degrees. The priest under the law was seven

days in consecrating ; this figured all the time that interveneth before

we enter upon the everlasting sabbath. Our whole life is the time of

consecration, which goeth on by degrees, and will be made complete,

both for body and soul, at the resurrection ; for then shall we be made

fit to approach the throne of glory, and serve our God in a perfect

manner in the eternal temple of heaven. In this life our consecration

is not yet finished, we cannot come so near God. We are qualified

indeed to come to the throne of grace, but not qualified to come to the

throne of glory ; but the work is a-doing, and in time it will be accom-

plished.

4. We have not the full privileges of priests till then, which is inti-

macy, full communion, nearness of access to God, and ministration

before him. This is the privilege we have as priests. The apostle

tellelh us, Heb. ix. 8, ' The Holy Ghost signifieth that the way to the

holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle

was yet standing.' How did the Holy Ghost signify this ? I answer —

By the whole economy and frame of that dispensation. God kept state

and majesty then, and his people must not come too near him ; the com-

mon Israelite must not come too near the sanctuary ; they were not to

camp or pitch their tents round about it, but only the Levites, lest they

die: Num. i. 52, 53, 'And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents

every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard through-

out the host. But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of

testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children

of Israel/ It was a dangerous thing for the common Israelites to be too

near the symbols of God's presence ; to teach us the distance between

God and men, and their unworthiness to come near him and his holy

things. But though the Levites might encamp near it, yet none but the

priests must enler into the tabernacle : Num. iv. 18-20, ' Cut ye not off

the tribe of the family of the Kohathites from among the Levites ; but

this do unto them, that they may live, and not die ; when they ap-

proach unto the most holy things, Aaron and his sons shall go in, and

appoint them every one to his service, and to his burden : but they shall

not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die.'

They were to keep near the tabernacle, and the Kohathites to bear

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tilings which they must not see and touch, upon pain of death. And

this was not only threatened, but executed on the Bethshemites, which

was a city of Levites, when they looked into the ark : 1 Sam. vi. 19, 20,

' And he smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into

the ark of the Lord, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and

threescore and ten men. And the people lamented, because the Lord

had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter. And the men

of Bethshemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?

and to whom shall he go up from us? ' Well, God kept at a distance

from that people, and would not have them too familiar with him ; but

the priests might come near and minister before the Lord, but not till

they were consecrated, and till they had cleansed themselves : Exod.

XXX. 20, 21, 'When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation,

they shall wash with water, that they die not ; and when they come

near to the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire unto the

Lord. So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die

not.' But though an ordinary priest might come to the altar of burnt-

offering, yet the high priest was only to enter into the sacrary, or holiest

of all ; and that not when he pleased, but only once a year : Lev, xvi.

2, ' And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that

he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil, before the

mercy-seat, which is upon the ark, that he die not' The high priest

was a solemn type of Christ, yet he was not to be too familiar with God.

The people were sensible of this state and distance which God kept,

and murmured at it : Num. xvii. 12, 13, ' And the children of Israel

spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish ;

whosoever cometli anything near unto the tabernacle of the Lord, shall

die : shall we be consumed with dying ? ' What did the Holy Ghost

signify by all this ? That the way of the holiest of all was not yet

made manifest. But now God is more familiar with his people ; a

christian hath the privilege of the high priest, a privilege which the

most eminent person of that dispensation could enjoy but once a year,

in the most solemn service which ever he performed, and that not till

after many washings and purifications. In every time of need we may

come tq the throne of grace. It was dangerous heretofore to thrust

themselves upon God, but now the Lord is willing to admit us into his

presence ; gospel-believers may come to him, the fountain of grace is

not inaccessible. Well, but though we may come to the throne of

grace, we cannot come to the throne of glory, thence we are all shut

out ; no man can immediately approach the throne of glory till he be

both fully and perfectly justified and sanctified ; for the present we are

not fit to come nigh him ; as Absalom, when his peace was made, and

he was permitted to come home to Jerusalem, yet he was not admitted

to his father's sight and presence : 2 Sam. xiv. 24, ' The king said, Let

him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face.' And Esther,

when chosen for a spouse for the great king Ahasuerus, yet she was to

' accomplish the months of her purification,' Esther ii. 12. We have

access to the throne of grace, that is all we can have in this life ; but

hereafter we shall have access to the throne of glory, then W3 shall

have full communion with our God, and a clear vision of his eternal

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beauty, and as great a fruition of his godhead as we shall be capable

of, in a state of full contentment, joy, and blessedness.

5. If there be a temple in the other world, then there are priests, and

there will be a ministration ; but now heaven is often represented as a

temple. As the temple under the law was a type of Christ, in whom

the fulness of the godhead dwelt bodily, and a type of the church, in

which God manifesteth his power and presence ; so also it was a type

of heaven, and so frequently applied. As in the temple there were

three partitions, the outward court, the holy place, and the holy of

holies; so is there the airy heaven, the starry heaven, and the heaven

of heavens, as it is called, Acts iii. 21, ' Whom the heavens must receive

until the times of restitution of all things ; ' and the third heaven : 2

Cor. xii. 2, ' I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, such an

one caught up to the third heaven.' This third heaven, the seat of

God and of the blessed saints, is often called ' the holiest,' with re-

spect to the type in the temple or sanctuary. Therefore that is called

' a worldly sanctuary,' Heb. ix. 1, and ' holy places made with hands,

which are the figures of the true ; ' that is, heaven itself, ver. 24. The

earthly or worldly sanctuary was the throne and palace of God, residing

as a king in the midst of his people, which figured or shadowed a more

excellent throne and palace, which is heaven, where God doth manifest

his presence in a far more glorious manner. Well, then, iu this

temple must we minister, and be admitted to a nearer attendance upon

God.

6. One great part of our sacrifices and oblations remaineth everlast-

ingly to be done by ns, and that is the sacrifice of praise and thanks-

giving ; it is a great branch of the thank-ofierings of the gospel : Heb.

xiii. 1.5, ' By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God

continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.'

And in heaven they cease not. Prayer suiteth more with our imper-

fect state, when we are compassed about with divers infirmities and

necessities ; but the angels praise God, and so do the blessed spirits.

We shall then have a fuller sense of the mercies and goodness of God,

when our redemption is full and complete, and a clearer sight of his excel-

lencies when we see him face to face. Here we do but tune our

instruments, and prepare for the work of heaven, but then we perform

it. We are here but as learners, when we see God by faith, and under-

stand a little of the love of Christ, but then as practisers. Therefore

certainly to be kings and priests unto God doth not respect the present

life only, but our ministration in the heavenly temple. There is a ' for

ever ' always affixed to the doxologies of the saints, to show that now

they do but begin in the work which they shall complete hereafter.

7. The scriptures do plainly express that our service is not ended

with our lives, but, as we still stand in the relation of creatures to God,

so we still glorify him and serve him : Eev. vii. 14-16, 'And he said

nnto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have

washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb :

therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and

night in the temple. And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell

among them, and they shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more,' <fec.

There is the explanation of the mystery of being washed in Christ's

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blood, and made kings and priests unto God. This office tliey chiefly

perform when they come to enjoy their happiness before the tlirone of

God and in the heavenly temple. And what is the work there ? They

serve him day and night ; they do not their service then by fits and

starts, but constantly. A type whereof were the priests under the law,

who, in their courses, were admitted day and night to be in the temple :

Ps. cxxxiv, 1, ' Bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which

by night stand in the house of the Lord.' But what was done by many

in their turns is now done by the same persons continually ; for they

are never weary, and there is no intermission in their service. And God

always dwelleth amongst them ; they shall not be at a distance from

God, nor he at a distance from them ; but they shall still enjoy his

company, as dwelling in one house with him ; for there shall not be sin

nor sorrow any more, and then shall they praise God cheerfully. This

will be our work when we are admitted into the most holy place.

8. As heaven hath the notion of a place, a temple, so our estate in

heaven hath the notion of a day or time wherein our priesthood is to

be solemnly exercised; for it is called cra/3/3aTfo-/xo?, a sabbath or

rest : Heb. iv. 9, ' There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.'

A sabbath is for holy rest, not a time of idleness, but to be religiously

employed ; so this glorious eternal rest, which is prepared for and pro-

mised to believers, is not passed over in ease and idleness, but in acts

of worship and adoration. It is a rest from toil and labour, but not

from work and service. On the sabbath-day the sacrifices were

doubled ; the priest had more to do upon that day than any other ; so

in our everlasting sabbatism, we serve God after a more perfect manner

than now we do. On the sabbath, a special delight and rejoicing in

God was to be raised : Isa. Iviii. 13, 14, ' If thou turn away thy foot

from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call

the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt

honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure,

nor speaking thine own words : then shalt thou delight thyself in the

Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth,

and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father ; for the mouth of

the Lord hath spoken it.' So in our eternal rest shall we delight our-

selves in his presence.

Use 1. It informeth us —

1. That our service is an honour, and worship a privilege ; for it is

not only a way to heaven, but a beginning of heaven. Our work there

is a part of our reward. The priestly ministration is so the work of

heaven, that it is also a reward for our present diligence. Well, then,

it is the most blessed life we can live upon earth, to be serving God

and ministering before the Lord, and to be employed in any nearness

about him ; his people desire no sweeter work. Alas ! what is the

work of all the world to this but a toilsome drudgery or base servility ?

Go to the brutish world, what is the work of the drunkard, glutton,

gamester, or fornicator, compared with that of the spiritual priest ?

They are priests to feed the belly, that base dunghill-god: Phil. iii. 19,

' Whose god is their belly.' Their business is to provide for and please

the flesh. Nay ; go to the more refined part of the world, the covetous

and ambitious worldlings ; they aim at nothing beyond this life ; but

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the spiritual priest contiimelli for ever ; his service is begun, and will

ever last ; his work is his wages.

2. That it is no easy matter to be familiar with God, and to draw

nigh to him in worship. We are stupid, and therefore not sensible of

it. You see what distance God kept under the law, and what distance

he yet keejKith as to his immediate presence. Surely ' God is greatly

to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence

of all that are about him,' Ps. Ixxxix. 7. The redeemed are honoured

to have access to God with boldness, yet they ought to be humbly sen-

sible of the privilege. Every nearer apj)roach to God is an enlargement

of honour. We must keep an even hand between natural bondage

and irreverence. Natural bondage ; we are sometimes afraid to come

into God's presence, and doubt of access, being so unworthy to come

before the Lord ; but we are privileged by our calling ; Christ by his

death hath made us kings and priests. The priests were sanctified to

draw nearer unto God than the common people, and to be employed

in his most holy service ; so if we be cleansed by the blood of Christ,

we are separated from the ungodly world, and may acquaint him with

all our desires, griefs, and fears. On the other side, against irreverence.

It is no easy matter to come before the Lord as we ought to do ; and

we must be sure to bless and thank the Eedeemer for this favour, that

we are made priests of God and Christ, that we are freed from the fears

of the second death : Rev. xx. 6, ' Blessed and holy is he that hatli

part in the first resurrection ; on such the second death hath no powei",

but they shall be priests of God and of Christ ; ' and we may hope for

a more solemn service.

Use 2. To exhort the children of God —

1. To long and hope for the time of their ministration in the

heavenly temple. When the time of our consecration is finished, then

we shall be admitted into this blessed estate. Oh, comfort yourselves

with the forethought of it ! There are many reasons to induce us —

[1.] Because then we shall see him whom we worship, and stand

before his throne. This is often promised : Ps. xvii. 15, 'As for me,

I shall behold thy face in righteousness ; I shall be satisfied, when I

awake, with thy likeness ; ' 1 John iii. 2, ' When he shall appear we

shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' So 1 Cor. xiii. 12,

\* Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face ; ' John

xvii. 24, \* Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be

with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast

given me.' Now it is a blessed thing to see what we love, and possess

what we see. The priests here, though they do not worship an unknown

God, yet they worship an unseen God. The Ptomans, when they brake

into the sanctum sanctorum, and saw no image there, gave out that the

liigh priest did worship the clouds. The world suspecteth the God

whom we worslii}) ; but there we see him face to face, with a clear and

distinct vision : 2 Cor. v. 7, ' For we walk by faith, not by sight.\*

There vision succeedeth in the room of faith, fruition of hope, and

perfect love of that weak adherence which now we put forth towards

God. If God should suffer himself to be seen by his creature in the

condition to which sin hath reduced him, it would prove rather a ground

of fear and astonishment than of love and fruition ; or else the majesty

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must be clouded with some allay of condescension, which would not

.sufficiently reveal him to us. The immediate presence of God, which

is our felicity in heaven, would be our misery upon earth. The scripture

telleth us, Exod. .xxxiii. 20, 'No man shall see him and live.' And

Manoah, Judges xiii. 22, ' We shall surely die, because we have seen God.'

We cannot look upon this glorious sun but we are in danger of losing

our life together with our sight. The scripture sometimes maketh God

to dwell in darkness, sometimes in light inaccessible, to note the

incapacity of our faculties, and the incomprehensible splendour of his

glorious majesty. We are not able to pierce through this darkness or

endure this light. But the majesty of God is not there formidable,

but comfortable ; for we shall behold the glorious God in a glorified

estate, both of soul and bod3^

[2.] We shall serve him perfectly, and without weakness, weariness,

and distraction.

(1.) Here is weakness. What dull and low conceptions have we of

God ! What heartless, irreverent, and poor expressions of his glorious

excellency whenever we come to worship before him ! such as should

make us ashamed to open our lips before the liord : Isa. vi. 5, ' Woe

is me, for I am undone,' saith the prophet Isaiah, 'for I am a man of

unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips ; for

mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.' Or as Job, chap,

xl. 4, ' Behold I am vile ; what shall I answer thee ? I will lay

my hand upon my mouth.' The best of God's servants, when their

eyes are but a little opened to see the glory of that God they speak to,

how sensible would they be of the shortness of their apprehension and

expressions of that God they speak to ! Alas ! how can such narrow

hearts frame an apprehension, or receive an impression of such an

infinite greatness and eternal goodness as there is in God ! But when

we shall see him as he is, then we shall better praise him, and conceive

more suitably of him.

(2.) Here is weariness, and we cannot endure long under our weak

duties, neither as to the frame of body nor mind ; but there God in

communion is always new and fresh to us every moment. And the

more we look upon the object, the more is the faculty fortified and

strengthened in conversing with God : Mat. xviii. 10, ' In heaven their

angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.'

The blessed spirits are never weary of beholding God, and enjoying his

glorious presence.

(3.) Here is distraction. We pretend, when we worship God, to

leave the world, and turn the back upon all things else, and to set our-

selves before the throne of God ; but alas ! we bring the flesh along

with us, and that will have its excursions, and so our hearts are stolen

away from under Christ's own arm. We mingle sulphur with our

incense, groan under divers infirmities : ' We cannot do what we would

do,' Gal. V. 17. But there is nothing to divert us from thinking of

God ; there is no blemish in priest or sacrifice ; nothing will appear in

us displeasing unto God, which is a comfort in our present weaknesses.

[3.] We shall then serve God uninterruptedly ; for tliere shall be

no impediment of business, nor need of sleep. Here earthly occasions

straiten Christ, and crowd up his interest in the soul, and we spend

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almost half our time in sleep, not showing one act of thankfulness to

God ; but then ' we shall he ever with the Lord,' 1 Thes. iv. 17. We

shall always stand before his throne of glory, and abide in his blessed

presence. Our labour shall not need repose, nor shall the night ever

draw a curtain upon that day. There will be no miseries, wants, and

necessities to distract us, and take off our minds. The whole strength

of our souls is carried out to God, and our time is spent wholly and

only in worshipping and serving God. Constant and perpetual solemn

service is a celestial privilege, and they that serve God most uninter-

ruptedly come nearest heaven, for there Christ is ever with us, and we

ever with him : 2 Cor. v. 8, ' We are confident, I say, and willing

rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.'

When absent from the body, we are present with the Lord, and shall

follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

[4.] There we are admitted into a nearer communion with God

than now in this mortal estate. We draw nigh to him now, but we

are not so nigh but there is some distance ; but in the palace of glory

our approach will be so near as to take away all distance, and we shall

have immediate and full communion with God. Now God is in heaven

and we upon earth, we receive no more of God than an ordinance can

convey to us. Hei'e and there he droppeth in a little comfort and

quickening into the soul ; the pipe cannot convey much, and the vessel

can hold less ; the means are narrow, and the person is not capacitated

to be filled up with all the fulness of God ; but then the Lord will do

his work by himself, the means shall not straiten him ; God will

communicate himself without means, and be instead of all means ; he

will be all in all, and therefore will communicate his grace in full per-

fection. The more we draw nigh to God here, the more like him.

Moses, while he conversed with God in the mount, his face shone.

Christ was transformed in his prayers : Luke ix. 29, ' And as he

prayed, the ftishion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment

was white and glistering.' So by proportion in heaven ; the nearer

we draw to God, the more we enjoy of him : 1 John iii. 2, ' When he

shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' Per-

fection of holiness is the glory and happiness of the saints in heaven ;

as iron by lying in the fire seemeth to be all fire ; when it is red-hot

the qualities of fire are imprinted on it; so we, by being ever with the

Lord, and ministering in his presence, have more of the divine nature

communicated unto us.

[5.] There is the unanimous conjunction of all the saints in the

praises of God, or a joining in comfort, without jarring or difference.

The apostle biddeth us, Rom. xv. 6, ' With one mind and with one

mouth to glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' It is

our duty, but never performed to the full, but when we meet together in

that great Travijyvpi';, that council of souls, or ' the general assembly and

church of the first-born,' which the apostle describeth, Heb. xii. 23,

\* The spirits of just men made perfect,' or consecrated. It is comfort-

able to join in worship with the people of God now. Moses preferred

it, with afflictions, before all the riches, and honours, and pleasures he

enjoyed in Egypt : Heb. xi. 24, ' Choosing rather to suffer affliction

with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of siu for a season.'

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But then is tlie communion of saints completed, when all are admitted

to the vision and clearest knowledge of God, and have the most perfect

adherence and love to him. Now what an happy time will that be,

when we and all the holy ones of God shall, with the same enlarged

affection, set about the same work ! as our groans here made but one

sound, and our conjoined tears but one stream, and our united desires but

one prayer, so all our praises then shall make but one melody and har-

mony. If it be an happiness to live with the saints in their imperfection,

when sin doth often embitter their society, surely it is an happiness to

live with them for ever when they are purged and freed from sin, and

fully consecrated and fitted to minister before the Lord.

[6.] To think of God, and to rejoice in his glory, and to love and

praise him, will be our great employment. There we shall be intent

upon our choice and noble work, which is praising and lauding God :

Ps. Ixxxiv. 4, ' Blessed are they that dwell in thy house ; they are still

praising thee.' Praises now are a part of our sacrifices, and must be

mingled with our prayers : Phil. iv. 6, ' In everything by prayer and

supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be known unto God.'

So Kev. V. 8, ' The four beasts and four-and-twenty elders fell down

before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full

of odours, which are the prayers of the saints.' Harps signify their

praises and thanksgivings. Here it cometh in by way of mixture, but

there it is our sole employment. There is no need of prayers, for there

are no sins, nor wants, nor necessities there; all is praise. David

calleth upon the angels ' to bless the Lord,' Ps. ciii. 20, to tell us

what they do. And when a multitude of them descended at Christ's

birth, Luke ii. 13, 14, they presently fell a-lauding and praising God,

' Glory be to God in the highest.' It is the opinion of the ancient

Hebrews that every day they sing praises to God, and that in the

morning ; this they gather from Gen. xxxii. 6, ' Let me go, for the day

breaketh;' which place the Targum of Jerusalem thus explaineth,

\* Let me go, for the pillar of the morning ascends ; and behold, the

hour approacheth that the angels are to sing.' This was their opin-

ion. Sure we are that the angels bless God, and that in an eminent

manner, as appeareth by frequent passages of scripture, where they

are called upon to bless the Lord ; for though the speech be in the

imperative mood, as if it were hortatory, yet it is to be expounded by

the indicative, as narrative of what the angels do. Particularly we

read they blessed God for his own excellence : Isa. vi. 1-3, ' In the

year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne,

high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the

seraphims ; each one had six wings ; with twain he covered his face,

and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And

one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of

hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.' For the creation : Job

xxxviii. 4-7, ' Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the

earth ? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the

measures thereof, if thou knowest ? or who hath stretched the line

upon it ? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened ? or who

laid the corner-stone thereof, when the morning-stars sang together,

and all the sons of God shouted for joy?' For the nativity of Christ :

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Luke ii. 13, 14, 'And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude

of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the

highest, on earth peace, good will toward men.' So they blessed

Christ : Kev. v. 11, 12, ' I beheld, and I heard the voice of many

angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the

number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands

of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was

slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and

honour, and glory, and blessing.' Though they cannot fully compre-

hend God, yet they do it far more clearly than we. They apprehend

God's excellency and perfection in himself; they know also the

excellency of his works, creation, and providence, and the redemption

of mankind. ' Then we shall know as we are known,' 1 Cor. xiii. 12,

and understand the faithfulness of God's conduct in bringing us to

glory. blessed time when we shall fall upon the work of angels,

when we shall have a sublime understanding to know God, an heart

to love him, and a mouth to praise him for evermore ! We shall not

need any excitement, but be willing and ready to do it. We have

greater cause of blessing God than the angels have. It is a question

whether an innocent or a penitent person is more bound to thank God ?

An innocent man is bound to praise God in respect of the greatness

of the benefit, and the continuance of it ; but a penitent man in respect

of the f reeness and graciousness of it. The freeness and graciousness

is much more conspicuous towards men. God was indeed good

and bountiful to the angels, creating them out of nothing, endowing

them with many excellent gifts ; but to man sinful was God good

indeed ; he loved us as enemies ; when his justice, offended by sin,

put a bar to our salvation, he spared not his beloved Son, but delivered

him to a cursed death in our room and stead.

2. To exhort us to prepare ourselves for this estate ; and let us

labour that we may be such as may be counted meet to minister before

the Lord in his heavenly temple. To this end —

[1.] Let us hasten the acts which belong to our consecration, and

attend upon them with more seriousness, which is the cleansing of the

soul from the guilt and stain of sin. From the guilt of sin : Kom. v.

1, 2, \* Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God,

through our Lord Jesus Christ ; by whom also we have access by faith

unto tills grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of

God.' Comfortable access to God here in the world depends upon our

justification ; the more clear that is, the more we are fitted to come

before the Lord. From the stain of sin : Mat. v. 8, ' Blessed are the

pure in heart, for they shall see God.' Though all see enough of God

to satisfaction, these see more than others do. Therefore the more we

cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, the more of God

shall we see, and the sooner shall we be admitted into his blessed

presence. It was an old observation, even among the heathens, ov ^iXel

0609 uTTodv^cTKet veo<;, that he whom God loveth dieth young. Not that

all that die young are beloved of God ; but ordinary observation will

teach you this, that let a man more than ordinarily improve in purity of

heart, though God may lend him to the world for an example for some

time, yet they are taken to God sooner than others ; or if they are

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continued in the world, they are continued under more weaknesses,

and do with more earnestness expect their translation to the everlasting

priesthood.

[2.] Let us begin our sacrifices, and discharge our priestly office now,

and perform all the duties which belong to our ministration with more

fidelity. Some of our duties are proper only to the present state, as

consecrating ourselves to God, and using ourselves for God ; that is out

of date then, for our consecration is over before we come there. It is

undeniable that the blessed spirits all live to God : Luke xx. 38, ' He

is not a God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him.' But

there is no need of giving up ourselves to God, for then we possess God.

Mercy is useless in an estate where misery cannot approach ; therefore

now it must be exercised. None are priests in heaven but those that

have acted the priest's part upon earth. But praise holds good now,

and then too : Ps. cvii. 22, 'Let us sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving,

and declare his works with rejoicing.' This is to tune our instruments,

and to be fitting ourselves for our everlasting work.

[3.] Let us be more frequent and often with God ; for the throne of

grace is the very porch of heaven ; by it we pass to the throne of glory.

Surely that life upon earth is best which is likest to the life of heaven :

Ps. Ixxxiv. 10, ' For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand : I had

rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the

tents of wickedness.' Prayer giveth us the nearest familiarity which a

man in flesh can have with God, and is the best preparation for our

entrance upon our everlasting priesthood. A man acquainted with a

God beforehand is not to seek for a God to pray to when he cometh to

die, nor for a mediator to intercede for him, nor for a spirit of adoption

to fly to God as a reconciled Father. Having been frequently enter-

tained and accepted by God, he can the better resign his spirit into his

hands, and with more confidence wait for this nearer attendance.

Alas ! to go out of the world into unknown and unseen regions, where

we are wholly strangers, how sad is that ! Who will venture into the

ocean who hath not learned to swim in the shallow brooks and streams ?

Communion with God in a way of grace is the way to communion

with him in a way of glory. We go to see him face to face whom we

have seen by the eye of faith, to live with him in heaven with whom

we have lived upon earth. Species non Iceiijicat in patria, quern Jides

non consolatur in via — Sight will not be joyful to him in heaven whom

faith hath not comforted upon earth. He that hath often heard and

accepted us will not reject us.

3. Let us be more apprehensive of the greatness of the privilege of

drawing nigh to God, that we may improve it accordingly. The priests

were sanctified to draw nearer to God than the common people, and

employed in his holy service. Yea, nearness of ministration before

the Lord is the felicity of the glorified. How must we improve it ?

[1.] Partly to be ashamed of our loathnessto draw nigh to God, and

our weariness of his special service. Oh, let us not shun God as an

enemy, and be loath to come into his special presence, or backward to

converse with him.

[2.] To thankfulness to our Redeemer. It was purchased by the

blood of Jesus : Heb. x. 19, ' Having therefore, brethren, boldness to

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enter into the lioliest by the blood of Jesus.' We may be the more

confident of drawing nigh to him in a way of grace, for he hath pur-

chased also our entrance into glory: Eph iii. 12, 'In whom we have

boldness, and access with confidence by the faith of him.'

Use 3. Comfort.

1. Against present weaknesses in duty. There will be a time when

we shall more perfectly express our thanksgiving to God.

2. Against troubles and sufferings. It must be so now, that we may

be conformed to our head ; but no molestation should be an impedi-

ment in our work.

3. Against death. It should make us willing to die, that we may

minister before the Lord. If David so longed for the enjoyment of God

in the earthly temple : Ps. Ixiii. 1, 2, ' God ! tlix)u art my God ; early

will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for

thee, in a dry and thirsty land where no water is ; to see thy power

and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary ; ' how much more

cause have we to long for the time when we shall be made priests to

him for ever ?

UPON LEYITICUS XIX. 17.

SEKMON L

Tliou shall not hate thy hrother in thy heart : thou shalt in any wise

rebuke thy neighbour^ and not suffer sin upon him. — Lev. xix. 17.

I AM to speak to you at this time concerning christian and brotherly-

reproof. Our first care should be that we are not sinners ourselves ;

our next, that we partake not of the sins of others ; which may not

only be by counselling and abetting their evil actions, but also by a faulty

connivance and silence, when the glory of God and love to our neigh-

bours' souls do loudly call upon us to mind them of their duty and warn

them of their danger. To this end I have made choice of this scripture,

\* Thou shalt not hate,' &c. Where take notice —

1. Of the removal of the impediment, ' Thou shalt not hate thy

brother in thy heart.'

2. An earnest excitement of the duty of reproof, ' Thou shalt in any

wise rebuke thy neighbour.'

3. A reason to enforce it, ' Thou shalt not suffer sin upon him,' or

that thou bear not sin for him.

First, A removal of the impediment or hindrance, ' Thou shalt not

hate thy brother in thy heart.' Hatred is forbidden when rebuke or

reproof is prescribed, for two reasons —

1. Because there is a supposition of wrong done ; that is, when any

man hath wronged us in anything, let him not nourish hatred or anger

in his bosom, lest by abiding there long, it soureth into malice and

revenge ; rather go and show them the evil that they have done, to

bring them to repentance. It is said of Absalom, 2 Sam. xiii. 22, that

\* Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad, for

Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.'

Amnon did the wrong, but Absalom reproved him not, because he hated

him. Implacable malice and desire of revenge is hid under silence and

dissimulation : ' He spake neither good nor bad to Amnon,' to wit, of

that subject of the rape committed upon his sister ; he reproved not

the fact, that so he might conceal his malice, till he found occasion to

put the same in execution ; and this is the fashion of all that regard the

wrong done to themselves, but not the offence done to God. Well, then,

since hatred begets close and cunning dissimulation, till it have a full

advantage to put forth itself, it is opposite to reproof; it is as fire

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raked under aslies, and reserved till another day. The historian Tacitus

observetli it in Tiberius, who being offended by some words spoken in

the senate by Haterius and Scaurus, In Haterium statim invecius,

Scaurum cui implacabilis irascehatur, silentio transmittit — The one

he rebuked, the other, whom he implacably hated, he passed by with

silence. Therefore God, well knowing the disposition of man, giveth

this direction by his servant Moses, ' Hate not thy brother in thy heart,

but rebuke him in any wise.' So that you see it is meant of hatred,

rising of offences principally ; wherefore rebuke him, hate him not for

such things. Suitable to this is the law of Christ : Luke xvii. 3, ' Take

heed to yourselves : if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him ;

and if he repent, forgive him.' Do your utmost to reduce any that

offendeth, though it be by injuring thee ; do not desire revenge, but

seek an opportunity to pardon him upon his reformation : Mat. xviii.

15, ' If tby brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault

between thee and him alone ; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained

thy brother ; ' that is, thy charity must be sure to put off all thoughts

of revenge against him ; yea, it will oblige thee to use all prudent

methods to bring him to a sense of his fault, and the most discreet

and gentle ways are first to be essayed. That is the first reason.

2. He that doth not rebuke his brother when he doth anything

amiss doth indeed hate him, not love him. There are two things

which put us upon reproof — zeal for God's glory, and love to our neigh-

bour's soul. There is a defect in our zeal if we do not seek to repair

God's honour when it is wounded by others : Ps. Ixix. 9, ' The zeal of

thine house hath eaten me up, and the reproaches of them that re-

proached thee have fallen upon me.' Injuries done to God and religion

affect us no less nearly than personal wrongs done to ourselves. So

there is a defect in our love and charity to others to let them alone in

soul-dangers ; and therefore reproof, as it is opposed to hatred, so it is

opposed also to flattery, which is false and corrupt love : Prov. xxviii.

23, ' He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than

he that flattereth with his tongue.' When we are about to reprove

others for their faults, we are afraid we shall offend them, and that all

friendship will be broken off between us and them, and so are tempted

to connive at others' sinful courses for fear of a rupture and breach

with them. Alas! at length, though the party be displeased a little

for the present, when he recovereth and cometh to himself again, he

will see that you showed him the true friendship, whereas others that

connived at or flattered him in his sins, however they sought to please

his humour, hated his soul ; and they will love you the better for it,

because you awaken them out of their sins, that would have been their

eternal ruin. It is possible you may enrage a wicked and haughty

scorner, but then you have discharged your duty, and freed your own

soul. But for others, you get the more favour and thanks, because

yon have done a true office of love. So that that which you are afraid

will be an occasion of breaking off friendship, will prove a means to

nourish love : Prov. ix. 8, ' Pteprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee ;

rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.' Gain him to a sense of his

duty, and he will bless God for thee while he hath a day to live. So

Prov. xxvii. 5, 6, ' Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful

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are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.'

Open rebuke is when we' plainly, and sometimes sharply, convince men

of their errors or sins they lie in ; this is better than hidden love, for

that is of no use and profit to us. He that reduceth me into the way

when I go astray, and plucketh me out of the fire and water when I

am in danger to be drowned or burned, though he break an arm or

leg ; be that cureth my disease, though by a sharp and troublesome

medicine, doth me a greater benefit than he that professeth great love

to me, and lets me alone to perish, and will not reach an hand to pluck

me out, out of tenderness, as loath to trouble me. That is called

hidden love that doth not make itself known by the offices of love and

friendship, or for fear of offence will not warn a man of his danger ; it

is indeed true hatred. The next verse is to the same purpose. It

may be my friend wounds me, as the physician lets me bleed to cure

my fever ; he doth it in faithfulness. A sharp reproof is there called

' a wound,' but it is the faithfulness of my friend, not done out of rancour

or malice, with a desire to shame and reproach me ; it is intended for

my good; but ' the kisses of an enemy,' or one that hateth me and my

soul, ' are deceitful.' By ' kisses ' are meant the pretences of great

love to us, as Joab kissed Araasa, and stabbed him, 2 Sam. xx. 9, 10;

and Judas kissed Christ, and betrayed him. Mat. xxvi, 48, 49. Alas !

this love is but deceitful, whilst it betrayeth your souls. That this is

true love appeareth also, because thus God dealeth himself with bis

own children : Prov. iii. 12, ' For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth,

even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.' God loveth his

children dearly, but yet will not let them perish in their sins, therefore

sometimes heuseth a smart discipline towards them. Satan seekethtolull

them asleep by the delights of the flesh, but God awakeneth them by

the sharp corrections and rebukes of his providence. I will but

add David's expression, which showeth what thoughts he had of a

sharp reproof wisely administered : Ps. cxli. 5, ' Let the righteous

smite me, it shall be a kindness ; and let him reprove me, it shall be

an excellent oil, which shall not break my head.' David, perceiving

what mischief those unhappy flatterers that Saul had about him had

procured to him, beggeth of God as a great blessing that he might

have such godly and faithful friends about him as would never consent

to any wrong deed of his, and would not only dissent, but dissuade him

from it, yea, reprove him, and rebuke him sharply, if need were ; which

sort of friendly smiting would be a most acceptable good turn as could

be performed to him. Surely he that truly hateth sin loveth to be

freely dealt withal, and reproved and admonished of it. It may be

the reproof is as a wound to the flesh, which is proud and impatient

of contradiction ; but it is the fruit of love unfeigned ; and when we

are in our right wits, it should be as a precious oil, which they were

wont to pour on the head, both for health, and cheering, and gladness.

Secondly, The exhortation itself, ' Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy

neighbour.' Here is — (1.) The object ; (2.) The act.

1. The object, thy neighbour and brother. Here the question will

be the same that was put to Christ : Luke x. 29, ' Who is my neigh-

bour ? ' Christ answereth him by a parable, and showeth him that

every one that stood in need of his charity, he is the object of thy

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compassion and mercy. So in tins piece of charity, by 'brother\* and

' neighbour ' is meant any other man, though he be to thee as a Jew to

a Samaritan, upon terms of the greatest separation and hostility towards

thee. So our Lord teacheth elsewhere : Mat. v. 43, 44, ' Ye have

heard that it hath been said. Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate

thine enemy : but I say unto you. Love your enemies, bless them that

curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that de-

spitefully use you, and persecute you.' Offices of love must be extended

to all, even to aliens and enemies ; therefore for this case am I to

reprove an infidel or one of a false religion ?

We answer briefly, as the apostle, Gal. vi. 10, \* As we have therefore

opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially to them who are

of the household of faith.'

[1.] By the law of charity I owe this office of love to all, for I should

bring home as many to God as possibly I can. Neither age, nor sex,

nor any condition of life doth deprive them of the benefit, nor exempt

me from ray duty to them. Unbelievers are our neighbours, and to be

loved with a true love ; besides (j)L\ahe\(f)ia, ' Love of the brethren,'

dyd-m], ' love ' is required of christians: 2 Peter i. 7, ' Add to brotherly-

kindness charity.' And therefore they must not be excluded from the

common act and office of charity that belongeth to all men as men.

Spiritual alms is no more restrained than bodily. Now upon occasion

we are bound to relieve the worst in their great necessity, and none

have such great necessity of being reduced as infidels, for they are

further from God and more gone astray than others, and therefore most

need information and warning of the danger they are in. An unbeliever

may reprove a believer; so on the contrary: Gen. xx. 16, 'And

Abimelech said unto Sarah, Behold, I have given to thy brother a

thousand pieces of silver ; behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes

to all that are with thee, and with all other : thus was she reproved.'

This heathen king reproved her, because she wore not a veil, as wives

are wont to do, but dissembled, and thereby she was in danger of being

ensnared, and giving occasion of these mischiefs ; as if he should say,

Acknowledge freely hereafter that he is thy husband, and cover thy

face in token that thou art a married woman, and that consequently he

is the shield and defence of thy chastity ; let it be a lesson and warn-

ing to thee to be more circumspect hereafter.

[2.] This is chiefly to be done to christians, and those who are

members of the same church, for in a chief respect they are to be

reckoned brother and neighbour. They have a nearer brotherly con-

junction with us than others, and the precept of brotherly correction

introduceth that discipline which is to be used in the church for ever :

Mat. xviii. 15-17, 'Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee,

go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone : if he shall hear

thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then

take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three

witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to

hear them, tell it to the church ; but if he neglect to hear the church,

let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican ; ' that is, thy

fellow christian, he is first to be admonished privately, without putting

him to any shame or reproach, and if he mend upon such admonition,

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there is an end. It is comfort enough to you to be an happy instru-

ment of his repentance. But if that first method succeed not, other

courses must be taken; and the case is to be brought before the

christian church, ver. 17, that it receive no damage by wilful and

obstinate offenders ; so that reproof doth mostly concern the scandalous

sins of a brother or professed believer.

[3.] Among christians, some are more nearly related to us, either by

the bonds of natural kindred or special friendship, as those of our

family, and with whom we have familiar converse. We know not the

estate of those who are at a distance, but those within the sphere of

our commerce we are more particularly concerned in ; as the apostle

says as to corporal relief: 1 Tim. v. 8, ' If any provide not for his own,

and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faitli, and

is worse than an infidel.' They act quite contrary to the laws of Christ.

So here, they that are of the same family, we are bound in a special

manner to seek their good and welfare, because, besides the common

bond of christian charity, there is a special tie of kindred and relation,

and also because this nearness and relation givetli an opportunity of

frequent commerce, and opportunity is one of the talents which we are

to account for.

2. The act is rebuking or reproving him for sin, which must be

done faithfully, compassionately, and prudently.

[1.] Faithfully; for in the Hebrew it is 'in rebuking thou shalt

rebuke ; ' that is, freely, plainly, soundly reprove him ; for doubling of

the words in the Hebrew increaseth the sense. We render it, ' Thou

shalt in any wise rebuke.' We must sometimes, i\e'y)(ecv d7roT6/jLco<;.

So Titus i. 13, ' Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the

faith.' But the end and circumstances must govern the matter, for

corrosives are not proper to all wounds and diseases, and a proud

censure is not a charitable reproof. Therefore in the general it must

be so as it may best obtain its effect.

[2.] With lenity and christian meekness, that it may appear an act

of love ; not the fruit of passion, but compassion : Gal. vi. 1, ' If a man

be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in

the spirit of meekness.' When we would reclaim and restore such as

are surprised with any sin, we must do it in such a manner that they

may see our love to them, and that we have a right aim, which is not

tlie reproach and disgrace of the person, but his reformation and amend-

ment. Our indignation against the sin must not transport us, or carry

us besides our pity to the person ; and there must not appear in it the

rigour and severity of censure which proceedeth of pride, but the lenity

of love, considering the circumstance of human frailty, and our own

proneness to offend if we were in like circumstances. It is our brother's

amendment we look after, not to beget in others an ill opinion of him,

or a good opinion of ourselves, as if we were singular in holiness and

hatred of sin above others ; and we must by all means show that our

reproving proceedeth from a zeal for the glory of God, and love to and

care of the salvation of our neighbour.

[3.] Prudently. All circumstances must be well weighed, of person,

time, and place, occasion, and the temptations to the offence, that all

things may be done conveniently, and proportionable to the end : Prov.

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XXV. 12, ' As an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is

a wise reprover upon an obedient ear ; ' that is, wise reproof is a precious

jewel, that is not so great an ornament to the ear as a wise seasonable

reproof is acceptable to a gracious lieart. Eeproof is an ear-jewel ; now

an ear-jewel must not be too weighty and heavy, lest it tear and rend,

rather than adorn the ear.

Thirdly, The argument by which this duty is enforced, ' Lest thou

bear sin for him ; ' that is the marginal reading ; in the text, ' Thou

shalt not suffer sin upon him;' either reading aflfordetli a strong

argument.

1. ' Thou shalt not suffer sin upon him;' that is, not leave him in

his sin unrepvoved. Sin should be so odious to a gracious heart, that,

as we should be careful not to commit it ourselves, so we should not

permit it to lie upon others. As we would shake off a spark of fire

from their clothes, so we must not suffer any sinful blemish to remain

upon their consciences and conversations. God would every way hedge

us within our duty ; as by mourning for the sins of others he teacheth

us penitence for our own, so by reproving others' sins he teacheth us

caution for ourselves : Kom. ii. 1, ' Thou art inexcusable, man, who-

soever thou art that judgest ; for wherein thou judgest another, thou

condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.\*

They that live and go on in these sins, in judging others they condemn

themselves.

2. The other reading also offereth a good argument, ' That thou

bear not sin for him.' To bear sin is to bear punishment ; as Christ is

said to ' bear our sins in his body upon the tree,' when he endured the

punishment due to our sins, 1 Peter ii. 24. So he that reproveth not

sin is said to bear sin for his brother or neighbour, that is, punishment

for his sake, because he seeketh not to save a soul from death ; as the

Lord threateneth, Ezek. iii. 18, ' When I say unto the wicked, Thou

shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn

the wicked from his wicked way to save his life, the same wicked man

shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hands.\*

Others are to answer for it, who have ability and opportunity to reprove.

Now we have sins enough of our own, that we need not take on us a

new guilt, and be partakers of other men's sins, or bear more for their

sakes.

From the whole observe —

Doct. That brotherly reproof is a necessaiy duty, which all are

bound to practise as well as they can.

I. Let us consider the kind of the duty which we are bound to

enforce. Reproof and admonition is either authoritative and by way

of office, or charitative and by way of general duty.

1. For reproof by way of office we have many scriptures : 2 Tim.

iv. 2, ' Preach the word ; be instant in season, out of season ; reprove,

rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine;' that is, urge

them, press them, call upon them when they are at leisure to hear,

and come together for that purpose ; or when thou hast any oppor-

tunity to fasten anything upon them at other times. Labour still to

convince the evil-doers of their wicked courses. This is the continual

duty of ministers, and they must mind it e'y/caipa)?, a/cai/so)?, \* in

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-season, out of season ; both when they liave probable opportunities, and

when they take occasion, thougli they find it not ; when the hearers, it

may be, think it not so seasonable : the recovery of souls must not be

delayed.

2. Keproof by way of general duty, which lieth upon all men that

are capable, and have the use of reason. Of this the apostle speaketh,

1 Thes. V. 14, ' Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are

unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient

towards all men.' All these are duties of christian charity, which

belong to private believers : vovOeTelre rov'; araKTov;, ' Warn them that

are unruly.' Keproof is one of these duties: 2 Thes. iii. 15, 'Count

him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother,' vovOeTsire;

set his duty in his mind. Again, all christians nmst contribute their

help to preserve the church of Chiist from scandal and prejudice ; and

therefore, when they see any man forsake his station and his work, tliey

must admonish him of his fault, and never leave till they have reduced

him into his proper posture and place again. Now there is a difference

between these two duties ; for the one is not only an act of charit}^, but

justice ; the other is an act of charity, and that general duty that we owe

to a neighbour as a neighbour. The one is done by a superior, by virtue of

his office ; the other is done by an equal towards his equal, or by a

superior by virtue of his common relation. The one is done publicly

by right dividing the word of truth, and giving every one his portion ;

the other is done privately between us and our brother, that we may

gain him according to Christ's rule. The one is done by public decla-

ration, and the evidence of truth in their consciences, disapproving their

evil deeds : John iii. 20, ' Every one that doeth evil hateth the light,

neither cometh he to the ligiit, lest his deeds should be reproved.' The

other is done by closer application, or personal charge for the sins that

we have heard and seen : Gal. ii. 11, ' When Peter was come to Antioch,

I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.' The one

requireth aptness of gifts, the other only christian prudence and a

fervent charity. This latter we have now in hand,

II. The arguments by which we are to enforce it ; which are needful

in this case, because men are so apt to bear with sin, both in themselves

and others ; and this duty is of so great use, that Satan seeketh to

hinder it with all his power ; and so hard to be done rightly, that most

men quite omit it.

1. I shall prove it from the law of nature, which teacheth me to love

my neighbour as myself; and therefore conscience bindeth me to reduce

those into the right way who are gone out of it ; this is the obliging

internal cause. We ourselves by a regular will, having erred, would

be glad to be reduced, and set into the right way again : Jer. viii. 4,

' Thus saitli the Lord, Shall they fall, and not arise ? shall they turn

away, and not return ? ' Is any man so absurd, heedless, and witless,

that when he hath gotten a fall, will lie still, and not essay to get up

again ? or that hath been unwittingly out of the way, and will not

desire to come into it again, and be willing to receive direction from

those that woidd set him rio:ht ? Now this being a dictate of nature,

produced by God himself by his prophet, to aggravate then- apostasy,

who having fallen by their sin, refused to rise and return, holdeth good

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also to others, whom we are to love as ourselves. And therefore, when

they are fallen, w^e must help them to rise aj^ain ; and when they are

turned away, we must help them to return. This is so niitural, that the

very birds and beasts desire to return to their proper places in their

natural and appointed time when they have wandered ; as the prophet

speaketh of the stork, turtle, and crane : ver. 7, ' Yea, the stork in the

heaven knoweth her appointed times ; and the turtle, and the crane,

and the swallow, observe the time of their coming.' Now, from that

reciprocal obligation that is between men and the law of nature, we are

bound to reprove our brother ; as we desire it, and expect it from tliera,

to be set right when we are wrong, we are to pay the same debt of love

to them again. The argument holdeth a fortiori, because in spiritual

things the danger is greater, the good to be procured is greater, the evil

to be feared greater. Yea, this argument is the stronger, because it

holdeth good concerning the ox and ass ; not only of our own neigh-

bour, but of our enemy ; as Exod. xxiii. 4, ' If thou meet thine enemy's

ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again ; '

and Dent. xxii. 1, ' Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox, or his sheep, go

astray, and hide thyself from them ; thou shalt in any case bring them

again to thy brother.' Surely hereby God would teach every man not

to look on his own things only, but to love and do good to other men.

This duty required towards beasts is much more towards men : Ezek.

xxxiv. 4, ' Ye have not brought again that which was driven away, and

ye have not sought that which was lost.' We are all like sheep going

astray, and have need of one another's help. Mark, there are two

precepts in Deut. xxii. 1 — a prohibition, not to hide, and a command-

ment, to restore ; so that they are doubly guilty that are not affected

with other men's sins, or do not seek to reform tliem.

2. It is a duty because positively commanded by God ; so that unless we

will be guilty of flat disobedience, we ought to mind it. God bindeth all

men to reprove their erring brother and neighbour, keeping the rules

of prudence, justice, and charity. Now that God hath commanded this,

many of the scriptures cited before prove : Mat. xviii. 15, 'If thy brother

offend thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee ; ' which

is to be understood not only of offences done to us, but to be extended

to all wilful crimes of which Ave see him guilty ; for zeal for God should

prevail with us as much as injuries done to ourselves ; and it is not

angry reproach, but christian admonition that we press you to : 1 Thes.

v. 14, ' Warn them that are unruly ; ' 2 Thes. iii. 15, ' Admonish him

as a brother.' So Eom. xv. 14, ' I myself also am persuaded of you,

my brethren, that ye are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge,

able to admonish one another.' So Prov. xxv. 8-10, ' Go not forth

hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when

thy neighbour hath put thee to shame. Debate thy cause with thy

neighbour himself, and discover not a secret to another, lest he that

heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.' All

these expressions concern brotherly reproof, debating matters in case of

offence and injury real or supposed. If we presently run to law, with-

out using previous gentle methods of taking up matters among ourselves,

we run a great hazard, both of loss and infamy. Better end it by

friendly composition than running to the judge, where, by many uu-

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happy representations, a righteous cause may be oppressed. But for

the common duty of christians, see Eph. v. 11, ' Have no fellowship

with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.' The

Avord fidWov ' rather,' doth not lessen oar duty, but enforce it. 'Exk^x^iv

Sel, saith Chrysostom, we ought to reprove. We shall not be excused

before God unless we do our duty. So Jude 22, 2.3, ' And of some

have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear,

pulling them out of the fire.'

SEKMON II.

Thou sJialt not hate ilmj brother in thy heart : thou shalt in any loise

rehiiJce thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him — Lev. xix. 17.

Thirdly, Consider how far it bindeth.

[1.] Intensively, as to the value of the precept. It is not an arbitrary

direction, which we may omit or observe at pleasure, but a necessary

precept, which wc must obey.

(1.) From the danger we incur. We are under danger of sin, and

bearing punishment for them whom we reprove not ; and the punish-

ment of sin is eternal death, if it be omitted out of a culpable negligence.

Eternal life and eternal death is in the case ; there is no doubt of

superiors, who by justice and office are bound to reprove, as well as by

the law of common love and charity : Ezek. xxxiii. 6, ' His blood will

I require at the watchman's hands.' But even private persons may

bear sin for others.

(2.) Because of the good which cometh thereby, which is the glory

of God and the gaining of our brother : Mat. xviii. 15, ' Thou hast

gained thy brother.' And the gaining of another's soul is no small

advantage ; this will be your crown and rejoicing in the day of the

Lord. To enforce both, consider that text. Pro v. xxiv. 11, 12, ' If thou

forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are

ready to be slain : if thou sayest, Behold we knew it not ; doth not he

that pondereth the heart consider it ? and he that keepeth thy soul,

doth not he know it ? and shall not he render to every man according

to his w^orks ? ' Hei'e is a work of charity, delivering the innocent

from temporal death. The sin is a sin of omission ; every man is

bound to do what he can to save Ids neighbour from imminent de-

struction. It is our duty not to be silent and see liim perish ; with a

safe conscience we cannot do so ; it is against the light of nature and

all honesty to use tergiversation in this case, when we have probability

to help it ; and will not this hold good in the case of brotherly reproof,

when thou seest thy neighbour likely to perish, and be undone for

ever ? The same charity that bindeth us to deliver him from temporal

death will much more bind us to deliver him from eternal death : Heb.

iii. 12, 13, 'Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of

unbelief, in departing from the living God.' Not only in you your-

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selves, but ' in any of you/ us will be clear in the remedy prescribed :

\* But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day ; lest any

of you be hardened through the deceilfuluess of sin.' This is a work

of christian charity, which we owe to one another as christian

brethren. But see how God answereth the excuse, ' If thou sayest,

Behold we knew it not.' They knew not the danger or innocency

of the person. Can you answer so to God ? ' Doth not he that pon-

dereth the heart consider?' &c. He will be judge whether you love

your brother, yea or no ? whether this pretence l;e cowardice or mere

ignorance ?

[2.] How far the obligation reacheth extensively. It bindeth all ; for

all are to be able : Coi. iii. 16, ' Let the word of God dwell in you

richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another ; ' and

Kom. XV. 14, ' I am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full

of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one

another.' There are several relations between christians, but all are

bound to reprove. Some are superiors, some are inferiors ; superiors

are bound in point of justice ; inferiors in point of charity. Superiors

that have charge of souls are much more bound to reprove than others ;

God's threatenings against them are more grievous if they neglect this

duty of love. The watchman must not spare. Yea, they are bound

though it be with the danger of their lives ; as Mat. x. 16, 'Behold, I

send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.' John the Baptist

reproved Herod, though it cost him his life, Mark vi. 27. And tlie

reason is, they have a double tie and bond upon them, as their office

and relation, besides the common bond of charity.

But now whether inferiors are bound to reprove those that are over

them ?

Yes, certainly ; for David, a king, did receive with meekness a

reproof not only from Nathan, a prophet, but from Abigail, a woman,

1 Sam. XXV. 32, 33 ; and Job produceth it as a proof of his integrity

that he despised not the cause of his man-servant, or of his maid-

servant, when they contended with him. Job xxxi. 13. Certainly we

owe this duty to superiors, as their danger is greater. To save a

private person is not so much as to do good to one that shineth in a

higher sphere. Well, then, we are bound to reprove all whom we are

bound to love, whether superiors or inferiors. But then to superiors

we are to use great modesty : 1 Tim. v. 1, ' Rebuke not an elder, but

entreat him as a father, and the younger men as brethren.' It should

be rather an exhortation and entreaty than a reproof. So princes and

magistrates, who are subject to errors and miscarriages, may with

humility and wisdom be admonished ; as Naaman's servant : 2 Kings

V. 13, 'My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing,

wouldstthou not have done it ? how much rather then, when he saith.

Wash and be clean ? ' Dan. iv. 27, \* Wherefore king, let my counsel

bo acceptable to thee;' and Col. iv. 17, ' Say to Archippus, Take

heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou

fulfil it.'

But 3'et this is still a generality. If every one be bound to reprove

all, and all every one, when shall we know that this duty is to be put

in act ?

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Ans. The admonislicr should have a calling to it through some rela-

tion between him and the offender. So we may find it in all kind of

relations ; a minister or prophet, as Nathan reproved David, 2 Sam.

xii. 1 ; as a counsellor, Joab reproveth him : 2 Sam. xix. 5, 6, ' Thou

hast shamed this day the faces of all tliy servants, which have saved

thy life ; ' a yoke-fellow, as the husband the wife : Job ii. 10, ' Thou

speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh.' The wife the

husband, as Abigail to Nabal : 1 Sam. xxv. 37, ' And it came to pass

in the morning, when the wine was gone out of his head, and his wife

had told him these things, his heart died within him, and he became

as a stone.' A son, as Jonathan to Saul: 1 Sam. xix. 4, 'And

Jonathan spake good of David to Saul his father, and said unto him,

Let not the king sin against his servant, against David, because he

hath not sinned against thee ; ' a servant admonisheth a prince,

2 Kings V. 13 ; a subject, so Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 27 ;

a friend to his friend : Prov. xxvii. 6, ' Faithful are the wounds of a

friend.' Yea, a stranger travelling by the way, and seeing his fellow-

traveller sin, or sitting at the same table, it is a call, because he is then

in his company, and there is the sin committed ; for so Christ proveth

the Samaritan was a neighbour to the Jew, when he lighted upon him,

Luke X. 29. So that the duty, though it universally obligeth, yet it

is not impracticable ; there is something giveth us the occasion.

4. It is recommended. When, besides the precept, there is a com-

mendation, it showeth the value of a duty. Now God not only com-

mandeth, but commendeth to us both the giving and taking a reproof,

and that upon the highest and most pressing motives.

[1.] Let us see how the giving a reproof is recommended to us as

a means to increase knowledge : Prov. xix. 25, ' Pieprove one that

hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge ; ' that is,

profit in the fear of the Lord. Yea, as a means to convey life : Prov.

vi. 23, ' And reproofs of instruction are the way of life.' They are a

means to reduce men to God and eternal happiness ; and it is called

saving a soul from death : James v. 19, 20, ' Brethren, if any of you

do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he that

converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from

death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.' So Prov. xxiv. 25, ' But

to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall

come upon him ; ' that is, all will pray for him, whereas they curse

and detest flatterers. Many such promises there are.

[2.] Taking a reproof is commended : Eccles. vii. 5, ' It is better to

hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.'

It saddens the heart for the present, yet it is more wholesome and

beneficial than vain mirth, that puts us off from seriousness in soul-

dangers, and feedeth our lusts and corruptions. So Prov. xiii. 18,

' Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction, but he

that regardetli reproof shall be honoured.' A headstrong wicked man

bringeth himself to beggary and shame, but he that taketh counsel

betimes soon wipeth off the stain of his miscarriages. So see two

j^roverbs together : Prov. xv. 31, 32, ' The ear that heareth the reproof

of life abideth among the wise : he that refuseth instruction despiseth

his own soul ; but he that hearetli reproof getteth understanding.'

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The one is a slight careless person, that despiseth God and his salva-

tion ; but the other giveth a token of a wise and tractable disposition.

So Prov. xvii. 10, ' A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an

hundred stripes into a fool.' Correption doth more good than correc-

tion. Now when God dotli argue and jiersuade, and not only interpose

his authority, surely this is a duty of importance, which we should

make conscience of.

5. If God hath given directions about it, it is unquestionably a duty

belonging to us ; for directions suppose the duty, and show tliat God

would not have it miscarry in our hands. As when God directeth to

pray, he supposeth prayer ; when God directeth to hear, he supposcth

hearing ; so when he directeth to reprove, he supposeth reproof to be

a duty. Now the word of God doth everywhere abound with these

directions : as with what lenity and meekness we should reprove : 2 Cor.

ii. 4, ' For out of much afHiction and anguish of heart I wrote unto j'ou

with many tears ; not that you should be grieved, but that you may

know the love which I have more abundantly unto you; ' Gal. vi. 1,

\* Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual

restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest

thou also be tempted.' What difference we should make of faults.

Gnats and camels : Mat. xxiii. 24, ' Ye blind guides, which strain at

a gnat, and swallow a camel.' Of persons : Jude 22, 23, ' And of

some have compassion, making a difference ; others save with fear,

pulling them out of the fire.'

6. The duty is necessary to prevent a sin, such as detraction, cen-

sure, and backbiting. It is the usual fashion of the world to change a

duty into a sin ; it should be the care of God's people to change a

sin into a duty : Eph. v. 4, ' Not foolish talking or jesting, which are

not convenient, but rather giving of thanks.' So do not speak of them

that sin, but to them ; do not judge, but reprove.

7. That without which no society can be maintained, no relation

faithfully improved, certainly is an unquestionable duty ; but so is

reproof. No society can be maintained, for faults will arise, the injured

will vent themselves in passion or reproof ; now which conduceth to

the welfare of human society ? And for relations, how can I be faithful

to God in them unless I take advantage of this nearness and frequency

of converse for spiritual use ? Even good men will miscarry : if we be

privy to it, must we hold our peace ? Well, then, observe the reason-

ableness of God's ordinance.

III. Wiiat is reproof ? It is an act of charity or mercy, by which

we seek by fit discourse to draw our brother from sin to his duty.

1. It is an act of charity and mercy, not of pride and vaingloiy :

James iii. 1, \* My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that wo shall

receive the greater condemnation.' No ; it is not an act of mastery or

rash judging, but of mercy towards our brother in his spiritual misery,

as he hath rendered himself obnoxious to God's wrath.

2. The means it useth is fit discourse, not correction and chasten-

ing, but correption or rebuke. It must be dispensed in most wholesome

ways, such as may be most fit to gain a sinner and heal his soul. To

some we must use more tenderness, but more sharpness to others. In

general, we reprove from God's word: Col. iii. 16, 'Let the word of

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Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing

one another ; ' that the offender may see God reproving him rather

than man ; as Christ reproved the pharisees with mere words of

scripture : Mat. xv. 7-9, ' Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of

you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouths, and

honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me : but in

vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of

men.' The reproof must be insinuated as the matter requireth, either

by exhortation, admonition, or caution.

3. The end, not to shame him, but to gain him from sin to his duty.

If the man be good, to set him in joint again : Gal. vi. 1, ' Brethren,

if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such

nn one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be

tempted.' If carnal, to take this occasion to turn him from sin to

holiness, or to save his soul from death : James v. 19, 20, ' Brethren,

if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know

that he which convertelh the sinner from the error of his way shall

save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.'

IV. Let us see when this duty bindeth or bindeth not ; for it being

an affirmative precept, it doth not bind at all times, but as circumstan-

tiated. Affirmative precepts, oion ligant ad semper, do not always bind,

as negative precepts do, for evil actions are never lawful. Affirmative

prece})ts bind only when time and place and other circumstances con-

cur ; and then the omission is faulty.

The question then is, at what times and in what circumstances this

duty bindeth ?

1. It bindeth not if I do not certainly or probably know the sin of

my neighbour ; for reproof by way of charge uuist be upon an appai'enf

crime ; as Gal. ii. 11, ' But when Peter was come to Antioch, I with-

stood him to the face, because he was to be blamed ; ' 1 Cor. v. 1, ' It

is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such

fornication as is not so much as named among the gentiles ; that one

should have his father's wife , ' 1 Cor. i. 11, ' For it hath been declared

imto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe,

that there are contentions among you.' Mark the grounds ; he goeth

upon certain knowledge, public fame, and valuable testimony : ' It is

commonly reported,' and ' it is declared by the house of Chloe.' Faults

that we reprove must be certainly known and evident ; we may not

reprove upon bare suspicion, for ' charity thinketh no evil,' 1 Cor. xiii.

5 ; nor upon an uncertain hearsay : Isa. xi. 3, ' Neither reprove after

the hearing of his ears ; ' not upon flying report, or forged stories, or

the censures of any.

But here we must distinguish between the reproof of a public and

private person and a bosom friend.

[1.] Mere private persons are not bound to use inquisition them-

selves, nor are they to be too suspicious, and credulously give ear to

slanders. If private persons were bound to search and find out faults

that they may reprove them, the obligation were intolerable, the number

of sinners being so innumerable as they are, and a man could hardly

avoid the imputation of a busybody and whisperer. Therefore it is a

good rule of Austin, Do not seek out what thou mayest rejirove, but

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seek to mend what tliou dost reprove. Therefore private men are not

bound to search and find out faults. The knowledge of another's sin

is not scienlia juris, which all are bound to have, but scientia facti,

which none are bound to but those to whom the particular care of

others' souls doth belong by office ; for iDcir in pares non liabet imper'mm

— equals have no power over one another. The fault must be known

either by certain knowledge or common fame, when you see your brother

sinning.

[2.] A superior and bosom friend may go upon suspicion, but then

his reproof must be rather by way of caution than charge, and by virtue

of special friendship, that as no guilt, so no blame may rest upon his.

friend. A superior is to search out the matter.

2. Not if he hath repented already ; for to upbraid men with past

sins is to rake in the filth which God hath covered. The elder brother

said, Luke xv. 30, ' As soon as this thy son is come, which hath

devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted

calf.' There is a difference between the correction of a superior and

the reproof of a neighbour. The correction of a magistrate respects

the common good or the example of others ; and therefore, whether the

man repent or no, he may be corrected and punished for his faults, and

he must patiently endure the punishment ; but brotherly reproof respects

the private good of the party admonished or reproved, to remove the

fault, not to inflict punishment ; the end is obtained if thou hast gained

thy brother.

But yet here is an exception ; if we have good cause to suspect his

repentance is not thorough and sincere, or if he be in danger of a relapse

into the sin again.

3. If it be evident he shall do no good by his reproof; for all means

are required in order to the end. Therefore when there is no appear-

ance of doing good at all, or that our reproof will be profitable or attain

its proper end, we are not bound in such a case. Ministerial reproof

must be given though there be no hope : Ezek. ii. 5, ' And they,,

whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, for they are a

rebellious house, yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among

them.' The waters of the sanctuary must flow, whether men drink of

them or no. But in private reproof we are bound while there is hope,

and while they are not incorrigible. Yet there is this exception ;

every attempt must not discourage us, nor every reproach and scorn

make us give over the cause as remediless ; but we nnist reprove, and

reprove again, as long as we have any hopes of reducing them into the

right way : 2 Peter i. 13, ' Wherefore 1 will not be negligent,' saith

the apostle Peter, ' to put you always in remembrance of these things.'

Let us do our duty, and trust God with the event. Those that for the

present do storm and rage may afterwards come to themselves again,

especially if God stirreth us up by the secret motions of his Spirit to-

continue our endeavours: Acts xvii.lG, Paul's 's})irit was stirred in him,

when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.' Impulse of spirit doth

determine circumstances of known duty though it doth not constitute

new duties.

4. When the party is likely to be the worse, rather than better, if he

be reproved : Prov. ix.'7, ' He that reproveth a scorner getteth to him-

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self sliame, and he that rehiiketh a wicked man getteth himself a-

blot; if it provoketh them to rail. So Mat. vii. 6, ' Give not holy

things to dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they

trample them under their feet, and turn ag^ain and rend you.' Some are

so wedded to their sins, that Grod's providence calleth upon us to let

them alone. No good statue can be made of crooked or knotty timber ;

a vicious stom.acli turneth all things into choler ; rain maketh a spongy

marsh ground the worse ; blowing increaseth the fire ; a dunghill

stinketh the worse the more it is stirred. Some are contemptuous and

scornful ; their corruptions are ii-ritated by seeking to restrain them.

Therefore if he sinneth the more grievously, that is a worse inconveniency

than the reproof can bring good. Yet we must take heed that we do not

censure people to be such without a cause ; the reasons for our omission

of such a necessary duty must be clear and sure, such as we can urge

and avouch before God himself. We must not put by the duty upon

slight conjectures, but still remember that God seeth and will consider

it. It is" very notable that cautions against rash judging are given

before the direction of not casting pearls before swine and dogs : Mat.

vii. 1, ' Judge not, that ye be not judged.'

5. When it will be rationally presumed that he will amend without

our reproof. As alms ought not to be given to one that is indeed in

poverty, when we know there are those that will plentifully relieve him,

so in the case of reproof, when neither by ourselves, nor by the help of

any other, a man is likely to be awakened, then we are bound to re-

prove him, or procure another that may do it more successfully ; for

some are capable to manage it with more wisdom than ourselves. I

confess this must be taken cautiously. A general presumption that

another will do his office doth not absolve us in foro conscientice, be-

cause this duty ariseth not from any voluntary contract or paction

between men and men, but from the law of God, our supreme governor

and judge, binding every one ; and therefore we must do our own duty,.

and not think to be discharged by the zeal and diligence of others.

And besides, a presumption that others will do it may cause it wholly

to fall to the ground ; as, Luke x. 33, the good Samaritan had not been

absolved from uncharitableness if he had presumed that the priest and

Levite would relieve the distressed man, or, if not they, that some other

of his countrymen that came that way, and were nearer to him by

nation and blood, and more charitable than the former, that they

would relieve him ; but he neither minded the one nor the other, but

performed his duty ; he saw a miserable spectacle, one wounded with

thieves, 'and he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound

up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast,

and biought him to an inn, and took care of him,' ver. 33, 34. So here.

The papists indeed make this limitation. Nisi pi'ohabiUier pixi^sumatur

aliunde naciurum, qui eum corripiat — Except he probably presume

that another will reprove him ; but this presumption must be evident

and rational, not probable only ; and where I am privy to it, and know

it, and procure it, and know how much better he is able to manage it

than myself, then I am not to take it out of his hands, or when others

are present whose gifts and office more oblige them to it.

6. When he doth expect a better opportunity, his omission is not

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faulty for the present ; for all things must ho <^one ahont in Iheir

season : Eccles. iii. 7, ' Tliere is a time to keep silence, and a time to

speak ; ' and in another place, hccause ' to every man there is time and

judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him,' Eccles. viii.

6-8. He speaketh of the misery men contract upon themselves by

disproving puhlic disorders, especially in great persons, princes, and

potentates. Therefore certainly it concerneth us to lake a fit season ;

not when a man is drunk ; as Abigail told Nabal not a word when

the wine was in his head, 1 Sam. xxv. 36, 37 ; not when they are in

the heat of })assion, for then they are not capable of discerning right

and reason : James i. 20, ' For the wrath of man worketh not the

righteousness of God; ' therefore opportunity and conveniency of cir-

cumstances must be considered and improved. Yet here is caution

still ; we must not adjourn it too far. Life is short, and sin groweth :

Heb. iii. 13, 'Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest

any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.' And it nuist

be done at length ; if we have long waited for a season, and cannot find

it, we must make it, and break a rule of civil prudence rather than

violate conscience ; for civilities must not prescribe to religion.

7. If it be imcertain whether that which you reprove for be a sin, as

suppose some kind of games or sports, which are questionable, because

usually they do hurt, engross time, and enchant the mind, and are as

the excelsa mimdi, the high places of the world, that have a sti'ange

blast and judgment of God upon them, though we cannot say that for

the nature of them they are utterly unlawful. What shall we do in

this case ? Many weak people are importunate to have others reproved'

for these things ; but if once Ave give way to this, it looketh like an itch

of reproving ; and if we reprove foi" doubtful matters, men fly from our

reproof for what is clear and open. Yet we may hold an argument,

and i)rudently debate things, and discourse about them ; but take heed

you do not hinder yourselves in matters that are of more weighty

importance.

8. When greater loss and damage may come to ourselves by the

reproof than benefit to the reproved. It is out of question that he that

can easily discharge this duty without any considerable inconveniency,

and only forbears it out of sloth and pusillanimil}', hath the greater sin

if he doth it not; for he standeth with God for a trifle. But now if a

considerable damage shall redound to myself in discharging this duty,

it is of weight in tin's matter. Our Lord saith, Mat. vii. G, ' Give not

that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine,

lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.'

As suppose there be a danger of your life, having to do with a con-

temptuous sinner ; if I carry my life in my hand, and put it to hazard,

there must be many things considered in this case. But now in

extreme cases, if our neighbour l)e in present danger of losing his soul,

with the danger of my bodily life I am to do what I can to save his

soul. The work is good ; the danger, depending upon a future event,

is not absolutely certain ; God can preserve me. However, it is a part

of much self-denial to venture all in God's hands.

9. Puhlic reproof is sometimes, not always necessary. If the sin be

public, either as committed in sight before all : 1 Tim. v. 20, ' Them

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that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear ; ' or as judged by

a public judicatory ; or if an hidden siu tends to the damage of the com-

munity ; or a greater hurt follow upon it than the loss of my neighbour's

fame ; or if the person have lost all right to fame, or to a good name (as

some have forfeited it), I need not stand nicely upon their good name,

but in such cases I am to reprove jiublicly. In other cases the reproof

must be private ; and the rule is, Mat. xviii. 15, 'Go and tell him his

fault between thee and him alone.'

Use 1. If we are to reprove others, let us take care that we be

innocent ourselves, not culpable, but blameless. They that are faulty

themselves cannot reprove others without blushing and great shame.

Pull out the beam out of thine own eye. Physician, heal thyself : Mat.

vii. 3-5, 'And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye,

but cousiderest not the beam that is in thine own eye ? or how wilt

thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye, and

behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out

the beam out of thine own eye, and then slialt thou see clearly to pull

out the mote out of thy brother's eye ;' Ptom. ii. 21, ' Thou that sayest

a man should not steal, dost thou commit sacrilege ? ' The Jews were

tender of idolatry after they had smarted in the matter of the golden

calf, yet all the latter prophets condemn them for sacrilege and robbing

God of his due. If we are faulty ourselves, either in the same kind

or worse, we spoil our reproof : Ps. cxli. 5, ' Let the righteous smite

me, it shall be a kindness ; and let him reprove me, it shall be an

excellent oil.' They may admonish with the greater authority. Others

are remotely bound, they nearly ; others not without special repentance

and humility, acknowledging their own sins, and desiring they may not

be examples to harden others. A sinner is not freed from the debt of

love, but he is bound humbly to acknowledge his sin, and forsake it,

that he may be fit to reprove others.

Use 2. If others be bound to reprove, certainly you are bound to take

a reproof. Solomon brings in the wretched sinner, when his sin hath

found him out, speaking thus, Pro v. v. 12, 13, ' How have I hated

instruction, and my heart despised reproof ; and have not obeyed the

voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed

me ! ' These are the lamentations of one that is ready to perish in his

sin. And Prov. x. 17, ' He is in the Avay of life that keepeth instruc-

tion ; but he that hateth reproof, erreth.' They wander far and wide,

that hate to be brought into the right way : Prov. xii. 1, ' He that hateth

reproof is brutish.' Why ? Because he despiseth the great help of

mankind, and so is carried away with his base and impetuous desires,

and will not hear reason to the contrary : Prov. xiii. 18, ' Poverty and

shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction ; but he that regardeth

reproof shall be honoured ; ' as unwilling to go on in a wrong course

after he seemeth to be engaged in it ; and he shall be honoured as one

that is prudent : Prov. xv. 5, 'A fool despiseth his father's instruction ;

but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.' He is wise at the second

hand ; though not in his first choice, yet in rectifying his ill choice.

Nay, Prov. xv. 10, \* Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the

way ; and he that hateth reproof shall die.' Better be corrected than

die and perish for ever. God's reproofs and rebukes at the last day

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will be very severe and amazing. And ver. 31, 'The ear that heareth

tlie reproof of life abideth amonf^ the wise ; ' that is, forsaketh the ill

company which misled him, and betaketh himself to better guides:

Prov. xxix. 1, ' He that, being often reproved, hardcncth his neck, shall

suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.' Our case without

repentance is desperate ; for when we have hardened ourselves in an

evil way, the Lord overtakes us with a sudden destruction.

Use 3. It exhorts us to set upon this duty. There is need of it ;

which will appear if we consider the infirmity of nature, that is to be

restrained, a blind mind to be enlightened, a drowsy heart to be

awakened, vehemency of passions to be curbed, and great allurements

to sin to be withstood. Say not with Cain, Gen. iv. 9, 'Am I my

brother's keeper ? ' Thou art so ; do it then with love, lest you do the

work of an enemy under the vizard of a friend. No hatred or ill end

must put you on this business ; for when you rebuke sin with sin, you

increase it. Again, there is need of it ; for it will prevent many evils,

as censuring and detraction, and speaking ill of others, and invasion of

the ministry. This is one great evil that heretofore hath reigned

among us. Many little prattlers, that had no gifts, set up for ministers.

This itch would soon be cured if men would mind necessary duties,

such as meditation (which is a preaching to themselves), family in-

struction, and brotherly reproof.

Use 4. Direction to perform this duty. Many graces are necessary

hereunto, as zeal for God, love to our neighbour, and courage. Avoid

pusillanimity, that you be not hindered by your fears, this is the way

to prevail ; and if you prevail not, you must mourn and pray ; as Lot :

2 Peter ii. 8, ' For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing

and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their ungodly

deeds ; ' Jer. xiii. 17, ' But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in

secret places for your pride, and mine eye shall weep sore, and run do^vn

with tears.'

SERMONS UPON 1 CORINTHIANS XV. 19.

SERMON I.

If in this life ojily ive have hope in Christ, ive are of all men most

miserable. — 1 Cor. xv. 19.

In the context the apostle is disputing for the truth of the resurrection.

This way of reasoning is deducendo ad ahsurduvi, by showing the

absurdities that woukl follow upon the denial of it.

The first absurdity is mentioned, ver. 13, 'If there be no resurrection

of the dead, then Christ is not risen.' In all things he is a pattern to

his people ; if the head be risen, so shall the members also.

The second absurdity consequent upon that is mentioned, ver. 14-16,

'And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith

is also vain : yea, and we are found false witnesses of God ; because

we have testified of God that he raised up Christ ; whom he raised not

up, if so be that the dead rise not : for if the dead rise not, then is not

Christ raised.' Whole Christianity would be a forgery, and whatever

was preached by the apostles, and believed by them, vain and frivolous,

if Christ be not risen.

The third absurdity, ver. 17, ' And if Christ be not risen, your faith

is vain ; you are yet in your sins.' That the new covenant, and all their

confidence about remission of sins upon repentance, would come to

nothing. .

The fourth absurdity, that those that had lost their lives for Christ

would perish eternally, and would have nothing to recompense this

loss : ver. 18, ' Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are

perished.'

The fifth absurdity is in the text ; if all our hopes in Christ were

terminated with this life, christians were the most wretched sort of men

in this world : ' If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of

all men most miserable.' But these are such absurd thoughts, that

every christian should abhor them with indignation.

In the words we have —

1. A supposition, ' If in this life only we have hope in Christ.'

2. An absurdity thence inferred, ' We are of all men most miserable.'

Doct. That the calamities of the godly in this life show that we have

much more to hope for from Christ in tlie life to come.

1. I shall state the point, in what sense it is said that christians are

of all men most miserable if there be no life to come.

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2. Confirm and prove it, by showing tlie validity of tlie apostle's

reason inf^.

I. For the supposition.

1. This is supposed, that affliction and misery is the common bm-den

of the sons of Adam. In the present life all are liable to misery, some

more, some less. We walk through a valley of tears, live in a groan-

ing world ; none have such an uninterrupted current and stream of

worldly felicity but that they have their crosses and afflictions. These

things are common to man. We are told in the book of Job, chap. v.

7, ' Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward ; ' and chap. xiv. 1,

\*Man, that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.' None

can reasonably expect to be absolutely exempted from the common lot

of human lapsed nature. Though life be short, yet it is long enough

to be vexed with many sorrows. ' Few and evil have the days of the

years of my life been,' saith old Jacob, Gen. xlvii. 9. Since they are

evil, it is well they are but few. Most men little consider of this, that

they come into the world to bear crosses, but rather imagine they come

hither to spend their days in j^leasure ; at least, they do not mind the

true cause of their troubles, nor the proper remedy. The true cause

is sin ; man's transgressions are the door by which it entered ; and the

proper remedy is the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Well, then, what-

ever may be the particular and various dispensations of God towards

men, yet to be miserable in some sort and degree is common to all Adam's

posterity, which should make us to look higher than the present life.

2. Of all men, virtuous good men are more miserable than others,

if you consider their temper and the state of the world. Their temper ;

they deny themselves the pleasures of the flesh, and the world too often

depriveth them of the ordinary comforts of life. They deny themselves

the irregular pleasures of the flesh, as being an impediment to goodness,

and that sense and appetite may not carry them against the dictates of

reason, and so, instead of being led by conscience, as they ought, they

serve their brutish passions and inclinations, as others do. This is the

difference between them and others : ' They do not run with them into

the same excess of riot,' 1 Peter iv. 4. But besides this, they are subject

to many tribulations and persecutions. We often see that instruments

of public good are made sacrifices of public hatred. The bad will hate

the good, as differing from them, and disgracing that kind of life which

they affect : Prov. xxix. 27, ' He that is upright in the way is abomin-

ation to the wicked.' They have a malignity and enmity to that good-

ness which they want themselves, and therefore deal worst with those

that deserve best at their hands, because they cannot so quietly take

satisfaction in their lusts, whilst others about them excel in virtue and

holiness.

3. Of all good men, the profane carnal world is more enraged against

christians than others. Probity and honesty in the heathens hath met

with opposition in the world ; and some among them, that would

reform a depraved and disordered age, have met with sore troubles,

and been hurried even unto death foi- seeking to stop the inundation

of public vices. But especially hath this been the portion of christians :

2 Tim. iii. 12, ' All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer

persecution.' Christianity is the more violently opposed because it

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carrieth us to an higher pitch of purity and holiness than bare moraUty

doth ; for therein men are more devoted to God, and do most resemble

him, as they are made partakers of the divine nature. Therefore a

true, constant, christian course doth more enrage the world. Besides,

it is most contrary to those diabolical impostures which have prevailed

over the nations, and are entertained by them with much veneration,

as being received by a long tradition from ancestors. Therefore the

devil ever had a greater rage against this way ; and many of the truths

of it are not only mysteries, and therefore contradicted, but mysteries

of godliness, tending to imbue men with right thoughts of God, and

do more shake the interests of the devil's kingdom. Thence hath

it been that christians have been worse used than other good men ;

and so, considered as to their outward estate, are of all men most

miserable.

4. To induce men to lead such an holy godly life, which exposeth

them to so many miseries, such motives are necessary as are greater

than the temptations of the world; partly with respect to Christ, for

Christ is so good that he would not impose this duty upon us without

a sufficient recompense for our losses and troubles ; for he came not to

make us miserable, but happy, to save, not to destroy, that the world

might have benefit by him, and not loss and trouble. We have a two-

fold apprehension of God, as an holy and happy being. There is in

his nature, to dyadop, goodness, and to jjcaKupiov, blessedness ; accord-

ingly Christ hath made a discovery of him to us when lie came to plant

godliness and holiness in the world. He hath revealed him as a God

of infinite purity and blessedness, that, by imitating him in purity, we

might be made partakers of his blessedness ; or that, self-denyingly

carrying on a life of holiness here, we might have our blessedness in a

better life hereafter : his calling is an high and holy calling. And

partly with respect to us : In this state of frailty, this living godly in

Christ Jesus cannot be carried on unless our natural and sensual

inclination be overruled by the bias of a stronger affection. The flesh

in us is importunate to be pleased ; and therefore when our troubles

and trials are sore and manifold, what shall we do if we have not such

higher motives as may rationally prevail with us ? The voice of nature

is. Spare the flesh ; Ijut the voice of faith is, Save the soul. Now if

this salvation be not greater than the temptations of the present life,

how shall we row against the stream of flesh and blood, and run all

hazards with Christ ?

5. Christ hath promised an happiness that will countervail all these

afflictions. There is a fourfold comparison which believers usually

make, or in scripture are taught to make, between this life and the

next ; as —

[1.] Sometimes they compare temporal good things wuth eternal

good things, or the portion of a carnal man with the happiness of a

child of God : Ps. xvii. 14, 15, ' From men which are thy hand, O

Lord, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life,

and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of

children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes. But as

for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness ; I shall be satisfied,

when I awake, with thy likeness.' That is, the rich and great men of

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tlie wo)-lJ have all llieir good things allowed by tlice iti this life ; here

they have all riches, and plenty, and a numerous posterity, wealth

sufficient not only to enjoy themselves, but to leave abundantly to their

children ; Ijut I count myself abundantly provided for if I may have thy

favour with a painful holy life here, and when I awake out of the sleep

of death, may so see thee hereafter, as to be like thee ; I am satisfied

with the ho])es of the vision and i'ruition of God.

[2.] Sometimes they compare temporal evil things with eternal evil

things ; as a prison with hell, or the killing of the body with the casting

the body and soul into hell-fire : Luke xii. 4, 5, ' Be not afraid of them

that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But

I will forewarn you whom you shall fear : Fear him which, after he hath

killed, hath power to cast into hell ; yea, 1 say unto you, Fear him.'

Certainly it is more for our interest to fear displeasing God than dis-

])leasing men ; the utmost that men can do is to kill the body, and

then their malice is at an end; but God can cast body and soul into

•everlasting toi-ments. Every one would submit to a lesser evil to avoid

a greater. When you must sin to escape trouble in the world, you

run into eternal sufferings to avoid temporal. No wrath like the wrath

of God ; no torment like the fire of hell.

[3.] Sometimes they compare temporal good with eternal evil ; as

Mat. xvi. 26, ' What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world

and lose his own soul ? ' The plentiful life of worldlings with the for-

feiting of the soul ; the pleasures of sin for a season with the pains of

hell.

[4.] The fourth sort of comparison which the scripture directs us

imto is temporal bad things with eternal good things ; and that is the

€ase we have now in hand. Thus Eom. viii. 18, ' For I reckon that

the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with

the glory which shall be revealed in us.' Sufferings for the present

may be very great, but the glory that is revealed to us, and shall one

day be revealed in us, is much greater ; as there is no compaiison

between a little flea-biting, or the prick of a pin, with eternal ease and

rest, or the trouble of entering by a strait gate or entry into a glorious

palace : 2 Cor. iv. 17, ' For our light affliction, which is but for a

moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of

glory.' The sufferings of the present world are leves et breves, light

and short; not in themselves, but in comparison with eternal life. In

themselves they may be some of them very sharp and grievous, and

some also very long and tedious ; but look, what a point is to the cir-

cumference, that is time to eternity, and -what a feather is to a talent

of lead, that are present evils to future glory and blessedness. All this

is spoken to show that it is better to be miserable with the people of

God than happy with his enemies, and that we should not be drawn

away from Christ neither by the comfortable nor troublesome things we

meet with in the world.

6. This happiness which Christ hath proposed is at the general

resurrection, or Christ's coming to judgment; for that is the point

which the apostle is now discoursing of. There is a distinction between

the good and the bad at death, when ' the spirits of just men are made

perfect,' Heb. xii. 23, and the spirits of the wicked are sent to prison,

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1 Peter iii. 19. The soul dieth not with the body, but some go one

way, some another; the souls of just men to God's palace of glory,

where they are with Christ, and the souls of the wicked to the prison

of hell. 13ut this retribution is not sufficient, for two reasons — because

it is private, and doth not openly vindicate the justice and holiness of

God ; and it is but on a part, the soul, and not the body.

[1.] Because it is private, and dispensed apart to every single person,

man by man as they die. Certainly it is more for the honour of God

to bring his judgment to light, as the prophet speaketh, Zeph. iii. 5,

' Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light.' Here the love

of God towards the good, and the justice of God towards the wicked,

is not brought into the clear light, nor at death ; neither the mouth of

the pit is visibly opened, nor the glory of heaven exposed to view.

But then this different respect is more conspicuous when the justice of

God hath a public and solemn trium})h, and his enemies are branded

with shame and ignominy, and the faith of his elect found to praise

and honour, and the one are publicly condemned, and the other justi-

fied by the judge sitting upon the throne : Acts iii. 19, ' That your sins

may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the

presence of the Lord.'

[2.] As it is upon a part, the soul only. The bodies of the holy and

the wicked are both now senseless, and moulder into dust in the grave;

and till they be raised up, and joined to their souls, can neither partake

of woe or weal, pleasure or pain. The soul, though it be a principal

part, is but a part. The body essentially concurreth to the constitution

of the man ; and it is the body that is most gratified by sin, and the

body that is most pained by obedience ; and therefore the body, which

is the soul's sister and coheir, is to share with it in its eternal estate, what-

ever it be. Therefore, that we may not be in part punished, nor in part

I'ewarded, there is a time coming when God will deal with the whole

man, and that is in the day of Christ's solemn court and audience,

when all the world shall be summoned before his tribunal.

7. The apostle proveth this, because the righteousness of God's

government will not permit that his people should be accounted of all

men most miserable.

To clear this I shall show —

First, In what sense the apostle saith, If there were no life to come,

christians were of all men most miserable.

Secondly, How this will not consist with the righteousness of God's

goverimient.

First, In what sense the apostle saith, If there were no life to come,

christians were of all men most miserable. I put this first question,

that we may not mistake the apostle's meaning, when he pronouncetli

christians to be of all men most miserable if our hopes in Christ were

terminated with this life. Take him right ; and therefore, —

1. Negatively.

[1.] It is not to deny all present providence or watchful care over his

op[)ressed people. No ; Eccles. iii. 16, 17, ' And moreover, I saw under

the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the

place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.' He meaneth not in

the mountains of prey only, but in the tribunals of justice; there was

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iniquity and wickedness: 'I said in my heart, God sliall judge the

righteous and the wicked ; for there is a time there for every purpose,

and for every work.' So again, Eccles. v. 8, ' If thou seest the

oppression of the poor, and the violent perverting of judgment and

justice in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher

than the higiiest regardeth, and there be higher than they.' Both thevse

places show that there is a providence ; though God for a while permit

his meek and obedient servants to be oppressed, and in the eye of the

world they seem to be forgotten and forsaken and utterly left to perish,

3'et in due time God will exercise a righteous judgment on them and

their enemies. The like you have, Ps. Iviii. 11, ' So that a man shall

say. Verily there is a reward for the righteous ; verily he is a God that

judge th in the earth.' It is not meant of hereafter, but now. It i»

many times found that godliness and holiness are matters of benefit and

advantage in this world, abstracted from all reward in another life.

The world is not governed by chance, but by a wise and most just pro-

vidence. It may be God doth not relieve the oppressed so soon as men

would, yet in due time he will not fail to show himself the ruler of the

affairs of mankind ; so that this is not his meaning, to exclude all pre-

sent providence.

[2.] Not to deny that we have such benefits by Christ here in this

world as not to make our condition more valuable than that of the

wicked. We have hopes by Christ of the pardon of sins, and that is

a blessedness : Ps. xxxii. 1, ' Blessed is he whose transgression is for-

given, whose sin is covered.' Of communion with God : 1 John i. 3,

'And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ/

And that maketh way for a full joy, and countervaileth temporal evils.

We have not only an interest in the love of God, but a feeling of it in

our souls : Kom. v. 3-5, ' And not only so, but we glory in tribulations

also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience expe-

rience, and 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.' All things are sanctified to us as we are sanctified to

God : Rom. viii. 28, ' All things shall work together for good to them

that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.' But

yet this is not all ; therefore the apostle saith, ' If in this life only we

had hope, we are of all men most miserable.'

[3.] The apostle's drift is not to compare wickedness and godliness,,

as abstracted from the eternal reward ; as if a wicked man were more

happy than an afflicted godly man. No ; Christ's worst is better thaQ

the world's best ; godliness and holiness is amiable, or a reward in

itself. Better be good though miserable, than bad though prosperous ;

for holiness and godliness, though abstracted from all reward in an-

other life, is an excellency and perfection of human nature : Ps. xvi.

3, ' But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent,,

in whom is all my delight ; ' Prov. xii. 26, ' The righteous is more

excellent than his neighbour.' It is an honour put upon human nature

to have the image of God impressed upon it. The more good we are,

the more orderly we live, and agreeably to reason and those souls with

which we are created ; and the actions which the law of Christ calleth

for at our hands are fittest to be done by us if they were not com-

manded, nor ever should be rewarded in us.

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2. Positively ; and so —

[1.] The apostle speaketli not of their inward enjoyments, but their

outward estate, which no ways seems to answer God's covenant love

nor governing justice ; for the calamities of the godly raise two doubts —

(1.) How this doth stand with the love and goodness of God to his

l)eo{)le ? This was the psalmist's temptation : Ps. Ixxiii. 1, ' Truly

God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.' It is a

most certain and a most infallible truth that God is abundantly

gracious and kind, and not only ftxithful and just to all his sincere

servants ; but we are under no small temptation to doubt of the truth

of this when they are under severe scourges and chastisements, or

exercised with continual afflictions, and others live in pomp and

luxury, and all manner of secular felicity. (2.) But the other temp-

tation to doubt of God's governing in righteousness was Jeremiah's

temptation : Jer. xii. 1, \* Righteous art thou, Lord ; yet let me talk

with thee of thy j udgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked

prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacher-

ously ? ' Certain it is that God is righteous ; yet when his people are

in a sad condition, and their enemies thrive and prosper by their

■wicked courses, their minds are troubled ; for to appearance none are

in a worse condition than they that love God most, and serve him best,

till he be considered not as to his external but eternal estate.

[2.] The apostle's meaning is, that a man cannot rationally be

induced to submit to Christianity, and, in defiance of all temptations,

to lead an holy godly life, without the expectation of the happiness of

another world. The temptation lieth in things present, and our

strength lieth in a due reflection on things to come. Faith must guide

us, that sense may not mislead us ; and so, when the world's best and

Christ's worst are brought into competition, the soul is the better

enabled to make a right choice : Heb. xi. 26, ' Esteeming the reproach

of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt ; for he had

respect to the recompense of reward.' It is the liopes which Christ

offereth in a better life which strike all temptations dead. Now in

case this should not be, the apostle pronounceth christians to be of all

men most miserable, upon a fourfold account —

(1.) Because their very present comforts would seem to be but a

fantastical impression or a fanatical illusion ; for our whole religion

would be a falsehood if the great promise be chimerical, or a mere

dream and supposition : 1 John ii. 25, ' This is the promise which he

hath promised us, even eternal life.' And so how can we imagine but

that all the comfort which we take in the pardon of sins, communion

with God, and the sense of his love, are mere conceit and vain ima-

gination ?

(2.) Because their future hopes and trust would be utterly dis-

appointed, and they deluded in their greatest expectations : 1 Tim.

iv. 10, ' Therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust

in the living God, who is the saviour of all men, especially of those

that believe.' It is our hope in God through Christ, or the assurance

of an eternal reward, which is the only ground of our suffering patiently

anything that befalleth us. He is the preserver of all mankind, but

hath promised eternally to save those that believe and obey him.

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Therefore, if there were no world to come, christians would not only

be disappointed of their great hope, which is the worst kind of vexation,

bnt draw a suspicion upon all these advantages that we seem to reap

by Christ and enjoy here upon earth.

(3.) Their earnest desires would not be fulfilled if there were no

blessedness to come. We may prove eternal life by the disposition

and instinct of nature towards happiness in general, yea, eternal happi-

ness, which if we should not enjoy, that desire were in vain ; but God

doth nothing in vain. The apostle intimateth this universal desire in

all rational creatures ; they all grope and feel about for an eternal and

infinite good : Acts xvii. 27, ' That they should seek the Lord, if haply

they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from

every one of us.' Other creatures besides man are satisfied with what

they have here, but the soul of man is satisfied with nothing but the

eternal enjoyment of what is good, an immortal estate, an infinite

good ; this is the universal inclination of all mankind. Whence cometh

that desire to be so universal if there be nothing to satisfy it ? Where

is this immortality that we seek after? Not in temporal enjoyments,

riches, honours, and pleasures ; they perish, and we perish. Yea, the

lust of these things passeth away in time : 1 John ii. 17, \* The

world passeth away, and the lust thereof.' Not in surviving fame ;

that is a shadow, like the pleasure which those take who want children

in playing with little dogs and puppies. It lieth in the eternal enjoy-

ment of God. But we urge not this now ; we urge the desires of the

renewed and sanctified, which do much more prove it, for these act

more regularly, and direct their desires and hopes to a certain scope

and end ; and these are excited by the Holy Spirit of God, who im-

printeth the firm persuasion of this happiness, and inclineth us to it,

and stirreth up these groans after it: Kom. viii. 23, ' And not only they,

but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we our-

selves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the

redemption of our body,' The word of God warrants these desires,

and the Spirit of God kindleth them in our hearts, and that usually in

our gravest and severest moods, when we are solemnly conversing with

God in his holy worship ; then doth he raise up these affections towards

heavenly things, as in the word, prayer, and sacraments ; then is this

relish left upon our hearts ; and the more serious and holy any are, the

more do they feel of this. And also in our bitter sufferings for God :

Kom. V. 3, ' And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also, knowing

that tribulation worketh patience ; ' 1 Peter iv. 13, 14, ' But rejoice

inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory

shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be

reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye ; for the Spirit of glory

and of God resteth upon you : on their part he is evil-spoken of, but on

your part he is glorified." This is a greater argument than the bare

instinct and desire of nature. Certainly if our holiness be our torment,

and God beget in us these desires which he never meant to satisfy, then

we are of all men most miserable.

(4.) There would be no recompense for their greatest losses. Christ

requireth us not only to venture, but lose our lives for his sake : Luke

xiv. 26, ' If anv man come to me, and hate not his father and mother,

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and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life

also, he cannot be my disciple/ Now if our hopes in Christ be at an

end with this life, what encouragement have we to lose our lives for

Christ's sake ? Nature will teach us to submit to a lesser evil to obtain

a greater good than that evil depriveth us of ; but what will teach us

to lose the greatest benefit we are possessed of when nothing cometh of

it ? Grace indeed teacheth us to quit this frail life for the hopes which

Christ hath given us of an immortal blessed estate ; but if that be not,

christians are of all men most miserable, who had better have kept that

life which they had till a natural death called them from it, than to

have lost it for nothing.

Secondly, Having vindicated the apostle's meaning, I shall prove

that it is inconsistent with the righteousness of God's government that

his people should be always of all men most miserable. For a time

they may be so, but not for ever. Certainly God is righteous'; to

deny him to be just is to deny him to be God and the governor of the

world. The perfection of his nature includeth his justice ; so doth also

theeminency of his office : 'Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance?

God forbid ; for then how shall God judge the world ? ' Rom. iii. 5, 6 ;

that is, he were then incapable of governing mankind. But when is

this righteousness manifested? Not always in this world, especially

to those who perish in their afiflictions and persecutions, which they

endure for his name's sake. No ; ' He hath appointed a day wherein

he will judge the world in righteousness,' Acts xvii. 31, and that is at

the general resurrection. God now judgeth the world in patience,

winketh or conniveth at many faults, endureth the wicked with much

long-suffering, but then he will judge the world in righteousness.'

None are punished now besides or beyond their deservings ; but all are

not punished according to their deservings, nor are the wrongs of his

people righted, nor their labour of love recompensed. Therefore we

must expect another day and time when that shall be done ; and that

is most fully and universally done in the great and general day of

judgment, when the dead shall be raised out of their graves, they that

have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done

evil to the resurrection of damnation. And so it serves the apostle's

scope to prove a resurrection.

si:rmon II.

If in this life only ice have hope in Christ, ice are of all men most

miserable. — 1 Cor. xv. 19.

II. 1 5IUST sliow the validity of the apostle's argument, that there must

be a life to come, because otherwise christians would be of all men most

miserable. The apostle urgeth it here as a strong proof of the resur-

rection, and elsewhere he urgeth it as a demonstration of the general

judgment; as when he, speaking of the persecutions of the righteous,

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telleth us, 2 Tlies. i. 5, ' Which is a manifest token of the rigliteous

judgment of God,' evSetyfxa, a })lain and certain demonstration. Surely

the argument is cogent and. concUisive.

But where lieth the force of it ?

1. I shall argue from the nature of God ; and there —

[1.] I shall begin with his wisdom, which doeth things according to

number, weight, and measure, and doth rightly dispose things in their

proper places. This wisdom of his will not permit the disjunction of

these two things so closely united together as sin and punishment,

holiness and happiness. This cannot bo but there will be an appear-

ance of deformity and irregularity. If there be such a thing as good

and evil, homim et malum morale, as reason will tell us there is ; again,

if there be such a thing as pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, or honum

et malum naturale, as sense will tell us there is; then it is very

agreeable to the wisdom of God that these things should be rightly

placed and sorted. That moral evil, which is sin, sliould be punished

with natural evil, which is pain and misery ; and that moral good,

which is holiness, should end in joy and happiness; these seem to be

such natural relatives, that without great incongruity they cannot be

parted. It seemeth uncomely and an uncouth thing to us when it is

otherwise : Prov. xxvi. 1, ' As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest,

so honour is not seemly for a fool ; ' that is, as snow and rain in

harvest and summer come unseasonable and unwelcome, and breed a kind

of displeasure in our minds, so we look upon it as a blemish or an un-

couth thing when the wicked are exalted. We have compassion on a

miserable man, whom we esteem not deserving his misery, but are

moved with indignation against one that is happy and successful, but

unworthy the happiness he enjoyeth. This is the general sense of

mankind, which is a proof and plain document that we perceive an ex-

cellent harmony, and natural order between these two things, sin and

misery, holiness and happiness ; and this sentiment is some stricture

and shadow of the perfection of God's wisdom ; and therefore, though

for a time, while both good and bad are upon their trial, the good are

not regarded, nor the bad punished, yet the wisdom of God will not

permit it to be always so, that the godly should be in an afflicted and

distressed condition, and the wicked prosperous.

[2.] Come we to the holiness of God, which inclineth him to hate

evil and love that which is good. Surely God is not indifferent to good

and evil, or more partial to the evil than to the good. That were a

blasphemy, and such a diminution of God's holiness as should be ab-

horred by every good christian. No ; 'He hatetli all the workers of

iniquity,' Ps. v. 5 ; and again, Ps. xi. 7, ' The righteous Lord loveth

righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.' Well, then,

wherein is this love and hatred demonstrated ? Go(i doth not openly

declare it in his present dealings with the rebellious and the righteous,

therefore it shall be seen in his final dealing with the wicked oppressors

of his people, and those that walk uprightly. Therefore there is a life to

come, for in this life this love and hatred is not sufficiently expressed ;

not his hatred against the wicked, even in the judgment of them who

have no great knowledge of the nature of sin, and the punishment which

is competent thereunto ; nor his love to the godly, who are often ex-

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posed to bitter sufferings, and seem to be less favoured in the course of

liis external providence than their enemies. Therefore there is a time

to come, when he will show his love to the good in maldng them

everlastingly happy, and his detestation of the wicked in eternal

torments.

[3.] Come we now to the justice of God. It is agreeable to the

justice of his government that it should be well with them that do well,

and ill with them that do evil, and that he should make a difference by

rewards and punishments between the disobedient and the righteous.

Conscience hath a sense of this, and therefore checketh and cheereth,

as we have done good or evil. Heathens had accusing or excusing

thoughts, which the apostle urgeth as an evidence to the gentiles of

judgment to come: Rom. ii. 15, IG, 'Which show the works of the

law wiitten upon their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness,

and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one

another, in the day when Cod shall judge the secrets of men by

Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.' If every man's thoughts do

iiccuse or excuse him respecti^'ely according to the nature of his

mictions, then there is in nature a sense of this different retribution.

Notions of good and evil are as naturally implanted in our hearts

as notions of truth and falsehood, and a man is as sensible of a

difference between comely and base as between the right hand and

the left ; only the notions of good and evil are sooner corrupted than

the notions of truth and falsehood. However, the workings of consci-

-ence cannot utterly be choked and deadened in any, though most men

seek to stifle it, and the voice of it be oftentimes unheard. The very

profane have hidden fears frequently revived in them because of these

•retributions of God's justice. The apostle telleth us, Eom. i. 32, ' Who

knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things

are worthy of death.' They were none of the tenderest men that are

here spoken of, but such as were extremely debauched and corrupted,

and did delight in the company of those who were as corrupt as them-

selves. Well, then, conscience is sensible of a reward and punishment,

but this is not fully nor universally dispensed in this world ; yea,

rather the worst are permitted to enjoy most here, when the good are

kept in a low and bare condition. And that is not the whole case ; the

worst do not only differ from the best, but are permitted to triumph

over them. Now no righteous governor will suffer his disobedient

subjects to persecute those who most carefully obey him, if he hath

power to remedy it ; and therefore, though he may jiermit it for a

time, yet he will call them to an account, and then amends and satisfac-

tion shall be made to them that have suffered wrongfully. Therefore

the wicked are reserved to future punishment, and the godly to future

reward.

[4.] Come we now to the goodness of God. The Lord is inclined to

■do good to his creatures ; and if there were no sin to stop the course of

his bounty, there would be nothing but happiness in the world ; but

-certainly if any recover out of a state of sin, and are willing to devote

themselves to God, and to contemn all their natural interests for his

.sake, certainly the Lord will be good and kind to them. A certain

truth it is that no man serveth God for nought ; and it is eV Trpuroa,

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one of the first maxims of religion, that ' God is, and that lie is a

rewarder of them that diligently seek him/ Heb. xi. 6. Next to his

being, we believe his bounty, that God's service, first or last, will turn

to a good account. And it is the rather to be believed by us,

because carnal and corrupted nature begrudgeth everything, and

in the eye of sense all is lost that is laid out upon God. We say

with Judas, ' What needeth this waste ? ' The same opinion that

Seneca had of the Jewish sabbath, the same thoughts have carnal

men of the service of God. He said the Jews were a foolish

people, quia scptimam cetatis partem perdunt vacando, because a full,

seventh part of their lives was lost in idleness and rest. While men

are under the influence of such thoughts, they will never do anything

for God that is great and worthy. And therefore, to confute this false

conceit during the time of his patience, the superficial service he

getteth from us hath its reward. He giveth many temporal blessings

to those that worship him in the sliglitest fashion ; as he suspended

his judgments upon Ahab's mock humiliation, 1 Kings xxi. 29 ; and

his present providence plainly declareth that none shall be a loser by

God, nor do anything for nought. He pleaded by the prophet against

this people for their sorry services and contemptuous usage of him :

Mai. i. 10, ' Who is there even among you that would shut the doors

for nought ? Neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I

have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept

an offering at your hand;' that is, the porters of the temple did not

open and shut the doors for nought, nor the Levites that kindled the

fire, nor the priests attend upon the burnt-offering for nought ; they

were all well rewarded with tithes, portions, and oblations, and this by

the Lord's own appointment and allowance. And again, if anything

be done sincerely, though never so mean and inconsiderable, it hath its

reward : Mat. x. 42, ' And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of

these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, he

shall in no wise lose his reward.' The smallness and meanness of the

benefit, help, and refreshing, done to any in Christ's name, shall not

make it lose its estimation and recompense. This, though hardly

credited by the unbelieving world, is very true : \* Verily 1 say unto

you,' and ' he shall in no wise,' &c. ; they are emphatical expressions.

But now the more eminent services, which are carried on with hazard

and difficulty and very considerable self-denial, surely they shall not

fail of their recompense. Whatever we lose for Christ, we shall receive

again with infinite advantage : Mark x. 29, 30, ' And Jesus answered

and said, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house,

or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lauds,

for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred-fold

now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and

children, and lands, with persecution, and in the world to come eternal

life.' He shall in this life, in the midst of his persecutions, and the

time of his trials and troubles, have an hundred-fold ; not in kind, an

hundred wives and mothers (as Julian and Nero scoffed at the

christians), but in value, in peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy

Ghost, and the satisfaction of having discharged his duty. But God

will not rest there ; in the world to come he shall have eternal life.

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Now, then, the argument groweth upon our hands. If self-denying

obedience would be not only man's loss but utter ruin, and he be made

miserable by his duty without any recompense, God would not only be

not the best, but the worst master ; and they that suffer tlie loss of life

and all things by the cruelty of their persecutors would be utter losers

by their faithfulness and obedience to God, which is contrary to the

experience of all mankind, and all that natural light and sense of

religion that is in men's hearts. Surely Christ would never proselyte

us to a religion that is our undoing, nor shall any of his people be

losers by him, or they that venture the most for him be in the worst

condition ; and therefore there must be another life, wherein he will

fulfil the good he hath promised, and execute the evil threatened.

2. From the nature, state, and condition of man.

[1.] He is God's subject ; not left at liberty to break or keep God's

laws at his own pleasure, which he would seem to be if no harm would

come of it, yea, present good and profit ; for we see here the wicked

live a life of pomp and ease, and often have their will upon the godly,

and oppress them at their pleasure ; their wickedness is their advantage.

Now this is not only a great discouragement to the gracious and

heavenly-minded, but would quite destroy all obedience, if there were

not assurance of a better estate. Therefore God expresses himself as

particularly engaged to punish such as flatter themselves with hopes

of impunity, though they go on in their wickedness : Deut. xxix. 19, 20,.

' And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that

he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk

in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst. The

Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his

jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are

written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall

blot out his name from under heaven.' They that add the moist

to the dry, and the dry to the moist. So Zeph. i. 12, 'And

it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with

candles, and punish the men that are settled upon their lees, that say-

in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil/

And on the other side, he considereth the case of the faithful, that they

have an opposite principle against their duty within their hearts, which

must be always curbed and suppressed ; and they meet with many

temptations from the oppositions and reproaches of those that like not

that sort of life which they addict and apply themselves unto ; and

thei-efore if they have not sufficient motives to keep them in the love

of God and obedience to the end, how shall they bear up against all

these blasts of persecution, when all the world is against them ? They

need both their cordials and their solaces from another and better

world. Therefore God assureth them that their fidelity and obedience

shall not be lost, that they are blessed already, and shall be perfectly

blessed hereafter : James i. 12, ' Blessed is the man that endureth

temptation ; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life,

which the Lord hath promised to them that love him ; ' 1 Peter iv. 13,

' But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that

when his glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding

joy ; ' that is, that these sufferings are sure pledges of the glory that

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shall ensue. Their joy is suspended while the glory of Christ is under

a veil, but when lie is manifested to the world, they shall be manifested

to be the chiklren of God. Alas ! otherwise what would become of

the best servants God hath in the world, when they are hooted at by

the clamours of the wicked rabble, and ])ui'sued with sharp laws, and

exposed to great difficulties and hardshi])s, if they had no life to live

but this ? The bare sense of our duty would not support us in this

state of imperfection if tliere were not a great recompense of reward

set before us ; so that the persuasion of another life is necessary to

seen re our duty.

[2.] Man is bound to be upright and sincere in God's service, or to

get such a constitution of soul as to resolve to adhere to God, what-

ever temptations he hath to the contrary. Our Lord describeth the

good ground to be 'that good and honest heart which, having received

the word, keeps it, and brings forth fruit with patience,' Luke viii. 15.

This was a principle not denied by many heathens, who esteemed the love

of honesty and goodness better than this mortal life with all its appurte-

nances, and thought that a man was never sincere nor thoroughly honest

till he did abhor the practice of any villany and impiety more than death,

and those things which were ra aifkoyi dja6a, absolutely good, a man

ought to love them more than life, and lose life rather than omit their

practice. Now such principles, whether they saw it, yea or no, do

necessarily conclude and infer a life after this much better than this is,

and an estate of torment much worse than death to those that have

lived and died dishonestly ; for everything that hath a being doth by

an indispensable law of nature desire the continuance of its being, but

most of all its well-being, or the bettering of its present estate.

Therefore every man (if tliere be not a life after death) is bound to

seek the preservation and continuance of this life above all things in

the world besides ; and to do that, no device would be dishonest or

practice amiss. But all they that have ever heard of the name of virtue

abhor this principle as base and odious, that a man should make what

shift he can, though never so base and wicked, to maintain and save

his life. No means used to this end are to be accounted foul, for no-

thing is so ill as death, nothing so good as life. But if this would

destroy all honesty and virtue, then certainly we have hopes and fears

of another life. If you will say. No ; virtue is a sufficient recompense

to itself, at what rate soever it be purchased and maintained ; yet what

is there to countervail all the losses and grievances it exposeth us unto,

such as the loss of life and limbs ? Virtue is a sufficient reward to

itself, spe, non re, in hope, not in the thing itself, but so far as it is the

only way to everlasting communion with God, who is our exceeding

great reward, or so far as the assured hope of a better life after

death is inseparably connexed to the constant practice of godliness in

this life. And to do good merely for goodness' sake, without any eye

or respect to the reward, is a strain of devotion contrary to that doctrine

which is taught us by Christ and his apostles.

[3.] With respect to man's comfort and solace in his troubles, which

ariseth from reflecting on our future reward when all things go cross

to us here : ' Comfort one another with these words,' saith the apostle,

1 Thes. iv. 18. Now what words were those ? The belief of a blessed

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resuiTection of those that died in or for the Lord ; that is, by occasion

of the faith of Christ. lie thought that consideration sufficient to

yield matter of comfort or support to them. These are consolations

proper to christians, because they are sure, as depending upon Christ's

word ; and they are congruous and suitable, because tiieir hearts are

set upon these things ; not upon a vain world, but a blessed and

glorious estate that Christ hath offered, and himself is entered into;

and when we get thither, our affections will be satisfied, desires granted,

and hopes fulfilled. So that still the apostle's reasoning is strong :^ ' If

in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miser-

able ; ' for our consolations, which are fetched from the other world, are

our proper consolations.

[4.] With respect to the credit and esteem of God's servants in the

world. It is neither for the glory of God nor the safety of his people

that the most eminent virtue and goodness should lie under perpetual

infamy. God's servants do not only suffer hard things, but their names

are cast forth as evil. Now this is not for the honour of God, because

it reflects upon him when the children of wisdom are represented as sons

of folly, in checking their lusts, venturing their interests, and renounc-

ing their all for their fidelity to Christ, as if they did foolishly in

running into such inconveniences, when they might spare themselves, and

sleep in a whole skin. Now it is a great dishonour to God that his

wisest and most faithful servants should be accounted fools, and an

humorous odd sort of men, that needlessly trouble themselves and

others. This hardeneth the world in sin, and would quench and destroy

all zeal for God, if there were not a time coming when the wisdom of the

woi-ld shall be seen to be the greatest folly, and that there are no such

fools as those that employ their greatest abilities in attaining present

pleasure, profit, and preferment ; but those are the wisest adventurers

who have sold all to promote the glory of God and gain Christ, who

look not upon things as they appear now to the sensual and deluded

world, but as they will be found at the last day, when all things shall

be seen in their own proper colours. Neither is it for the safety of the

saints, who, though they seek nothing but the public good, are traduced

as the troublers of Israel, and. their way condemned as factious singu-

larity. Therefore it is a great satisfaction that we have hopes that

things shall be reviewed, and that which is good be restored to its

public honour, and the godly, who prize a good name above all earthly

interests, shall have their faith found to praise and honour and glory :

1 Peter i. 7, ' That the trial of your fliith, being much more precious

than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried \vith fire, might be found

unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.'

Use 1. It showeth us how much it concerneth us to be assured of the

future estate. It is the life of our religion ; it bindeth our duty upon

us by the strictest tie, and doth also establish our true and proper com-

fort. If we may have hope of better things from Christ in another

world, not only in our calamities, but by our calamities, we should not

liave such dark and doubtful thoughts about eternal blessedness, but live

more in the clear foresight of it by faith, and the foretaste of it by

hope. Especially should this support us in two cases— in sharp afflic-

tions, and in death.

1. In sharp afflictions. We are apt to take scandal and offence at

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the sufferings that befall ns for righteousness' sake ; but consider not

only tlie promises of Christ, but tliat our very persecution is an argu-

ment of our final deliverance. The opposition of ungodly and un-

righteous adversaries is ' to them an evident token of ])erdition, but

to you of salvation, and that of God,' Phil. i. 28. That they are

wretched and obdurate people, and run on to their own destruction ;

but that you are sincere and penitent believers, who are not drawn away

from your fidelity to Christ by any terrors whatsoever. It is not eVSetfi^r,

not only an argument to confirm the hopes of the gospel, but a mark

and token of your sincerity; it coiitirmeth your right. Well, then,

though our afflictions be smart and grievous, let us comfort ourselves

with these hopes. You are not to look to present things, but future ;

not to what is applauded in the world, but what opinion Christ will

have of them at the last ; not to what you feel now, but what you shall

enjoy hereafter. Though all things appear with pomp and glory on

the world's side, and terror to the saints, yet this scene is soon withdrawn,

and present time is quickly past, like a dream or piece of fantasy ;

and then there is an utter inversion of things; shame is on the wicked's

side, and honour put upon the saints ; and the shame and glory are both

eternal; and when they enter into everlasting torments, we enter into

our master's joy ; and the children of God, that are derided and

vilified in the world, are then approved and justified by Christ ; and it

shall be plainly seen that they have chosen the better part that have

chosen the faith, and patience, and holiness of the saints.

2. In death. This is a comfort suited to that time. When you die^

you may commend your souls to Christ; as Stephen: Acts vii. 59,

\* Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' God trusted Christ with souls from

all eternity; they were given him by way of charge and rev/ard;

and you may trust him, for he is able to make good his trust: 2 Tim.

i. 12, ' I know whom I have believed, and I am ])ersua(led that he is

able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.'

If they are consecrated, they may be committed. And you may dismiss

your bodies to the grave, there to rest in hope: Acts ii. 26, 'More-

over also my flesh shall rest in hope ; ' Acts xxiv. 15, 'And liave hope

towards God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of

the just and unjust.' So Acts xxvi. 6-8, 'And now I stand and am

judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fatheis :

unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and

night, hope to come: tor which hope's sake. King Agrippa, I a id

accused of the Jews. Why should it be thouglit a thing incredible

with you, that God should raise the dead ?' Death seemeth to mal<e

void all the promises at once, but there is an estate after death. The

dead shall rise ; and to men bred up in the church this should not seem

incredible. It is not incredible in itself, considering the justice and

power of God ; and this should not seem incredible to us, since all

religion tendeth to it ; but rather you should entertain it as a mattei-

of undoubted certainty. All true believers do look and long for and

prepare for this blessedness ; otherwise why should they trouble them-

selves about religion, which abridgeth them of present delights, and

often exposeth them to great difficulties and sufferings ? But there is

another life, which is happy and joyful; and therefore we serve God

instantly day and night.

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Use 2. That it concernetli us to see this blessed estate, not only by

the liglit of faith, but reason. Though the light of scripture be more

sure and clear, yet the light of nature hath its use. Nature saith, It

may be ; faith saith, It shall be ; yet the light of nature must not be

rejected.

1. Because things seen in a double light work the more strongly upon

lis ; as our affections are stirred more by a double consideration than u

single. As Paul said of Onesimus to Philemon, that he was dear to

him, but much more dear to him ' both in the flesh and in the Lord,'

ver. 16, as being one of his faith, and one of his family ; so this work-

•eth upon our faith, when even nature teacheth us that it is reasonable

to expect such a retribution ; then all vain cavils are refuted. All have

not received the light of scripture, at least Avith such veneration and

reverence as they ought to do : to such the light of nature is a prepa-

rative inducement either to believe, or to believe it more firmly. Nay,

the children of God have not such a steady belief of the life to come

-as they ought to have, especially in time of temptation, as the time of

grievous and bitter persecution is. Surely we need all the succour and

relief which the nature of the thing will afford. Evil is present and

pressing, and our great lioj^es are to come ; surely then, besides the

grounds of faith, we must study the helps of faith. The grounds of

faith are the promises of the gospel ; the helps of faith are such

demonstrations and evidences as the light of nature will afford in the

case. Therefore reason must be allowed to be an handmaid to faith.

2, Because by this means a temptation is turned into an argument.

Men doubt of the being of God, of providence, and the future estate,

because of the afflictions of the good ; and this is one means to settle

vou in the belief of these things. It is good to observe how differentlv

men will reason from the same principles ; for the wicked draw another

•conclusion hence, either that there is no God, or he hath no respect to

human affairs, or that all things are governed by chance, or the like,

iSo elsewhere you may see what contrary and different conclusions the

■carnal and the spiritual draw from the same premises ; as David infers

the immutable certainty of God's promises : Ps. cxix, 89-91, ' For evei-,

■O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven; thy faithfulness is unto all

generations. Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth: they

continue this day according to thine ordinance.' But the scoffers said,

\* Where is the promise of his coming ? For since the fathers fell asleep,

all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation,' 2

Peter iii. 4. Because the frame of nature had kept one constant tenor

and course, they plead for the eternity of the world, and the falsehood

of the promises ; but David was hereby confirmed in the belief of God's

constancy and fidelity. So from the brevity of life ; see the different

-conclusions drawn from hence : 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, ' The time is short :

it remaineth that both they that have wives be as if they had none, and

they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though

they rejoiced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not, and

they that use the world as not abusing it,' On the contrary : 1 Cor.

XV. 32, ' Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die.' So from

the grace of God ; Jude 4, 'Turning the grace of God into lascivious-

ness ; ' compared with Kom. vi. 1, ' Shall we continue in sin, that grace

may abound?' So also, 2 Sam, vii. 2, 'I dwell in an house of cedar

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Lilt the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.' Observe tlie workings

of David's heart : The I^ord liath built me a stately house, but what

have I done for God ? But those Avretches, Hag. i. 2, ' This people

say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be

Ijuilt.' So 1 Sam. iii. 18, ' It is the Lord; let him do Avhat seemeth

him good ; ' compared with 2 Kings vi. 33, ' Behold, this evil is of the

Lord ; why should I wait for the Lord any longer ? ' See Prov. xxvi.

9, \* As a thorn goetli up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable

in the mouth of fools.' All is as the heart is.

3. Because if the perverse carringe of things now be not a confir-

mation to your faith, it will at least be an help to your meditation.

Improve the argument as it was set forth before, by your most serious

thoughts; thus: Surely there is a God; he is wise, holy, just, and

good, and v/ould not impose duty upon a man, but he hath encourage-

ments and rewards to quicken him to the performance of it. Few

christians are so firm and strong in believing but they may find it a

prop to their faith. Certainly all are so barren of thoughts that they

will find it an help to their meditation. Would God make laws with

a sanction of penalty and reward, and never look after them more ?

Doth he delight in the prosperity of his servants or their afflictions ?

Would he raise hopes and desires which he never meant to satisfy ?

give the wicked power to afflict and vex his people, and never call them

to an account ? bid us venture our all for him, and give us no recom-

pense ? If such thoughts were more frequent with us, God would bless

them to the increase of faith, love, and hope.

Use 3. Is to persuade us to live in the constant hopes of this blessed

estate in the life to come. Hope is a certain and earnest expectation

of the promised blessedness. Let me show you — (1.) The necessity of

this hope ; (2.) The encouragements of it,

1. The necessity that the hope of eternal glory should always be

cherished in us.

[1.] Because it is a special act of the new nature : 1 Peter i. 3, 'Who

hath begotten us to a lively hope.' As soon as we are children, we look

for a child's portion. The new nature presently discovereth itself by

its tendency to its end and rest, which is the fruition of God in heaven.

Indeed, the scriptures speak of a twofold hope — one that is the imme-

diate effect of regeneration, and flows from our acceptance of the new

covenant, and dependeth upon the conditional offer of eternal life ; we'

take it for our happiness, resolving to seek it in God's way ; without

this we are not new creatures. There is another hope, which is the

fruit of experience, and belongetli to the seasoned and tried christian,

who hath approved his own fidelity to God, and hath had much trial

of God's fidelity to him. This is spoken of, Kom. v. 4, 'Patience

worketh experience, and experience hope.' This produceth not a con-

ditional certainty, but an actual confidence of our own salvation. The

former is more necessary, for we live by it, but this is very comfortable.

[2.] Because it is the great end why the scriptures Avere written, to

beget and raise this hope in us : Kom. xv. 4, 'For whatsoever things

were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through

patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.' It is the

business and design of these holy books.

[3.] Because the keeping up of this hope with zeal and industry is

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the distinguishing character between the temporary and the sincere

convert. The one loseth his taste and comfort, and so casteth off the

profession of godhness, or neglecteth the powerful practice of it ; the

other is diligent, serious, patient, mortified, heavenly, and holy, because

' he holdeth fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto

the end,' Heb. iii. 6. And his end sweetens his work, for this grace

doth quicken the whole spiritual life : Titus ii. 12, 13, ' Teaching us

that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberlj',

righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed

hope, and the glorious appearing of the great Grod and our Saviour

Jesus Christ.'

[4.] Because we have nothing else to support us and fortify us

against the difficulties that fall out between our first right to eternal

life and our full possession of it. In our journey to heaven there are

many sufferings and trials which must be undergone, and hope is our

strength and support. He that sets his face heavenward will find

difficulties that attend his service, temptations that assault his con-

stancy, and troubles and calamities to which his religion exposeth him.

Now it is hope carrieth us through, and therefore it is compared to an

anchor : Heb. vi. 19, ' Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul,

both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil ; '

and to an helmet : Eph. vi. 17, ' And take the helmet of salvation,' com-

pared with 1 Thes. v. 8, ' And for an helmet the hope of salvation.' As we

would not go to sea without an anchor, and to war without an helmet,

so we must not think of carrying on the spiritual life without hope ;

nothing else will compose the mind, and keep it stable in the floods of

temptation, or cause us to hold up our heads in our daily conflicts and

encounters. Without this anchor our souls are in danger of spiritual

shipwreck ; without this helmet our heads are exposed to deadly blows

from sin, Satan, and worldly discouragements.

[5.] We shall need it not only while we live, but we shall have most

need of it when we come to die. They that are destitute of the hope

of glory then are in a dangerous, woful, and most lamentable case:

Job xxvii. 8, ' For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath

gained, when God taketh away his soul ? ' They may be full of pre-

sumption and blind confidence while they live, but what hope have

they when they come to die ? All their worldly advantages will afford

them no solid comfort. They live in a presumptuous dream that all

shall be well ; but then they die stupid and senseless, or else despairing,

and their hopes fail them when they have most need of them.

2. The encouragements of it.

[1.] God's gracious covenant and promises. God would not invite

and raise an hope to disappoint it, for surely God will not disappoint

the creature that dependeth upon his word ; and therefore we are

allowed to challenge God upon his word : Ps. cxix. 49, ' Kemember

the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.'

It contains a double argument ; the promise was of God's making, and

the hope of his operation ; the grant of the new covenant, and his

influence by the Spirit. We have a strong tie upon God ; as he giveth

us the promise, which is a ground of hope, we may humbly put the bond

in suit ; and when his Spirit hath caused the hope, it is not with a

purpose to defeat it.

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[2.] Consider what a foundation God haili laid for his promises:

2 Tim. ii. 19, 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal,

The Lord knoweth them tliat are his ; ' 2 Cor. i. 20, ' For all the

promises of God in him are Yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of

God hy us.'

[3.] Ohserve what God hath given you by way of earnest. Hope is

not built upon promises alone, but also upon assurances and earnest ;

the })romises are contained in the word of God, but the earnest is given

into our hearts : 2 Cor. i. 22, \* Who hath also sealed us, and given the

earnest of his Spirit in our hearts ; ' 2 Cor. v. 5, ' Now he that hath

wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who hath also given unto us

the earnest of the Spirit ;' Eph. i. 13, 14, ' In whom also, after that ye

believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, wiiich is the

earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased pos-

session, unto the praise of his glory.' Though God be truth itself, and

promiseth nothing but what he meaneth to peiform, yet he will give

earnest of his promises, and a pledge of his afiection to us. An earnest

is a part of the sum which is promised, so is the earnest of the Spirit

a part of the promised felicity. God would not altogether weary us,

and burden us with expectation, but giveth us somewhat in hand.

Surely he that giveth us earnest will give us the whole sum. The earnest

of the Spirit consisteth in light, life, grace, joy ; one drachm of these

is more precious than all the world, and yet these are but an earnest.

Now, having such a confirmation in the midst of our doubts and fears,

let us with more confidence look to receive the whole in due season.

[4.] Some already have got home to God upon the same terms, and

in the same way in which you expect to get home to him. Think often

of the happiness of the blessed, who are now enjoying what we expect,

and are in possession of that supreme good which we hope for. Tliey

are entered into the joy of our Lord, and have neither miseries to

fear nor blessings to desire beyond what they enjoy ; they possess all

that they love. And though the time of our advancement to these

privileges be not yet come, yet we should look and long for it. We

are all of the same family : Eph. iii. 15, ' Of whom the whole family

in heaven and earth is named.' It is but one household ; some live in

the upper room, some in the lower, some in heaven, some on earth ;

but we are all of the same society and community : Heb. xii. 23, ' To

the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in

heaven.' We are said to be already come into this fellowship, only

they have gotten the start of us, and are made perfect before us, that

we should follow after. We are reconciled to the same God by the

same Christ: Col. i. 20, ' By him to reconcile all things unto himself;

by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.'

And we expect our portion fiom the bounty of the same Father. If

he hath been so good to that part of the family which is now in heaven,

will he not be as good to the other part also ? Therefore they that

are working out their salvation with fear and trembling may encourage

themselves, and look upon this felicity as prepared for them, though

not enjoyed by them. It will one day be their portion, as well as those

others who have passed the pikes, and are now triumphing with God.

SERMON UPON EOMANS II. 7,

To them ivJio, hy patient continuance in luell-doing, seek for glory ana

honour and immortality, eternal life. — Rom. ii. 7.

In this scripture we liave a plain and full character of the heirs of

promise, or a short but complete description of that good which is

necessary to life. The words are occasioned by the apostle's mention-

ing of the righteous judgment of God, which rendereth to every man

according to their works. That general mentioned in ver. G is more

distinctly explained in the next verses, wherein he showeth how the

righteous judge will carry himself towards the good and towards the

bad in the judgment of absolution and condemnation : towards the

good in the text ; toward the bad, ver, 8, ' Bat unto them that are

contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indig-

nation and wrath.' The one is a reward of grace, and the other is a

punishment awarded by his exact justice. We are to consider the

first of these, the reward of grace, 'To them who, by patient con-

tinuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality,

eternal life.'

In the words observe the qualification and the reward —

1. The qualification or description of the heirs of promise.

[1.] By their end and design : they ' seek for glory, and honour, and

immortality.'

2.] The means or way wherein they seek it ; by ' well-doing.'

3.] Their constancy and perseverance in that way, Kaff" vTroju.ovrjv,

by ' patient continuance.'

Well, then, here is a short and full description of those who shall be

saved. They are those who, out of the hope of the eternal reward,

persevere in the obedience of the truth ; for they that ' continue in

well-doing' are opposed to them that 'obey not the truth, but obey

unrighteousness,' whereby is intended those that sin against the light

of nature, and refuse the direction of the gospel. So that ' well-doing'

must be stated partly by the light of nature, and partly by the light

of scripture ; or rather, by this latter alone, as it compriseth and ex-

plaineth the other. And their constancy and patient continuance in

this work is as considerable as the work itself. Continuance im})lieth

a constant tenor of righteousness and holiness ; and patient continu-

ance implies continuance notwithstanding temptations to the contrary,

or bearing the persecutions which they underwent for the duties of the

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cliristian profession, still going on in the pursuit of that reward which

Christ hath promised.

2. The reward is ' eternal life.' This they looked and this they

laboured for. They were not cai-ried on upon temporal encouragements,

but eternal bliss in the world to come ; and this is an excellent counter-

poise against the loss or the discomforts of the present life.

Doct. That Grod will give eternal life to all those who by patient

continuance in well-doing seek after it.

The point will be best opened by discussing the circumstances of the

text. I shall speak — (1.) Of the qualificatiou ; (2.) Of the reward.

I. The qualification. And there I must speak —

First, Of their design and aim: they 'seek for glory, honour, and im-

mortality.' In all businesses and affairs the end must be first thought of.

Now these persons which are here described propound to themselves

the noblest and highest end which the heart of man can pitch upon,

even ' glory, honour, and immortality.' Amongst men, the ambitious,

who aspire to crowns and kingdoms, and aim at perpetual fame by their

virtues and rare exploits, are judged persons of greater gallantry than

covetous muckworms and brutish epicures ; yet their highest thoughts

and designs are very base and low in comparison of sincere christians,

who ' by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour, and

immortality,' and whom nothing less will content and satisfy than the

enjoyment of God himself in his heavenly kingdom, and all that happi-

ness which he hath promised to his faithful servants. The threshold

will not content them, but the throne ; their end is far more noble than

the designs of all the rest of the world. And whereas others do carry

themselves but as an higher and wiser sort of beasts, and so are un-

worthy of an immortal soul, these carry themselves as men possessed

with a divine spirit. The beasts have an instinct that guideth them to

seek things convenient for that life which they have ; and a man that

is satisfied with his portion here, and only relisheth the contentments

of the rational and bodily life, carrieth himself more like a living

creature than a rational creature, more like a beast than like a man ;

all their business and bustle is to have their wills and pleasure for a

while, as if they had not any hopes or fears of any greater things here-

after : Ps. xlix. 20, ' Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is

like the beasts that perish;' because he merely inclineth to present satis-

factions ; for reason is a middle thing between the life of faith and

the life of sense. If it be not sublimated by faith, it is debased by

sense ; and then what great matter is it if you be a man, or a dog, or

a swine, if reason be only given you to cater for the body, and to make

provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof ? But let us more

distinctly see what is the aim and design of those noble and brave spirits.

There are two things in the text — the object and the act ; the thing

aimed at, and their respect towards it.

1. The thing aimed at is 'glory, honour, and immortality.' Let me

open the meaning of these words apart, and then show why so many are

heaped together.

[1.] Glory. Glory is status illusiris, appearing excellency. There

is a glory of this world, but that is fading : 1 Peter i. 24, ' All flesh

is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.' The

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flower is more fading than the grass itself, and is sooner shed than the

stalk rotteth ; so many a man's excellency dietli before he dieth, and his

glory is gone, when he remaineth as a neglected stalk. But this is a

more solid glory, called by the apostle, 2 Cor. iv, 17, \* A far more

exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' This glory is in their persons:

Rom. viii. 18, ' For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are

not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us;'

Phil. iii. 21, ' Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned

like unto his glorious body ; ' Mat. xiii. 43, ' Then shall the righteous

shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father ; ' 2 Thes. i. 10,

' When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired

in all them that believe.' All the spectators shall stand wondering what

he meaneth to do with those who were but newly crept out of dust and

rottenness, so wonderful is the glory of the saints in the world to come.

And as this glory concerns their persons, so their state. Christ will

advance them to a glorious estate, to high dignity and honour, which

the scripture expresseth sometimes by thrones : lie v. iii. 21, ' To him

that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I

also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne ; ' some-

times by a crown : 2 Tim. iv. 8, ' Henceforth there is laid up for me a

crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give

me at that day.' Visible marks of favour and honour will Christ put

upon them.

[2.] Honour ; that imports praise and commendation, for honour

is a testimony of excellency. To seek the honour of this world is

destructive to faith : John v. 44, ' How can ye believe, which receive

honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God

only ? ' But the honour which Christ will put upon those that are

faithful to him in the world to come is the great object of faith, by

which we vanquish those temptations of disgrace and scorn which we

meet with here in this world. Christ Avill then commend their faith

before men and angels : Rev. iii. 5, ' I will confess his name before my

Father, and before his angels.' Oh, what a blessed thing is it to be

owned by Christ, and approved as faithful in his service by the judge

of all the world, at whose sentence we must stand or fall ! The apostle

saith, 2 Cor. x. 18, ' For not he that commendeth himself is approved,

but whom the Lord commendeth.' To have a testimony in our own

consciences is very sweet. Let the world slander, yet, if God approveth,

it is sufficient. But it will be more honourable to us when the judge

upon the throne shall acquit us ; and not only so, but approve and com-

mend us. It is said, 1 Cor. iv. 5, ' Judge nothing before the time, until

the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of dark-

ness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart ; and then shall

every man have praise of God ; ' that is, be not too forward in your

censures ; in time God will display the seducers, and discover every

man's intentions and purposes. Then tliey that deserve it shall have

shame, and every man that hath done well shall by God be justified and

commended. What kind of approbation we shall have is shown : Mat.

XXV. 21, ' Well done, thou good and faithful servant.' This is the honour

which the saints expect.

[3.] The third word is ' immortality,' a<i>dapaiav, incorruption. All

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the glory and honour of the world soon fadeth away. If our fame

survive us, what good will it do us when we are dead ? Alas ! it is but

a poor shadow of tliat eternal glory and lionour which Christ will ])ut

upon the saints. Their glory is immortal, and never withereth. The

glory and honour of the world is uncertain ; their hosanua is soon

turned into a crucifige, crucify him : 2 Sam. xix. 43, 'We have ten

parts in the king, and we have also more right in David than ye.'

And in the very next verse, chap. xx. 1, ' We have no part in David,

neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse : every man to his

tents, Israel.' They who but just now claimed ten parts in David,

presently disclaim and disown him, as having no part in him at all; so

suddenly are men's affections and esteem of us altered. And as our

glory perisheth, so we perish, even the best of men : Acts xiii. 36,

' David after he had served his own generation, by the will of God fell

asleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption.' What a deal

ado men keep to get praise and honour in the world ; but what doth this

profit you when you are dead, and must be laid in the grave with others?

But the saints look higher. As they seek ' glory and honour,' so they

seek incorruption or ' immortality ; ' a glory which will abide with them,

and tliey with it, to all eternity.

Thus we have considered the words apart. Now why are so many

heaped up together ? It is not done casually ; the same is observed

elsewhere : 1 Peter i. 7, ' That your faith may be found unto praise,

and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.' Now this is

done partly to represent the fulness of this blessed and glorious estate.

The honour which Christ puts upon his servants at his appearing is

manifold. Many words cannot express it ; they shall be much com-

mended, and gloriously rewarded. And partly to recompense and

make up the shame and disgrace of our trials. How infamous soever

Christ's servants be in the world, yet they are glorious with God, and

honourable in his sight ; and ' when Christ shall appear, they shall

appear with him in glory,' Col. iii. 4. Well, now, this is the object of

the expectation.

2. Their respect to it ; they seek it. Seeking implies two things —

(1.) An hearty desire ; (2.) An earnest endeavour in the use of means.

[1.] An hearty desire ; for seeking is the earnest desire of a thing

lost or absent. The seeking of this glory, honour, and immortality

implieth an earnest desire of it, as appeareth by Col. iii. 1, 2, ' If ye then

be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above ; ' which is further

expressed by, ' Set your affections upon things above.' And this is not

a slight desire, but such a desire as prevaileth above the desires of

other things ; such an affection to them as is not controlled by other

affections : Mat. vi. 33, ' Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his

righteousness.' First, tliat is, so as our pursuit of other things doth not

cross our affections to these. Many desire heaven and glory, but they

are soon put out of the humour, and take up with the pleasures, and

honours, and profits of the world, and they become slaves to their

fleshly appetites and senses, and the good things here below.

[2.] Seeking implieth diligence and an earnest endeavour, such as

the woman used that sought her lost groat : Heb. xiii. 14, \* Here we

have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.' If we desire it,

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and long after it, something must be done in order tliereimto. As our

desires are greater, so our endeavours will be greater than after worldly

things ; for to seek is to bestow our earnest care and serious diligence

upon it. See how it is expressed in scripture ; by labour : John

vi. 27, ' Working,' and \* working out ; ' Phil. ii. 12, by ' pressing

towards it ; ' Phil. iii. 14, by ' striving ; ' Luke xiii. 24, because we

meet with opposition. You must not think to come to the enjoyment

of this great happiness with idleness and cold wishes. No ; we must

be at pains, and such pains as flesh and blood will count hard labour.

Well, now, we may from hence conclude the first part of the mark of

the heirs of promise.

(1.) By the object; they are distinguished from the wicked and

carnal part of the world, who covet the honours, riches, and pleasures

of the present life ; but these are engaged in a more noble design ;

they ' seek glory, and honour, and immortality ; ' that is, they seek not

vainglory, but labour to make themselves truly glorious, honourable,

and immortal.

(2.) Again from the object and act together ; they distinguish

themselves from all infidels and unbelievers ; for they ' seek glory and

honour' where it is to be found, and in the way wherein it is to be

found, and so go upon sure grounds. They are ascertained by the

truth of God's word, and depend upon it, that if they seriously set

themselves to obey and honour God in the world, they shall have glory

and honour with him : 1 Sam. ii. 30, ' Those that honour me, I will

honour ; ' John xii. 26, ' If any man serve me, him shall my Fatber

honour ; ' and elsewhere. Upon this they are certain.

(3.) By the seriousness of the act ; they distinguish themselves from

hypocrites or partial believers. Those that have a slight sense of

eternity will desire ' glory, and honour, and immortality ; ' but to

desire it so as that it shall be their top care ; to desire it so as that all

other things should be lessened in their opinion, estimation, and affec-

tion ; to desire it so as to labour after it in the first place ; this is the

disposition of the sincere only. They can withdraw the veil of sense,

and look to the glory that cometh from God only. They prize it

above all the glory of the world, and resolutely choose it for their

portion, with an habitual and thorough consent of their wills ; and the

drift, and aim, and bent of their lives is to be for God and their salva-

tion, and this is first and chiefly sought after in all their endeavours.

Secondly, The means and way wherein they seek after it : 'By

patient continuance in well-doing.' A good design without a good way

is nothing ; and therefore, next to a right end, we must choose a right

way ; and if we desire salvation, we must mind the right way thither.

Now in the way and means three things are considerable. Here is —

(1.) Well-doing ; (2.) Continuance; (3.) Patient continuance. If one

of these be wanting, all cometh to nought. If Avell-doing be wanting,

our perseverance is but an obstinacy in things sweet and pleasing to

the flesh ; and our patience but a carnal self-denial, nothing conducing

to our great end. If well-doing be regarded, yet if there be not a

continuance, or a continuance only when we are put to no trial, then

the benefit is lost. All three must concur.

1. For well-doing. Let us state that first, that we may not be mis-

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taken. Tlie world is filled with ill notions ; every man applaudeth

himself in his own course, he it never so vain. The covetous, the

amhitious, the dissolute, when they thrive in their several ways, they

Avill think they do well: Ps. xlix. 18, ' Though whilst he lived, he

blessed his soul; and men will praise thee when thou dost well to thy-

self.' A man's own self-deceiving heart measureth good and evil by

his present condition in the world. The brutish worldling aj)plauds

himself in his own course when it succeedeth. The glutton thinketh

lie doetli well when he maketli much of, and cherisheth and pampereth

himself. The ambitious applaudeth himself in his good fortune. The

prodigal, when he spendeth, thinketh he doeth well ; and the covetous,

when he spareth, thinketh he doeth well ; and contrary persons will say

so. Ay ! but there must be another rule than the fancies of men ;

that is, well-doing, which really turneth to our eternal good. To do

well is to obey righteousness, to obey the truth ; for it is opposed to

those that violate the light of nature, and wrangle and dispute away

that true religion which is offered for their cure and remedy.

[1.] To do well is to obey righteousness, or to act agreeably to

those obligations which lie upon us with respect to our relation to God,

others, and ourselves. There are but three beings in a moral considera-

tion — God, neighbour, and self. Paul's adverbs are suited to them :

Titus ii. 12, ' Soberly, righteously, and godly.' As to self-government

of our fancies and appetites, we are to live ' soberly,' in an holy weaned-

ness and moderation in the midst of all present delights and comforts.

As to our neighbour, we are to live ' righteously,' in all justice, truth,

mercy, fidelity in our relations, as parents, husbands, subjects, children,

wives. As to God, we are to live ' godly,' in an holy subjection to

him, and entire dependence upon him, and communion with him. So

to do well with respect to God is to behave ourselves as to one that is so

excellent, powerful, and good, and upon whom we depend so much,

not breaking his laws for all the world. As to others, ' Whatsoever ye

would that men should do unto you, do even so to them,' Mat. vii. 12.

Not only negatively, to prevent the wrong, but positively, to do good.

As to ourselves, we must subordinate all things to our true happiness,

and be more careful for the soul than for the body. All this, righteous-

ness, or the evidence of natural light, calleth for at our hands, that we

love our creator, and live to him, and depend upon him ; for if he be

God, he is our first cause, highest Lord, chiefest good, and last end.

That love to others is showed in doing to them as we would should be

done to us. We would have others helpful to us, so must we to our

power be helpful to them ; he that will be for none but himself cannot

justly expect that any should be for him. And for ourselves, man

consists of a body and of a soul. Now all our senses and bodily powers

and appetites must be subordinated to the good of the soul ; for the

soul is the chiefest part. Well, then, if we live in the neglect of God,

and be only self-lovers and self-pleasers, and wrong ourselves by grati-

fying our flesh, do we do well ? If we prefer every paltry vanity

before the favour of God, slander and wrong our neighbour, please

appetite before reason, and let the beast ride the man, surely we obey

unrighteousness ; we do not do Avell

[2.] We must obey the truth ; that is, act agreeably to the revealed

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will of God in scripture ; that is to do well. It is the scripture which

helpeth us to distinguish good from evil, and will be a sure direction

in well-doing : Ps. cxix, 105, ' Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and

a light unto my path ; ' Prov. vi. 23, ' For the commandment is a

lamp, and the law is light ; ' Isa. viii. 20, ' To the law and to the

testimony ; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there

is no light in them.' We are not to be ruled by our own thoughts,

but by God's word, which amply sets forth our duty to us. The

light of nature is very dim, and it would be a matter of great difficulty

to find out our duty if we had no supernatural light to help us. There-

fore God hath given his word, and that not only to instruct us in

moral duties, most of which are evident by the light of nature, but

also in supernatural verities, which tend to our relief and deliverance

by Christ. Well, then, well-doing is not one work only, but all our

entire obedience, which is necessary to salvation, that we may not only

love God, do good to others, govern our appetites and desires, but

believe in Christ, and live according to his holy institutes, and perform

all the duties which belong to his new remedying law. This is well-

doing.

2, There must be continuance in well-doing. As we must endea-

vour universally to do all that God hath commanded us, so we must

continue this care unto the end : Luke i. 75, ' In holiness and righteous-

ness before him all the days of our life.' In a journey it is not enough

to go a mile or two, but we must continue till we come to our journey's

end ; so must we never give over whilst we are in this world. There

may be interruptions, diversions, and stragglings, but a christian

gets into the way again. Sometimes we slip and stumble, and some-

times step aside, but we must not go back again. Some are good for

a pang or fit : Deut. v. 29, ' Oh, that there were such an heart in them

that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always!' I

might heap up many considerations here, but the thing is evident.

The law bindeth continually, and g/ace planted in the heart should

influence all our actions. God's eye is always upon us, and every hour

and moment we are anew obliged to him fur his benefits. How

reasonable is it our duty should last, and the use of means be continued

till we attain our end ! Therefore do not lose your crown, and the

benefit of all you have done already. The promise runneth to per-

severance : Kev. ii. 10, ' Be thou faithful to the death, and I will give

thee a crown of life.'

3. Here is patient continuance ; that is necessary also. The good

ground is described to be that which ' bringeth forth fruit with pa-

tience,' Luke viii. 15. The other grounds brought forth fruit, but they

did not bring forth fruit with patience. The stony ground was im-

patient of contradiction and afflictions ; the thorny ground was im-

])atient of the delay of the reward, and therefore took up with present

things, riches and honours and voluptuous living ; but they that have

a deep sense of the other world, and can tarry God's leisure, enduring

the hardships of obedience, and look for their happiness in the world

to come, that is the good ground. So Heb. vi. 12, ' Be ye followers of

them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.' We shall

meet wilh opposition within and without ; till we can deny ourselves,

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our hearts are not sound witli God. We need the working patience,

because of the labour and pains which belongeth to well-doing ; and

the waiting patience, because our reward is to come ; and the bearing

patience, because of the troubles and dangers which we must endure,

if we would be faithful with God ; loss of estate, slanders of the wicked,

and sometimes danger of life. The working patience should not be

grievous to us, because the pains of godliness will be recompensed with

the fruit of it, the peace and comfort that followeth it ; and because

there is more labour in committing sin than doing good. The waiting

patience should not be grievous, because there must be a time for the-

trial of our faith. They are hypocrites which must have their reward

at present : Mat. vi. 2, \* Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.'

The believer he can wait for it ; he looketh for glory and honour too,,

but not now. The bearing patience should not be irksome, because

faithfulness in our trials is most comfortable to us, and most acceptable

to God. Comfortable to us ; we have not ordinarily so clear a proof

of the reality of grace as when we are under sore trials : 1 Peter i. 7,

'That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold,,

though it be tried with fire, may be found unto praise, and honour,

and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.' Faith is then faith indeed,

and obedience obedience indeed. The greater the work, and the more

impediments we meet with, self-denying obedience doth most evidence

itself to the conscience. Whilst we do anything for God, while we

do it without shame, opposition, and loss, it is more hard to interpret

our sincerity : it is more acceptable to God ; it is tried friendship and

obedience which is most valuable. The obedience of a soldier is pleas-

ing to a general in a time of peace ; when he saitli to one, Go, and he

goeth ; and to another, Come, and he cometh ; but especially in the

most desperate hazards, when he doth not dispute commands when he

is bidden to go upon the cannon's mouth. From the whole, mortifica-

tion, self-denial, contempt of the world, patience under manifold suffer-

ings, is necessary to all that would be faithful with God, and are sure-

notes of his peo})le.

II. The reward is eternal life. This will make amends for all. By

it is meant all manner of happiness.

1. Eternal life is a freedom from all misery whatsoever, in estates^

names, relations, bodies, souls. As the body is free from all weakness,

so the soul is free from all sin ; faultless, without spot or wrinkle.

2. There is a perfect and entire possession of all manner of good ;

God is all in all to them.

3. This estate is to abide for ever and ever.

Use 1. Let us examine whether we be in the number of those that

shall be saved. Eternal life is believed of all christians, at least with a

dead opinionative belief; they do not count it a lie or a fable. Now,

who are those that shall enjoy it ? for God will not give it to all.

I answer — Here is a plain note and evidence by which you may judge

your claim — (1.) They are such as seek it; (2.) They seek it in a.

way of well-doing ; (3.) They continue thus to do.

1. They that seek it ; for God will never bring us to heaven with-

out our wills nor against our consent, nor make that man happy that

doth not desire to be so ; yea, that doth not seek it in the first place.

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Now this cutteth off a great many ; all them that do nothing towards

the attaining of it, and all them that seek nothing, have no settled design,

but live at haphazard, as occasion offereth, and leave the boat to the

stream ; that come into the world they know not why, and go out of

the world they know not whither. AH such careless and inconsiderate

people can have no claim ; all such have no higher end than to enjoy

their sensual pleasures while they may. Besides, they that do not seek

it in the first place. They do something, but it is little or nothing to

the purpose. The strength and choice of their desires and endeavours

are not directed this way. Eternal life must be esteemed and chosen

above other things which draw our hearts, and must be chiefly sought

after in our endeavours, and then something may be gathered from

seeking.

2. They seek it in a way of well-doing ; not only praying for it, but

living according to the dii-ections of God's holy word ; that is to say,

by seeking his favour in Christ, and maintaining communion with God

in the Spirit, by serious converses with him in the means of grace,

governing our affections and passions, and by a constant self-denial,

mortification, and temperance, getting a victory over the world and

the desires of the flesh. And as to others, by carrying ourselves in all

meekness and charity, without envy, malice, injury, and oppression,

and doing good to all as we have opport.unity, especially, to the household

of faith. This is the well-doing recommended to us in the scripture, and

this is our beginning and progress towards eternal life ; for wo must

apprehend it not only under the notion of glory and immortality, but

under the notion of exact holiness as well as complete happiness ; under

the notion of conformity to God and communion with God ; for God's

will is done in heaven as well as upon earth ; and the heaven of chris-

tians is to see God and to be like him. Many seem to desire it as a

state of felicity, but they hate it as a state of perfect holiness (which is

the better part of it), a sinless, immaculate estate. Well, then, by

this part of the evidence many are excluded. Partly all those who

live according to their own humours and fancies, and vain desires, and

the customs of men, or the course of this world, and were never

acquainted with a life of holiness spent in communion with God and

subjection to his will. Partly also all they that do evil, dishonour God,

oppress and wrong their brethren by violence or slanders, and live in

malice and envy, who were never acquainted with self-government, or

bridling their sensual and worldly desires, so that the honours, profits,

and pleasures of the flesh have the pre-eminence in their esteem, choice,

and practice. Partly too all those that do no good ; that have not fed,

visited, clothed, relieved the destitute, comforted the afflicted : Mat.

XXV. 41-45, ' Then shall he say also to them on the left hand. Depart,

ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels :

for I was an hungry, and ye gave me no meat ; I was thirsty, and ye

gave me no drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in ; naked,

and ye clothed me not ; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Then shall they answer him, saying, Lord, Avhcn saw we thee an

hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and

did not minister unto thee ? Then shall he answer them, saying,

Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as yc did it not to the least of these.

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ye did it not to me.' In short, all those who yield no ohedience to

God, but cast off his yoke, or that yield a partial ohedience, submit-

ting it may be to outward acts of worship, but neglecting the duties of

justice and charity ; or, on the other side, make conscience of duties

of commerce with men, but delight not in communion with God, and

trouble not themselves with seeking his favour and reconciliation bv

Christ.

3. They are such as continue patiently in a course of well-doing to

the end of their lives ; for it is not enough to begin well, but the work

must still be carried on till we come to receive our reward : Heb. iii.

14, 'For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of

our confidence steadfast unto the end.' But 3^ou will say, Itonr com-

fort be suspended upon this condition, then we can never know that wo

are heirs of promise till we come to die. I answer — It is not eventus

persevcrandi, not actual perseverance to the end, which maketh the

evidence ; but labor, conahcs, et cura perseverandi, the resolution and

endeavour to continue in a diligent use of all means, to continue in the

way of well-doing, and to please God in all things. And the more you

thus give diligence to persevere in this holy ])urpose, the more assurance

you get of the goodness of your condition : Heb. vi. 11, ' And we desire

that every one of you do show the same diligence, to the full assurance

of hope to the end ; that ye be not slothful,' &c. A christian may be

assured, and his assurance groweth upon him the more he sets himself

continually to obey God. Now this part of the evidence cuts off partly

all those that are only good by fits a-nd starts and good moods ; some-

times they set their faces heavenward, but their lusts return, and then

they are worse than they were before : partly those who prove final

apostates ; they began to build, but they leave the work unfinished,

and 'after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the

knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again en-

tangled therein, and overcome,' 2 Peter ii. 20.

Use 2. Is exhortation, to press you —

1. To seek after honour, glory, and immortality. Oh, this is the

best pursuit you can engage in. What is better for you ? Can the

world or the devil propound anything so good, or better, than this

glorious estate? Are the dreggy contentments of the flesh, the vain-

glory and honour of the world, the uncertain riches we enjoy here,

worthy to come in competition with eternal life ? Surely in matter of

motive a christian hath the advantage, however a carnal man hath the

advantage in matter of principle, because in him it is wholly entire

and unbroken.

2. To well-doing. Surely you should not need many arguments to

press you to do well ; rather to press you to do ill should be the more

difficult task, it is so contrary to our reason, and the right constitution

of our natures, but that we are strangely depi'aved. christians !

what do we invite you to, but to love God above all, and seek his

favour in Christ, and love your neighbour as yourself, and by temper-

ance, purity, and chastity to preserve your own vessels, both bodies

and souls, in sanctification and honour ? Surely these duties are not

gyves, but ornaments; and such subjection to God should be i)referred

before liberty in sinning.

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3. To continue with patience. I will press you to this by two argu-

ments' —

[1.] There will be always the same reason for going on that there was

for beginning at first. Did the sense of your duty invite you ? The

same bond of duty lieth upon you still. l)id the hopes of the world to

come engage you ? Heaven is not yet obtained. And will you lose

all the cost you have been at already ? Gal. iii. 4, ' Have ye suffered so

many things in vain ? '

[2.] There can be no temptation great enough to recompense you for

the loss of your reward of eternal life. Is it reproach ? Wlien men

despise, God will honoin- thee ; and it is a blessed thing to be reviled for

righteousness' sake. Is it worldly loss ? Better lose the world than

lose our souls : Mat. xvi. 26, ' What will it profit a man if he should

gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? ' Is life in danger ?

Losing life for Christ is the way to save it ; and John xi. 25, ' Though

he were dead, yet shall he live.' Is it the continual reviving of troubles?

In the other world there is nothing to assault thy perseverance ; there

thou art out of the gunshot of temptations, and shalt serve God with-

out defect or difficulty ; there our service is not troublesome to us.

SERMON UPON 2 CORINTHIANS XIII. 14.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Clirist, and the love of God, and the

communion of the Holy Ghost, he toith you- all. Amen. —

2 Cor. xiii. 14.

My purpose is to open the apostolical benediction or prayer for tlie

Corinthians ; for our way of blessing is only to pray for those whom we

bless. To love others is to desire their good. They that love best and

most desire the best good for their friends; and better good there

cannot be desired than that those we love may have God for their God.

Now they that have God for their God have all tliat is in God, and all

that is God. God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost will employ all

his wisdom, power, and goodness, to save them from all evil, and bring

them to eternal blessedness. This is that which is prayed for in this

place : ' The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and

the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.'

In the words we have —

The thing prayed for, together with the persons from whom ; or

rather —

1. Tlie matter of the bk^ssedness wished, ' The grace of our Lord

Jesus Cln-ist, the love of God, the communion of the Holy Ghost.'

2. The effectual application to the Corinthians, ' Be with you.'

3. The confirmation of these hopes and desires, in the word ' Amen.'

1. The matter of the blessing. It consists of three branches, suited

to the persons of the godhead — (1.) The grace of Christ ; (2.) The

love of God ; (3.) The communion of the Holy Ghost.

2. The effectual application, ' Be with you.' These things are with

us, or in us, two ways — (1.) In the effects ; (2.) In the sen.se.

[1.] In the effects, when we have tlie fruits of the Fatlier's love and

Christ's grace and the Spirit's operation : ' That the love wherewith

thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them,' Jolm xvii. 2G.

[2.] In the sense and feeling, when we comfortably know it is thus

with us : John xiv. 21, ' He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father ;

and I will love liim, and manifest myself unto him;' Eom. v. 5,

' Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost,

which is given unto us.'

3. The confirmation of these desires and hopes, in the word ' Amen ; '

^\\\q\\'\^ signacidxim fdei, an expression of faith ; and votum desiderii,

an eruption of our desire and love.

SERMON IFPON 2 CORINTHIANS XIII. 14. 157

Doct. That all the persons of the blessed Trinity do concur to the

hajipiness and salvation of believers.

Here let me show you — (1.) How they do concur ; (2.) Why they

do concur.

I. How they do concur. Let ns explain in the text.

1. Here are all the persons of the Godhead mentioned. God is

taken personally for the Father, and then Jesus Christ and the Spirit

are distinctly mentioned. So in other scriptures : J Peter i. 2, ' Elect

according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctifica-

tion of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus

Christ.' The fundamental cause of salvation is the election of God,

who, when he had all fallen mankind in his prospect and view, was

pleased to choose out some to grace and glory, passing by others.

Then there is reconciliation ascribed to Jesus Christ, and sanctification

to the Spirit, as the means by which this purpose is brought about.

The beginning is from God the Father, the dispensation is by Jesus

Christ, and the application is through the Holy Ghost. So also Titus

iii. 4-6, ' But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour

towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have

done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regen-

eration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us

abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.' God the Father out

of love sent a saviour, by whose grace we are saved ; and God the Son,

from God the Father, sent God the Holy Ghost, who applieth the love

of God, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, by renewing and

healing our natures. So 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14, ' But we are bound to give

thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because

God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sancti-

fication of the Spirit, and belief of the truth ; whereunto he called you by

our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ ; '

where the three persons are again mentioned, and their concurrence to

our salvation.

2. That words proper to their personal operation are used ; for there

is love ascribed to the Father, grace to the Son, and communion to the

Holy Ghost. The Father is represented as the fountain of love and all

goodness, and as expressing and exerting his love by the Son and Spirit.

By the 'grace of Christ' is meant all that gracious ])rovision which

he hath made for man's salvation, both in the reconciling God to us,

and procuring the mission of the Spirit. \* Communion ' is ascribed to

the Spirit, because all is applied or communicated to us by him. Or

thus, our salvation is ascribed in election to the love of the Father, in

redemption to the grace of the Son, in sanctification to the communion

or participation of the Holy Ghost.

[1.] ' The love of God.' Love is ascribed to the Father ; for the

love of God is the cause of all. Consider his giving Christ for us, or

giving Christ to us, and us to him. (1.) In giving Christ for us:

John iii. 16, ' God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have ever-

lasting life.' Christ did not merit electing love, but love rather moved

God to give Christ for sinners. Love appointed the Son to be our

Kedeemer ; there was the bosom and bottom cause. (2.) In giving

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Christ to us : John vi. 37, ' All that the Father givetli me shall come

to me ; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out ; ' John

xvii. 6, ' 1 have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest

me out of the world ; thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and

they have kept thy word.' And in time he doth execute and accom-

plish this out of his mere love : Jer. xxxi. 3, ' The Lord hath appeared

to me of old, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love,

therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee/ As by elective love

the heirs of salvation were distinguished from others in God himself, or

in his intention and purpose, so by regeneration and converting love

they are distinguished from others in themselves, and set apart from

the rest of the world, to be the objects of his special love and instru-

ments of his glory. Besides, there is a love of God whereby he loveth

us when we are in Christ Jesus, which is the ground of our safety and

preservation : Rom. viii. 38, 39, ' For I am persuaded that neither

death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things

present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,

shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ

Jesus our Lord.'

[2.] ' The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.' What is intended us by

tlie Father is brought about by the grace of the Eedeemer, and there-

fore all the provision Christ had made for our salvation is called grace :

2 Cor. viii. 9, ' For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that,

though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through

his poverty might be rich;' that is, ye know his gracious condescen-

sion in submitting to such a mean condition for our sakes. So 1 Cor.

xvi. 23, ' The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.' Grace

is God's favour and love, which was first purchased by Christ by his

obedience and bloody sufferings : Rom. iii. 24, \* Being justified freely

by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Ciu-ist.'

Secondly, applied by his intercession, which is also another act of his

grace ; and therefore we ' come boldly to the throne of grace, that w'e

may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need,' Heb.

iv. 16 ; namely, ' having a great high priest that is jiassed into the

heavens, Jesus the Son of God,' ver. 14, who knoweth our infirmities.

Thirdly, as it is bestowed by him, as Lord of the new creation, upon

such terms as every way keep up the honour and interest of grace

in our salvation : Eph. ii. 8, ' By grace ye are saved, through faith, and

that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.' All the saving benefits

we have by Christ are from grace, such as reconciliation with God, the

renovation of our natures, and everlasting glory and happiness ; they

are all dispensed in a gracious way from first to last.

[3.] ' The communion of the Holy Ghost.' Communion is ascribed

to the Holy Ghost. It may be rendered communion or communication.

The Spirit reneweth and changeth our nature, and worketh faith and

holiness in us. Light, life, and love are the special benefits which he

comnnmicates to us. He doth enlighten our minds, to understand

and believe the great things prepared for us by God through Jesus

Christ. It is said, 1 Cor. ii. 10, ' But God hath revealed them unto

us by his Spirit ; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep

things of God.' So Eph. i. 17, 18, 'That the God of our Lord Jesus

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Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and

revelation in the knowledge of him ; the eyes of your understanding

being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling,

and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' Life ;

for we live in the Spirit, and are born of the Sph-it ; that is, have a

new life begotten in us, therefore called a Spirit of life : before we

lived as men, now as christians. And love ; the heart is bent and in-

clined to God. It began in love, and endeth in love ; love of God

endeth in love to God. This threefold effect is expressed, 2 Tim. i. 7,

' For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and

a sound mind.' Life in power, as light in a sound mind. And it is

altogether called the divine nature : 2 Peter i. 4, ' Whereby are given

unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you

might be partakers of the divine nature ; ' for it answereth to the

wisdom, power, and goodness of God.

3. That all these words imply riches of goodness, bounty, and liber-

ality. Love notetli a ready inclination to do good to others, without

the excitement of external motives ; it openeth and enlargetli the heart

to another, and then the hand cannot be shut: 2 Cor. vi. 11, 'Oye

Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you ; our heart is enlarged.'

Grace is some good thing freely given. So KoivwvCa, communion,

noteth a liberal effusion or distribution of the graces of God's sanctify-

ing Spirit ; and so it suiteth with cv^airr) &eov, and %a/3i9 Xpiarov, ' the

love of God,' and ' the grace of Christ ; ' elsewhere, Kowcovia Trvoevi^aro^,

'the communion of the Spirit,' is joined with 'bowels and mercies :' Phil,

ii. 1, ' If any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies ; ' that

is, if you have received any good from Christ by the Spirit. So Rom.

XV. 26, ' For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a

certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.'

What is in our translation to ' make a contribution ' for the saints, is

in the original KOLicovlav iroitjaaOai, to make a communion or com-

munication. So 2 Cor. viii. 4, ' Praying us with much entreaty, that

we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the mini-

stering to the saints,' KOiv(oviavrrj<i hiaKovia'^. So 2 Cor. ix. 13, 'And for

your liberal distribution unto them,' aTT\oT7]Ti rf]'; kolvcovlu^;. So here,

' the communication of the Spirit.' If you will render it ' communion,'

this is the great effect of the love of God a;nd the grace of Christ, that we

are made members of Christ's mystical body by the Spirit : 1 Cor. xii. 13,

' For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body;' and so are united

to the head, and to one another by this bond of union. The church is

a mystical body, whereof Christ is the head, and the Holy Ghost is,

as it were, the heart of it ; the one guideth this great body, the other

quickeneth it. Now in this mystical body we actually come to the

participation of what Christ hath purchased for us by the Holy Ghost.

4. These make way one for another, or work into each other's liand ;

for what the Father intended, Christ purchased, and the Spirit applieth.

God the Father is as the fountain of grace, Jesus Christ as the con-

duit or pipe to convey it to us, and the Holy Ghost the immediate

operator and worker of it ; the Father of his good pleasure electing

sinners to grace and glory, the Son by his obedience and sufferings

purchasing it, that it may be brought about in a way convenient for

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Gods honour, the Spirit by his virtue and power working grace in tlieui.

There is not a different effect from the Father which is not from the

Son, and from the Son which is not from the Spirit, but they concur

in an united way, that wliat cometh from the Father cometh from the

Son a:nd the Spirit ; the Father makes way for the Son's worlc, and the

Son for the Spirit's. So back again; the Spirit is said to honour the

Son : John xvi. 14, ' He shaU glorify me ; for he shall receive of mine,

and shall show it unto you ; ' and the Son is said to glorify the Father :

John xiv. 13, ' And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do,

that the Father may be glorified in the Son/ The Spirit acts as sent

by Christ, and Christ as sent by the Father. This is necessary to be

regarded by us, because as our salvation in the general is from the

Father, through the Son, by the Spirit, so in all our commerce with

God, God the Father, as a judge, by the spirit of bondage sendeth us

to Christ as mediator, and Christ as mediator by the Spirit of adoption

fiends us back again to God as a Father. It is a great help to prayer :

E[)h. ii. 18, ' For through him we both have an access by one Spirit

unto the Father.' To whom are we praying ? To God as a Father.

Whence have we hopes of audience ? By Christ. Who giveth us an

heart to come ? The Spirit.

II. The reasons why they concui'.

1. That we may have the higher esteem of the work, which hath such

<ngents concerned in it. It is no slight thing to bring about the salva-

tion of lost sinners ; all the persons of the godhead are at work about

it ; and shall not we, who are the parties interested, be employed about

it also ? God is in good earnest ; for therefore before all worlds he

emi)loyed the riches of his wisdom and grace to save us in this con-

venient way : 1 Peter i. 20, ' Who verily was fore-ordained before the

foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.'

And who are we, that the thoughts of God should be taken up

about us so long ago ? Jesus Christ hath spared no pains to accom-

plish the work of our redemption, but freely offered himself to this

work : Heb. x. 7, ' Lo, I come to do thy will, God.' He repented

not his undertaking, but was fully contented, if souls may be saved:

Isa. liii. 11,' ' He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be

satisfied.' And the Holy Spirit continueth striving with us, though

often grieved by our obstinacy and disobedience : Gen. vi. 3, ' My Spirit

shall not always strive with man ; ' Isa. Ixiii. 10, ' They rebelled,

<ind vexed his Holy Spirit.' Many a conviction do we smother, and

often check, and resist his motions, yet he is importunate to prevail

with us.

2. That our hearts may be raised to give equal glory to all the

persons concerned. We must honour the Son as we honour the Father,

as it is expressly said, John v. 23, ' That all men should honour the

Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son,

honoureth not the Father that hath sent him.' There is an honour due

to God only, not to be given to any other. Christ is equal with the

Father in participating this honour ; he is to have the same glory of

believing, love, fear, and invocation. So also for the Spirit ; he is an

object of invocation ; for as the apostle wisheth and desireth love from

the Father and grace from Christ, so a liberal distribution and com-

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municatioii of gifts and graces from the Spirit. Now, to excite ns to give

this due respect to all the persons, every one concurreth in his way to

promote our final happiness and salvation. The Father deserveth this

esteem from us. Many think of God the Father as all wrath

and justice, difficult to be reconciled to man ; and of the second

])erson of the Trinity as more gracious and merciful. No ; the love of

God is the original of our redemption: God 'spared not his own Son,

hut delivered him up for us all,' liom. viii. 32 ; and ' God was in Christ

reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them,'

2 Cor. V. 19 ; and ' the Father himself loveth you,' John xvi. 27. Christ

came to sliow the amiable nature of God : ' Being the brightness of his

glory, and the express image of his person,' Heb. i. 3. Then for the

Lord Jesus, in Christ the glory and riches of the grace of God doth

more eminently and palpably appear. This is the contemplation of the

saints: John i. 14, ' And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among

us ; and we beheld his glory (the glory as of the only-begotten of the

Father), full of grace and truth ; ' Eph. iii. 18, 19, ' That ye may be

able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and

depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passetli

knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God ; ' Heb.

iii. 1, ' Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,

consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Jesus Chi-ist'

His grace, thus condescending to men, is more eminently seen : Eom.

V. 8, ' But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were

yet sinners, Christ died for us ; ' and Eev. i. 5, ' To him who loved us,

and washed us from our sins in his own blood.' And for God the

Spirit, we also find our hearts raised to give him glory ; partly by the

motions of his grace, which we feel in our hearts: Ps. cxliii. 10, ' Teach

me to do thy will, for thou art my God : thy Spirit is good ; lead me

into the land of uprightness ; ' Neh. ix. 20, ' Thou gavest also thy good

Spirit to instruct tliem.' The sanctifier, guide, and comforter of

believers is God's Spirit ; he is the only authoi- and fountain of all

goodness and holiness. And partly by the comfortable sense he begets

in us of our adoi)tion : Gal. iv. 6, 'And because ye are sons, God

hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba,

Father ; ' and of our hopes of glory : 2 Cor. v. 5, ' Now he that hath

wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who hath also given unto us

the earnest of the Spirit.' And partly by the support and comfort we

have from him in all our conflicts and distresses : 1 Peter iv. 14, ' If

ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye ; for the Spirit

of glory and of God resteth upon } nu : on their part he is evil-spoken

of, but on your part he is glorified.'

3. That we may with more confidence wait for the beginning, pro-

gress, and consummation of our own salvation. There is the eternal

love of God, the all-sufficient merit of Christ, and the omnipotent

operation of the Holy Ghost. What cannot eternal love, infinite merit,

and almighty ])Ower do ? As Christ is necessary to keep all right be-

tween us and God, so the Spirit is necessary to keep all right between

us and Christ. As we need a person of the godhead to satisfy the

justice of God, so also to overcome our obstinancy and unbelief, and to

vanquish temptations, and doubts, and fears, and to settle us in the

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comfort and hope of the gospel. It is God's prerogative to settle the

conscience : It^a. Ivii. 19, ' I create the fruit of the lips ; Peace, peace, to

him tliat is afar off, and to him that is nigli, saith the Lord.' God is

the su[)reme judge and the wronged party : ' He conmiands his loving-

kindness in "tlie day-time,' Ps. xlii. 8. Ijy a powerful, imperial act of

the Spirit, he stilleth our douhts and fears.

4. That the whole glory of our salvation may redound to God alone.

Therefore the divine persons carry it on among themselves ; love,

grace, and communication do all : ' To the praise of the glory of his

grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the hcloved,' Eph, i. G.

Grace is the fountain cause of our election ; grace bringeth it about ;

for who could ransom a soul except Christ had taken the work in

hand? There would have been a stop there : Ps. xlix. 7, 8, ' None of

them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom

for him ; for the redemption of their soul is precious, and ceaseth for

ever.' There would have been a stop there. Grace applies all. What

are we before the grace of the Sjiirit ? how imworthy till grace make

us lovely ! how unable to lay hold on it before the Spirit of God enable

us ! Rom. V. 6, ' For when we were yet without strength, in due time

Christ died for the ungodly.' And how unable are we to make good

use of it afterward ! For (1.) What was our behaviour before calling?

' Disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures,' Titus iii. 3. (2.) In

calling, it was slight and refractory : Job xxxiii. 14, ' For God speaketh

once, yea twice, but man perceiveth it not.' He often inviteth, but

men take no notice of what so much concerneth their soul's good, but

slight all warnings and instructions, lay not their condition to heart,

and many an opportunity is lost ; but God overcometh men's evil by

his own goodness, and will not lose his elect ; therefore, ver. 16, \* He

openeth tlie ears of men, and sealeth their instruction ; ' that is, breaketh

in U})on them in such a powerful way that they cannot withstand it.

(3.) Since calling there are frequent interruptions of obedience : James

iii. 2, ' For in many things we offend ail.' Our best ]ierformances are

weak and full of blemishes : Isa. Ixiv^ G, ' We are all as an unclean

thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filtliy rags.' So that from

first to last all floweth from God, and all floweth from love, and grace,

and communication of the Spirit, tliat our persons and actions are

accepted. Now it is our duty to acknowledge this love, and highly

esteem this glorious grace, and to testify our esteem by word and work.

By word, in praises; by deed, expressing our thankfulness in our

lives, that they may be a constant hymn to God, and a prai^^e of his

grace that we are made partakers of.

Use 1. To encourage us to seek after the effects of this love of God,

grace of Jesus Christ, and communion of the Spirit.

1. I will plead your want. What will you do if you have not Father,

Son, and Holy Ghost for your God ? You have your beings from him

for a while, but the day of his patience will not always last. You

must die, and give an account ; and woful, yea, dreadful, will their

account be who are not only involved in the common apostasy, but have

heard of the transactions of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost about their

recovery, and never minded tiie benefit, or made light of it. Surely

it is woful dulness and stupidity not to value it, and to feel no need of it :

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2 Cor. vi. 1, ' We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also

that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.' What grace was that ?

' God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself/ chap. v. 19.

That grace which the Father hath contrived for your salvation ; that

grace for which Christ laid down his life ; that grace which is so

atTectionately tendered in the gospel ; that grace and that free un-

deserving mercy which is so suitable to your necessities. Will you

despise this ? It was an act of infinite love of God to design it and

reveal it to you ; of Christ, to purchase it for you ; of the Holy Ghost,

to offer it to jou. ; yea, to strive with you to make you capable of it.

Shall the gospel be cast away upon you, and all those gracious methods

of God frustrated ? Or have you no need of it ? How will you maintain

peace in your consciences now without grace ? How will you stand

before God's tribunal at the last day ?

2. Let me plead the worth of it. He that hath this love of God,

this grace of Christ, this communion of the Spirit, wanteth nothing to

Jiis solid happiness ; he hath all necessary things in their cause and

fountain ; for he hath God, Christ, and the Spirit ; for all things come

from the love of God, and the grace of Christ, and the communion of

the Holy Ghost. And he doth possess all things in that measure that

Ood sees fit for him: Ps. Ixxxiv. 11, 'The Lord will give grace and

glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk

uprightly.' It bringeth other mercies with it, and nothing is good

without it. All things are mercy, even those that fall out contrary to

our expectations: Kom. viii. 28, 'All things shall work together for

good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to

liis purpose.' Well, then, they that know the want of grace, or the

worth of grace, will earnestly seek it.

3. Let me plead the possibility of obtaining it ; for the three persons

conspire and agree together, not to your ruin, but salvation. Whatever

may be expected from infinite love, eternal merit, and almighty power,

it is all offered to those that will seek after it. There are none but

are sensible that they need to address themselves to God for pardon

and a blessing. Now God is an holy God ; how shall sinners deal with

him ? As the prophet said to Ahab, ' If it were not that I regard the

presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look towards

thee, nor see thee,' 2 Kings iii. 14. Whatever we seek and expect from

Ood, we must seek it from Jesus Christ, who hath purchased all : Isa.

liii. 5, ' He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our

iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his

stripes we are healed ; ' Eph. i. 7, ' In whom we have redemption through

his blood, the forgiveness of sins.' And he is appointed to bestow all

that which he hath purchased : Acts v. 31, \* Him hath God exalted

with his right hand, to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance

to Israel, and remission of sins.' And by his intercession he doth apply

all : Heb. vii. 25, ' Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost

that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession

for tliera.' Well, then, if we will go to Christ, he sendeth us to the

Spirit, who worketh all, and doth accomplish in us the pleasure of his

goodness. Go to the Spirit; he must heal you and help you. The Spirit

sendeth us to the means : Acts i. 4, ' And being assembled together with

them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem,

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but wait for the promise of the Father.' You shall fiud him present

iu the ordinances. Oh, what encuuragemeut have we to be serious, and

in the use of the means by which the Spirit worketh !

4. We are obliged by our baptismal covenant : Mat. xxviii. 19, ' Go

ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the

Father, and of the Son, and of the Koly Ghost,' Father, Son, and Holy

Ghost take upon them to convey this love, grace, and power ; and we

take upon ourselves to accept the Father for our Lord and happiness,

Christ for our redeemer and saviour, and the Holy Ghost for our guide,

sanctifier, and comforter ; to obey his motions, to use those means

whereby we may feel his power, to avoid those wilful sins which may

grieve the Spirit, and cause him to suspend his operations and comforts.

Tliere we are consecrated as children to the true God, consent to receive

Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and obey his Spirit. Now make

conscience of this vow.

Use 2. Is to put us upon self-reflection. Is the love of the Father,

and the grace of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Gliost with us ?

Do we seek our happiness in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ? Or do you

consent tliat God shall be your God, as reconciled to you in Jesus

Christ ?

1. As to the Father. Do you own him as your rightful Lord?

and are you willing to return to his obedience by Jesus Christ? Do

you take him for your portion and felicity ? Do you expect to receive

all your happiness from him ? valuing and preferring his favour and

love above all the pleasures, profits, and honours of the world ? Ps. iv.

6, ' There be many that say. Who will show us any good ? Lord, lift

thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.' Admiring it ? 1 John

iii. 1, ' Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us,

that we should be called the sons God ! ' ' His favour is life,' Ps. xxx'.

5. Yea, better than life : Ps. Ixiii. 3, ' Because thy loving-kindness is

better than life, my lips shall praise thee.' Willing to forsake all

rather than forsake him. Behave yourselves with that thankfulness

as those that owe yourselves and all your happiness to him : 2 Cor. v.

14, 15, ' The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that

if one died for all, then were all dead : and that he died for all, that

they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto

him which died for them, and rose again.' Carry it as those that are

obliged by love.

2. Do you take Christ for your only saviour and redeemer ? giving

up yourselves to be saved by his merits, righteousness, and intercession,

as he hath promised in the word ? Do you trust yourselves and souls

with him for pardon, peace, and endless ha})piness ? depend upon his

covenant and promises for reconciliation with God, and everlasting

fruition of him in glory? trampling upon all things, rather than turn

your back upon your Redeemer's grace ?

3. Do you yield yourselves to the Holy Ghost ? Are you unfeignedly

desirous to be rid of sin as displeasing to the holy God, how dear

soever it hath been to you ? And do you submit to the Spirit, to be

sanctified and perfected by degrees in the means lie hath appointed,

being ruled by his motions rather than the desires of the flesh ? Do you

observe his accesses and recesses, and behave yourselves accordingly ?

SERMONS

SEVEEAL TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To THE Eight Honourable Sir Thomas Abnet, Kt., Alderman,

and Lord Mayor of the City of London, with his most reh'gious

Consort.

My Lord and Lady, — Whoever have known the spirit and temper of

■worthy Dr Manton, appearing in his not-yet-forgotten hfe, and con-

spicuous in his never-to-he-forgotten writings, and do know anything

of your temper and spirit, will not think it an incongruity that your

names and his do thus stand together on the same page. Your lordship's

high esteem and value of him, made public to the world, can reflect

no dishonour upon you, either in your own judgment, or any man's that

is a capable judge of persons and things. And your ladyship's kindness

to his memory is even hereditary, descending to you from your worthy

father, between whom and him there was so inward and continued a

friendship as scarce ever hath been a greatei', expressed by beneficence

on the one part, and gratitude on the other.

And that an eminent servant of Christ, who, through the track of

so many years, hath been so great and public a teacher, and example

of the ancient serious piety, rigliteousness, sobriety, strictness of manners,

with most diffusive charity (for which London hath been renowned for

some ages beyond most cities in the world), should have his memory

revived by such a testimony from persons under your character, and

who hold so public a station as you do in it, can never be thought

unbecoming, as long as clearly explained and exemplified religion, solid,

useful learning, and good sense, are in any credit in the world.

This volume will, as an addition to his many former most useful and

most ajjproved works that have gone before it, further, through God's

blessing, contribute to the mending the world. And as it adds reputa-

tion to the author, so will the countenance you give it add to your own

reputation. That it may also redound to your real and the common

advantage is the cordial prayer of, my honoured lord and lady, your

most faithful humble servant in Christ, John Howe.

THE PREFACE.

Christian Eeader, — The many volumes of sermons tliat come yearly

from the press may in all probability incline some at first to apprehend

that, as to what is here presented, the publisher might have si)ared his

pains. But till we can find another Dr Manton, and performances like

to his, there is no sense in the censure. Of many attempts in this kind,

it had been wished they had proved abortive, there arising no credit to

tliose concerned, nor benefit to the world ; but the excellence of Dr

Manton's sermons is so conspicuous, that none can attempt to detract

from them, but it must be from ignorance or envy. Living and dying,

he had that reputation for a king of preachers that hath been reached

by few. Archbishop Usher was wont to say of him, that he was a

voluminous preacher ; not as if he was tedious for length, but because

he had the art of reducing the substance of volumes of divinity into a

narrow compass. Mr Charnock oft represented him as the best col-

lector of sense of the age. And Dr Bates, in his sermon at his funeral,

declares it with admiration, that though he was so very frequent in preach-

ing, yet he was always superior to others, and equal to himself. Here are

three substantial witnesses of imdoubted credit ; and he that won't

confirm their testimony with his own (upon the perusal of his com-

posures) manifestly shows he hath no gust. No man spun a more even

thread through all his sermons, which are as much of a piece as can

well be conceived ; so that if any of them are valuable, they are all so ;

for the same spirit and sense, substance and warmth, is discernible in

all of them. As for this volume, it hath nothing spurious, nothing

unbecoming the author, nothing mean or trivial ; but it contains several

as valuable and useful discourses as any that have been already printed.

And if any have given themselves the liberty to sa)', The doctor runs

dregs (the best being culled out before, and these the refuse left), it is

a sign they did not know him ; nor is it doubted but a perusal of what

is here offered will rectify their mistakes. These sermons were all

transcribed from his own notes, and crave the reader's candour to give

them that charitable allowance which is due to all posthumous works.

That light and love, knowledge and holiness, may bo increa.sed, and

dift'used more and more through this land and city, by all the labours

of those whom Christ hath sent into his vineyard, is the hearty prayer

of one of the meanest and unworthiest of them,

Richard Stretton.

SERMONS UPON EPHESIANS Y.

SERMON I.

Be ye therefore folloivers of God, as dear cliildren. — Eph. v. 1.

This cbapier containeth several precepts concerning holiness of life.

They are of two sorts ; some are general, and common to all christians ;

others are special, and particularly suited to the condition and state of

life they may he put into. The apostle heginneth with the common

directions that belong universally to all christians ; and this is the first

of them, ' Be ye therefore,' &c.

There are two things in the words —

1. The precept, ' Be ye followers of God,' ixijjbrjTa), imitators or

followers of his example ; for no English word is of a larger extent.

They may be said to be followers of God who embrace the profession of

his name, or the religion which lie hath established. There are fol-

lowers by way of adherence, and followers by way of resemblance.

2. The argument to enforce it, which is intimated in the words, ' as

dear children.' There is the relation, re/ct'a, and the love consequent

upon the relation, ajaTrrjTd, because ye are God's beloved children.

The doctrine is plain.

Doct. That christians should endeavour to resemble God as near as

may be.

1. I shall show wherein we are to resemble God.

2. What provision God hath made for it.

3. I will prove it by reasons.

I. Wherein are we to resemble God ?

I answer — The context seemeth to restrain it to one particular thing,

pardoning and forgiving the wrongs done us by others ; for it is said,

' therefore,' as inferring it out of what was spoken before ; and that is

what was said in Eph. iv. 32, ' Forgiving one another, as God for

Christ's sake hath forgiven you.' But it is usual to give general direc-

tions upon particular occasions, and therefore we need not confine our

thoughts to that only ; and yet I will not enlarge the matter too much.

In scripture we are pressed to follow God in two things — in holiness

and mercy ; as there is a tvA^ofold goodness of God, moral and bene-

ficial ; his moral goodness is holiness, Ids beneficial goodness is benignity

and mercy ; and in these two things are we pressed to follow him

chiefly.

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1. As for liis moral goodness and holiness : Phil. ii. 15, ' That )'e

inay he hlameless and harmless, the sons of God without rehiike in the

midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as

lights in the world.' fmplying that God's children must be like their

Father, just and holy, doing wrong to none, but convincing the con-

sciences of all of their sonship and adoption, or nearness to God. It

pleaseth God often to leave his people in the midst of the enemies of the

gospel, who will take occasion, by the uncircumspect carriage of believers,

to vomit out their spite and malice against it ; therefore christians had

need be exemplary in holiness.

2. The other thing wherein we are called upon to imitate God is in

goodness to all, enemies not excepted : Mat. v. 44, 45, ' But I say unto

you. Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them,

that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and perse-

cute you ; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in

heaven : for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and

sendeth rain on the just and unjust.' Meaning thereby, that you

yourselves will know or show yourselves to others to be children of your

Father. The more kind and merciful you are, the more you are like

him ; and ver. 48, ' Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect ; '

compared with Luke vi. 36, ' Be ye therefore merciful, as your heavenly

Father is merciful.' Which showeth that mercy is one of the great

divine perfections which we ought to imitate.

Well, then, let us now state the matter.

[1.] Negatively. This following and resembling of God standeth

not in his natural, but moral })erfections. God doth not say, Be ye

strong, as I am strong, or, Be ye hapj)y, as I am happy ; but. Be ye

holy, as I am holy, merciful, as I am merciful. Our loss by sin is more

in point of goodness than of power and knowledge. The devils

exceed us in the two last, in power and knowledge, but have nothing

of goodness. The impression of his goodness therefore is more neces-

sary to US in our lapsed estate than of his knowledge and power.

God is miglity in power; therein we cannot imitate him, for we are

poor weak creatures, and shall be so till we arrive at the state of bless-

edness and immortality ; but he is rich in mercy, and glorious in

holiness ; in these things we must resemble him. He would teach us

that moral perfections must be preferi-ed before natural ; it is better

to be wise than to be mighty, to be holy than to be wise. The bad

angels, that have lost their holiness, have kept their strength and

cunning. Nothing hath cost men dearer than striving to be like God

in greatness and power rather than in goodness, holiness, and truth.

It was Satan's temptation to our first parents: Gen. iii. 5, ' Ye shall

be as gods ; ' not in a blessed conformity, but in a cursed self-sufficiency.

Therefore let us take heed of the first ambition of man to affect to be

like God in power. It was the arrogancy of the king of Babylon to

say, Isa. xiv. 14, ' I will ascend above the heights of the clouds ; I will

be like the Most High.' No, no ; moral excellences God would com-

mend to us as deserving our best esteem from his own pattern.

[2.] Positively. Tiie chiefest excellencies are —

(1.) His holiness. So we are to imitate God, who is a pure and

holy being, and is also ' holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his

VeR. 1.] SERMONS UPON EPHESIANS V. 171

works.' Ps. cxlv. 17. So we must have a dhnne nature, and live and

walk in a godlike manner : ' Be holy in all manner of conversation ;'

and live at tlie greatest distance from and abhorrence of sin as may be.

That God is holy, his laws show it, which are very pure ; his work&

siiow it, botli internal on the heart of man : Eph. iv. 24, 'And that ye

put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and

true holiness.' The new man is created after God, and that causeth a

giving back. When sin is propounded to us, we cannot easily bring^

the heart to it : 1 John iii. 9, ' Whosoever is born of God doth not

commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him ; and he cannot sin, because-

he is born of God.' By tlie seed of God he meaneth the nature of God,,

or that grace he puts into us. So also his external works, his punishing^

sin, especially in his own children. His severity in punishing is seen

in the remarkable instances of his displeasure. Now we must hate-

what God hateth, and love what God loveth ; for our nature doth

most sensibly bewray itself by its affections, both of choice and aver-

sation ; and in some measure we must have the same nature that God

hath.

(2.) His goodness ; for ' God is love,' 1 John iv. 8. He showeth his.

benignity to all his creatures, but much more to us in our redemption

by Christ. It was well observed by CEcolampadius in his lectures to

the youth and children at Basil, that the ordinary pictures of God

and the devil were no good books to instruct children in the nature of

either. The truest representation that can be made of God would be

to teacli them what truth is, what love, mercy, and goodness is ; and

the truest picture of Satan Avould be to teach them the true characters

of falsehood, malice, hatred, cruelty, envy. Well, then, we must imitate

God in goodness.

Two acts there are of God's goodness — giving and forgiving.

(1st.) His giving, or bounty to all necessitous creatures, especially

mankind, especially in their great necessities of guilt and misery, in

])roviding so ample and suitable a remedy for them. Oh, what pity

should this stir up in us to the bodies and souls of men, and make us

ready to commiserate and do good to all, most especially to the house-

hold of faith I What hath God been doing on the theatre and stage

of the world for almost six thousand years, but doing good? Acts xiv.

17, 'Nevertheless he left not himself without a witness, in that he did

good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our

liearts with food and gladness.' And is this your Father, and will you

not imitate him ? Surely goodness should be the very constitution of

our souls, and doing good the business of our lives.

(2d) Forgiving. Some works of God are to be believed, not imi-

tated, as the creation of the woikl ; and some not only believed, but

imitated, as tlie forgiving of sins. Our wrongs done to God are

greater than the wrongs others do to us. Others owe us but pence,

and we owe God talents ; their debt to us is a hundred pence, and our

debt to God is ten thousand talents. Mat. xviii. 24, 28. A talent is an

hundred imd eighty-seven pounds ten shillings. Now God freely for-

gives all our offences ; therefore we must forgive freely, fully, heartily,

and that out of a sense of the Lord's kindness. However the world

deal with you, and behave themselves towards you, do not you follow

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tlicm to do the like ; for you are not to fashion yourselves accordin^^ to

this world, Eom. xii. 2 ; but ' be ye followei's of God, as dear cldldreu.'

And therefore you are not to reward evil with evil, but to do good,

even to enemies. This is to be like God, at whose table all his enemies

are maintained, and without whom they cainiot subsist one moment.

II. What provision God hath made that we may be followers of him.

1. He hath given us his word to stamp his image upon our souls.

We see much of his goodness in creation and providence, but not so

much as we do in his word ; nor in any })ait of his word so much as in

liis gospel : 2 Cor. iv. 4, ' Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Chi-ist,

who is the image of God, should shine upon them.' The image of God

is on Christ primarily, and then on his seed, which representeth Christ

to us, to beget holiness and love in us. God giveth his word, wherein

there is so much discovered both of his love and holiness. The im})res-

sion is according to the stamp. That which is hot communicateth heat ;

that which is cold, cold. Wit by communication causeth wit, and

common learning common learning. So an holy and comfortable doc-

trine breedeth in us a spirit of holiness and goodness. There is much

in the objects we are commonly conversant about.

2. He hath given us the example of Christ, or God in our nature,

•who came for this end and purpose, that we, who cannot fathom the

unsearchable depth of the godhead, might see the divine perfections

shining forth in the human nature of Christ, who was the character

and express image of his divine glory : Heb. i. 3, Christ was ' lioly,

harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,' Pleb. vii. 26. And Christ

came to represent the goodness of God, for he ' went about doing good,'

Acts X. 38. They that cannot directly look on the sun may see the

motion of it in a basin of water. To express an image, there must be

similitude or likeness, and a means of deduction or conveying the like-

ness to us. Christ appeared in our nature to represent the amiableness

of God, and to teach us a life of holiness.

3. He hath given us his Spirit to change us into the likeness of

Christ : 2 Cor. iii. 18, ' But we all with open face beholding as in a

glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from

glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' For an objective

cause will not work inns without some internal powerful cause to make

it effectual, and that is the Spirit. None else is able to renew us to the

image of God, there being such an averseness in man's heart, which

cannot be cured by our bare thoughts.

III. I prove the point by these reasons —

1. This image of God was our primitive glory and excellency : Gen.

i. 26, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' This was

the ornament and crown of glory which God would put upon a crea-

ture, which was his masterpiece, and the most excellent of all his

works. This made us amiable in the sight of God. In other creatures

there was a vestigium, a footprint, or a track of his wisdom, power,

and goodness ; but in man there was an image or resemblance of his

face. Now this was lost by sin ; but to have it restored and recovered

is the true glory of man, and the greatest excellency that we are

capable of,

2. This is the effect of our new creation and regeneration ; for it is

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said, 2 Peter i. 4, that to ' us are given exceeding great and precious

promises, that by these you might he partakers of the divine nature;' that

is, have the image of God stamped upon us ; and so christians might

again begin to look hke God himself, and in some measure resemble

him in wisdom, goodness, and holiness. Nothing so like him a.s the

new creature.

3. This is that which we hope shall be completed in heaven, and

therefore it must be endeavoui-ed here : 1 John iii. 2, ' We shall be

like him ; for we shall see him as he is ; ' and Ps. xvii. 15, ' AVhen I

awake, I shall be satisfied Avith thy likeness ; ' that is, when I awake

out of the sleep of death. The heaven that we look for is such a vision

as maketh way for assimilation, and such an assimilation to God as

maketh way for complete satisfaction and blessedness in him. All sight

of God is transforming. That sight that we have of him in the gospel

mortifieth sin ; but that sight that we have of him in heaven nullifieth

sin, and causeth a more perfect resemblance of him and likeness to

him. And this must needs breed satisfaction, for beyond God there

is nothing to be sought after ; and if we be as God, so far as creatures

are capable, we must needs be completely happy. Well, then, since

we hope for this in heaven, the resemblance must be begun here ;

for God carrieth on his work by degrees, and doth dispose and

fit us for that estate which he will translate us into. If we expect

it hereafter, we must endeavour it now, and grow more like God every

day ; and the more we are so, the nearer we approach to our final per-

fection ; as rivers widen themselves by degrees, till with a full mouth

they run into the ocean.

4. We must not omit the argument of the text, ' as dear children ; '

wherein two things are considerable — (1.) The relation ; (2.) The love

that accompanieth it.

[1.] The relation. Ye are children. Children usually resemble their

parents, either by nature, in the lineaments of their face, or by institu-

tion and education, in the quality of their minds. It may fail there,

but it always holdeth good here ; for none are God's children but those

that are like him. It may fail there through many intervening acci-

dents ; they may neither be like their parents in the compass of their

face, or in their nature and feature, nor in their manners and virtues.

Many a worthy father may have a base degenerate child ; and it is

often observed that where there is an extraordinary excellency, there is

as great a defect in the next descendant ; as Solomon, who had so

great a measure of wisdom and understanding, had a weak-hearted

Kehoboam to his son. But it cannot fail here : if we be children of

God, there is a resemblance between him and ns ; we will imitate our

Father ; for either the resemblance constituteth the relation, or else is

the necessary effect of it. It constituteth it as we have a new being

and an holy nature from him b}'' regeneration, before we have i^ovaiav,

the right, power, and dignity of his children: John i. 12, 13, 'But as

many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of

God, even to them that believe on his name ; which were born, not of

blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.'

And it is the effect of it, as we resemble him in our lives and actions :

1 Peter i. 14-16, 'As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves

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accordiug to the former lusts in your i^niorance ; bui as he wliich hath

called you is holy, so be ye holy iu all maimer ofconversation, because it

is written, Be ye holy, as I am holy.' And })resently, in the l7Lh verse,

\* If ye call on the Father,' &c. Well, then, our adoi)tion into Gods

family calleth for a likeness between God and us. Good men may

beget children no way like them ; as under the law, though tlie father

was ciicumcised, yet the child was boru uncircumcised ; they cannot

propagate grace. Yea, where we are more at liberty, we may adopt

children that may not answer expectation, but show themselves unthank-

ful, and unworthy of favour ; for men cannot i)ut a towardliness into

them. But God changeth and reneweth the heai-t, as well as adopteth.

Therefore there should be, and will be, such a conformity between God

and all his children that they plainly resemble him. I shall strengthen

tlie argument by this additional notion, that in morals, he is accounted

our father whom we imitate ; as Gen. iv. 20, Jabal is said to be \* the

father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle ; ' that

is, of all such as followed his course of life, whether they were lineally

descended from him, yea or no. And ver. 21, Jubal is said to be ' the

father of such as handle the harp and organ ; ' that is, the first inven-

tor. So in matters spiritual, there are two sorts of children in the world,

the children of God and the children of the devil. The children of

God are such as imitate God, and the children of the devil are such as

have a satanical nature in them, and are like the devil : John viii. 44,

' Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do ;

he was a liar and a murderer from the beginning, and the father of it.'

He is an envious, malicious, proud spirit, a cruel enemy of truth and

goodness, and whosoever imitaleth him in this is a child of the devil ;

as the apostle calleth Elymas the sorcerer : Acts xiii. 10, ' Oh, full of

all subtilty and mischief, thou child of the devil, and enemy of all

righteousness ! ' On the other side, the children of God are such as are

influenced by God, and imitate God in all purity and goodness. Now

there should be a broad and manifest difference between the children

of God and of the devil, 1 John iii. 10 ; therefore as children be

followers of God.

2. The love that accompanieth and goeth along with this relation,

\* As dear children.'

[1.] There was a great deal of love showed in giving us our new

nature in regeneration, and taking us into so near a relation to himself

as that of children : 1 John iii. ], ' Behold, what manner of love the

Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of

God ! ' ' Behold' serveth sometimes to excite our faith, that we may

believe the certainty of things so strange and unusual ; sometimes our

wonder and reverence, that we may consider the worth and value of

them. Be it for one end or other, surely it is a great grace and favour

that he would take such poor creatures into his family, that God will be

our own Father, and look upon us as his own children. All is from love,

great love, which we may admire, but cannot sufficiently express. Now

this love should beget love in us again ; we should love him and own him

as our Father ; and what will follow ? Love will beget sludium imitandi,

and endeavour to be like him in benignity and holiness ; for we love

him not only as a good God, but as a holy God.

VeR 1.] ' SERMONS UPON EPHESIANS V. 17.>

Object. But you will say, If I knew that lie did thus love mc, and had

adopted me to tliis grace, this might the sooner be done. I answer.—

(1.) He maketh you the offer of this privilege, as great as it is, and

it is your fault if you do not apply it and make it your own. The terms

are gracious enough : John i. 12, ' To as many as received him, to them

gave he power to become the sons of God.'

(2.) God hath a title to our dearest love before we can assure a title

to his choicest benefits. He made you out of nothing, provided a

saviour ibr you without your thought or asking, hatli offered pardon

and life to all that will accept of it in and wdth Christ to gospel ends.

Now this should attract and draw our love to him. Our first motive

to love God is not the persuasion of his special love to us, but the

tendering of the new^ covenant, the offered happiness by Christ : 2 Cor.

V. 19, 20, ' To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to

himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them ; and hath committed

to us the word of reconciliation. Now we are ambassadors for Christ,

as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ's stead,

be ye reconciled to God.'

(3.) The more this prevaileth with you to endeavour to be like God,

the more you see you have an interest in his dearest love, and that he

is your Father, and you his children in the most comfortable sense ;

that is, that you not only desire, but are in possession of his fatherly

love : Rom. viii. 29, ' For wdiom he did foreknow, he also did predesti-

nate to be conformed to the image of his Son.' Therefore at first you

nuist not ask questions, and put off your duty by scruples, but set to

the performance of it, and you will best get rid of them.

[2.] There is a great love and tenderness exercised towards those

that are in this relation. They are his ' dear children,' and they shall

know it by his fatherly dealing with them ; they are reconciled,

pardoned, and justified, and God is not severe upon their failings :

Mai. iii. 17, \*I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth

him.' They have his Spirit sent into their hearts, to keep afoot God's

interest there, and maintain the comfort of their adoption : Gal. iv. 6,

\* And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son

into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' Thej'' are also under the

special care of his providence for protection and provision, especially

that all things may work together for their final perfection and happi-

ness. christians ! methinks it should melt your hearts to consider

how the dearness and tenderness of God's love is expressed in the gospel

towards his children. Now, then, shall not all this have a due imjires-

fiion upon you ? Filial duty should answer fatherly love. Who should be

so ready to serve and please liim as his dear children ? Yea, now we do

not press you so much to serve him as to be like him. There are duties

which signify inferiority and subjection, and we are not exempted from

them, but should readily perform what our Father calleth for in this

kind ; but there are other things which are our perfection, as wisdom,

holiness, goodness, and truth ; these advance our nature, do not depress

it, because it is godlike to excel in these things ; and this we now press

you to.

[3.] The more like to God we are, the more dear we are to him, and

the more amiable in his sight ; so that you are not only dilecti, but

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diligibiles, not only loved, but lovely, or fit to be loved ; for the Lord

taketh pleasure in his own itnag-e wrought by his Si)irit in our hearts :

Ps. xi. 7, ' For the righteous Lord lovetli righteousness ; his countenance

doth behold the upright ; ' Prov. xi. 20, ' But such as are upright in

their way are his delight ; ' 1 Peter iii. 4, ' A meek and quiet spirit is in

the siglit of God of great price.' A holy creature is an object suited to the

complacency of his holiness. God doth delight in us as redeemed and

pardoned, for his own mercy endeareth us to him : \* Is not this a brand

plucked out of the burning ? ' Zecli. iii. 2. But no one reason doth

exclude another. He doth delight in us also as sanctified ; that was

our primitive amiableness, and the loss of it was our state of enmity to

God, when he could take no pleasure in us. Therefore, the more we

recover the image and nature of God our heavenly Father, the dearer

we are to him. He had a benevolence, a good will, or pity to us in

our sins ; but his complacency in us is as we are renewed and sancti-

fied ; yea, the more we are so, the dearer to him.

[4.J Our chief worship of God consists in imitation ; not in contem-

plation or admiration only, or in bare praise and adoration, but in

imitation, when we study to be like him. Other things are necessary,

but they are means for this end, that there may be a greater conformity

between us and God, and so a communion with him. Other things

are good in themselves, but without this they are not accepted. For

instance, one great part of worship is to admire God, to which we are

often directed in scripture : ' Who is a God like unto thee ? ' This

admiration will break out into praise ; for when the heart is big with

thoughts, it cannot hold : Ps. 1. 23, ' He that ofi"ereth praise glotifieth

me.' It is questionless a great duty to praise God for his excellencies,

for how shall we be affected with things that we do not frequently

remember ? But yet there is something more to be done tlian to

wonder and praise, and that is to imitate ; and this is true religion, to

imitate what we worship. By the admiration and commemoration of

God, or by the acts of adoration in wonder and praise, thei'e may be

some loose and inconstant eftects left upon our hearts ; as to fear him,

when for the time we remember his greatness and justice ; or to have

some delight stirred in us for the present, when we remember his

goodness and mercy. But alas ! these transitory acts, though good in

their kind, yet are not to be compared with that impression of God

Avhich becometh as a habit and holy nature in us, which is the constant

principle of holy spiritual operation. It is good to think of God often ;

particular thoughts have their use. It is good to speak of God, and

praise God often, not only for his benefits, but his excellencies. Keli-

gion lieth much in it. But all these acts are but means to this end,

that we may be like God, so far as is agreeable to our created state and

capacity, and so far as is necessary to our communion with him. U

you admire and approve of a good man, if you do not endeavour to

imitate him, you do not give him that respect which his virtues call

for. Translate the matter to God, and the same reason will hold

good. If you admire the perfections of his nature, })raise him for his

excellencies, bless him for his benefits ; but the likeness of him is not

impressed upon your souls so as to become the constant principle of

your operations ; you do indeed use the means in your way and

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manner, but 5^ou do not obtain the end. Shall I tell you by a plain

enumeration what I intend ? The knowledge of God is necessary to

rectify the world ; there it beginnetli. The belief of what we know is

also necessary to beget true religion, for knowledge without faith

leaveth us but convinced infidels : Heb. xi. 6, ' But without faith it is

impossible to please God ; for he that cometh to God must believe

that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek

him.' But doth it rest there ? No ; we must esteem what we do

believe. David calleth God his ' exceeding joy,' Ps. xliii. 4. And

what further ? We must pi'aise what we esteem : Ps. Ixiii. 3, ' Be-

cause thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.'

But must we rest there in worshipping and praising hira ? No ; all

this leadeth to a further end, that there may be a likeness and resem-

blance between God and us, that we be holy as he is holy, and merciful

as he is merciful ; otherwise our knowledge is but a cold form, our

faith but a dead opinion, our esteem is but a naked approbation, our

praise is but an empty compliment ; for how can we glorify God

heartily for such perfections as we like not, or have no mind unto our-

selves, and of which we are capable, and should seek after ?

[5.] My last reason is, because we are appointed for this end, and

■serve for this use, that wherever we come, we may call God to mind,

and bring him into remembrance with all those with whom we do con-

verse. All creatures serve for this use, that they may represent God

to the thoughts of men by that life and being which they have. But

because this is a common thing, and not very apt in itself to awaken

the stupid world to any reverence and regard of God, as children cannot

be said to call their parents to the minds of others by eating and drink-

ing, which are acts common to them, and the children of all other

parents, but by some special properties, wherein they resemble their

progenitors ; so though all creatures in their kind may represent God,

and awaken the thoughts of the drowsy world to remember him, yet

because this is generally overlooked, or doth very im])erfectly discover

God, therefore he hath chosen out some among mankind that may

more expressly show forth his divine excellencies and perfections to

the world. And for this use serve the saints, who are his witnesses to

declare the truth and excellency of his being, and to alarm the con-

sciences of a godless and wicked generation to remember God : 1 Peter

ii. 9, \* But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy

nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of

him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.'

What we read in the text ' the praises,' is in the margin Ta<; apera?,

the virtues of God. Now the virtues and praises of God are his divine

attributes, especially such as are communicable to men, as his wisdom,

justice, truth, holiness, mercy, goodness. Christians should show these

forth, and keep the world in awe of God by the majesty and beauty of

their conversations. Alas ! if we should speak well of God, it would

do the world little good as to the cure of their atheism and infidelity,

unless our deeds confess him as well as our words. What will the

world say ? They speak at a higher rate than we do ; but what is

there worthy, noble, and godlike in their conversations more than we

express ? Therefore you do not discharge your duty, and effectually

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represent God to the world, till you are followers of liim ; nay, rather

you give them cause to doubt that all is sophistry and pretence, while

you pretend to a greater nearness to God, and show forth nothing like

him or worthy of him.

Use. Is to persuade us to be followers or imitators of God. Shall

God give us his word and works, and shall the Son of God come in

the likeness of men, and live under the same law we are bound to, and

shall not men make it their design to be every day more like God, and

to be such in the world as the Son of God was in the world ? Ahis !

how uncomfortably else will you live, and with little honour to God,

yea, apparently to his disgrace, when you are his children by profession,

and give an ill character of him to the world ! Now to this end —

1. Get a due conception of God. Some have not a due apprehension

of the mercy of God, and entertain needless jealousies of him, as one

that watcheth all opportunities to destroy us, and will be severe to his

creatures. This is a blasphemy against his holy and gracious nature.

No ; Micah vii. 18, ' Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth

iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his

heritage ? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth

in mercy.' Others conceit ill of his holiness, and so live securely in

their sins : Ps. 1. 21, ' Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an

one as thyself.' The gods of the heathen taught sin by their own

example ; their impure lives, recorded by the poets, were a great means

to debauch the world. Augustine ad Nect. telleth us of a young man

that was enticed to wantonness by seeing a picture of Jupiter on the

wall committing adultery. Men could not sin so freely if they did

believe the holiness of God's nature, and his resolved displeasure against

sin and sinners. We think God like ourselves, and that he is more

indulgent to the impurities of men than is commonly believed, and so

transform God into an idol of our own fanc}^ These propagate their

ill conceits of God, while they pretend to be God's people, and yet walk

loosely. As the heathen gods are represented to be lascivious as goats,

drunken like swine, revengeful and furious like wolves and bears, and

so are a stain to the godhead, and lessened man's natural reverence of

the divine power and majesty ; so do evil christians, if they be so,

pollute his name : Ezek. xxxvi. 20, ' And when they entered unto the

heathen, whither they went out, they profaned my holy name, when

they said to them, These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth

out of the land.'

2. Esteem these things as amiable. We can neither praise, nor

love, nor imitate, what we do not esteem. Is holiness the glory of

God ? and will you either scorn it in others, or neglect to get it your-

selves ? Is justice and mercy good, a perfection in the divine nature ?

and will you get such a blot or blemish as to make no conscience of

tiiem, of paying your debts, or doing good to the poor and needy ?

Fy ! fy ! change your religion, or walk more answerably. You talk

of being christians, be good heathens first ; they had a conscience of

these things. There is a reflection on God when christians allow

themselves in dissolute immoi-alities.

3. Desire God to change your natures, that you may bear the image

of the heavenly one, 1 Cor. xv. 49. We cannot follow God in our lives

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till we are made partakers of the divine nature. Apply yourselves to

Christ in the use of his appointed means for the renewing of your

natures.

4. Bewail your imperfections, and come nearer to your pattern every

day : ' I press towards the mark,' Phil. iii. 14; and what is a christian's

cr/ccTTO?, or mark ? Exact holiness as well as complete felicity. \_ There-

fore be constantly intent upon this business ; it is not a thing that

must be left to chance, but it must be your great design, and the

purpose and daily business of your lives.

SEKMON 11.

And loalh in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for

us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.

— Eph.\* v. 2.

Here is the second direction for an holy life, \* To walk in love,' as

Christ hath given us an example. In the former verse he exhortetli

them to imitate God, in this, to imitate Christ.

In the words observe —

First, The duty enforced, ' Walk in love.'

Secondly, The reason to enforce it, which is taken from the example

of Christ's' love, \* As Christ also hath loved us.' Christ's love to us is

both a motive and a pattern.

1. A motive, becaicse he hath loved us, and reconciled us to God.

2. A pattern, as he hath loved us. In some proportional degree

our love should answer his love. It is both ways propounded in scrip-

ture. As a motive: 1 John iii. 16, ' Hereby perceive we the love of

God, because he hath laid down his life for us ; and we ought to lay

down our lives for the brethren.' As a pattern : John xiii. 34, 'Love

one another, as I have loved you ; ' and John xv. 12, ' This is my com-

mandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.' Now that

we may the better discern the force of this motive, and the completeness

of this pattern, let us see how the apostle representeth and setteth it

forth to us, ' As Christ also hath loved us.' Observe here —

[1.] The principle, 'As Christ also hath loved us.'

[2.] The act and instance of his love to us, 'And given himself

for us.'

[3.] The end and intent, ' For an offering and a sacrifice unto God.'

[4.] Tlie fruit and effect, ' For a sweet-smelling savour.'

Doct. That Christ showed so much love in giving himself for a pro-

pitiatory sacrifice to God for us, that thereby all true christians are

bound to walk in love.

1. Let me open the example and pattern which is here set before us.

2. Show you what it is to walk in love.

3. How we are bound to do so by the example of Christ's love.

I. To open the example here set before us. And there I begin —

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1. With the principle, 'Christ also loved us.' That was it which

moved and inclined him to so stranj^e an undertaking as to die for our

sins. Christ's coming into the world for our redemption is sometimes

made an act of ohedience, and sometimes an act of love ; of obedience

to God, and love to us. Of obedience to God : Eom. v. 19, ' By the

obedience of one many shall be made righteous.' There his whole

undertaking, or what he did, living and dying, is called obedience. So

Phil. ii. 7, ' He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.'

At other times it is made an act of love : Gal. ii. 20, ' Who loved me,

and gave himself for me;' Kev. i. 5, 'Unto him wdio loved us, and

washed us from our sins in his own blood.' He thought no price too

dear for our salvation. Now these two do not clash the one with the

other. It doth not cease to be an act of obedience because it is an act

of love, nor to be an act of love because it is an act of obedience. Christ

hath reconciled this matter to our thoughts by his own words : John

X. 18, ' No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have

power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again ; this com-

mandment have I received of my Father.' Christ was a free agent ;

this work was not forced upon him, but he yielded to it by a voluntary

dispensation, or upon agreement, in obedience to his Father ; and so at

the same time he commendeth his love to sinners, and obeyeth the will

of God in the discharge of his office. This was then the principle or

internal moving cause.

2. The act, ' He gave himself for us.' Where you have the giver,

the gift, and the parties interested.

[1.] The giver, Christ. He voluntarily first assumed a body, and

then parted with his life for this use.

[2.] The gift was himself. And both put together show that Christ

was both priest and sacrifice ; as God the priest, as man the saci-ifice :

Heb. ix. 14, ' He offered up himself to God through the eternal Spirit.'

Under the law the priests and the sacrifices were distinct ; but our Lord

Jesus was both the priest offering and the sacrifice offered. In his

person he was the priest offering, and his human nature was the thing

offered. Every priest must have somewhat to offer ; and when the

great high priest comes, he must offer something beyond what was

offered before, that the worthiness of the sacrifice and the dignity of the

priest may suit and well agree together. What did Christ then offer?

Heb. X. 5, ' When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and

offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me.' And

therefore it is added, Heb. x. 10, 'We are sanctified through the offer-

ing of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.' So that he gave himself,

his body, his flesh, for the life of the world, John vi. 51.

[3.] The parties interested, ' for us.' It was for our sake, that God

might pardon our sins, and bring about our salvation in a way most

convenient for God's glory and our peace. Now Christ's death was a

proper and convenient means — (1.) To demonstrate God's justice and

holiness, that he doth hate sin, and will certainly punish it, if it be not

taken away in the manner God hath prescribed in his new covenant

founded in the death of Christ : Rom. iii. 25, ' Whom God hath set

forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his

righteousness for the remission of sins. (2.) To vindicate the honour

YeR. 2.] SERMONS UPON EPHESIANS V. 181

of his goveitiment and law. God's authority was violated by man's

transgression ; his law was holy and jnst, and our obedience reasonable.

Now to keep up his authority, God would not dispense with the penalties

of his law till Christ died for us : Gal. iv. 4, 5, ' But when the fulness

of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made

under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.' (3.) To be

a warning to sinners, not to sin presumptuously, and slight and despise

the majesty of God : Eom. viii. 3, ' God sending his own Son in the

likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.' God

hath put a brand upon sin. (4.) To declare the greatness of his love

to us, in procuring our pardon and life at so dear a rate : 1 John iv.

10, \* Herein is love ; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and

sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.'

3. The end, set forth by two notions, 'An offering and a sacrifice to

God.' The first word, Trpoacj^opa, is a general word for anything offered

to God ; dvala, sacrifice, the other word, is more limited, for all the

offerings were not called sacrifices. Or, if you will, take the distinction

between these two words thus. ' Offering ' implieth things without life,

and ' sacrifice' referreth to living creatures. The one referreth to the

fruits of the earth that were offered to God, and the other to beasts that

were slain ; but whatever was offered to God was to be consumed, even

such things as were destitute of life, as the meat-offering was to be

burnt with fire. Lev. ii. 1, 2. Living creatures were to be killed, and

the blood offered upon the altar ; for the apostle telleth us, Heb. ix.

22, ' Without shedding of blood there is no remission.^ We must

understand the blood of some living thing that was sacrificed for free-

ing a person from guilt and obligation to punishment. Well, then,

all these things presignified Christ's death and bloody sufferings ; ' For

he gave himself to be an offering and sacrifice to God.'

This notion puts us in mind of several things.

[1.] Of our misery ; for we have sins whereby we are liable to death,

otherwise what needed there a sacrifice to be offered for us ? There

is no need of a reconciliation where there is no bi-each, nor a propitia-

tion where there is no offence, nor of a sacrifice where there is no sin

to be expiated and taken away.

[2.] It puts us in mind of the mercy of God in Christ, who gave his

Son for us, not only to be the high priest of our profession, but also to

be our sacrifice : Eom. iii. 25, \* Whom God hath set forth to be a

propitiation through faith in his blood.'

[3.] It puts us in mind of the manner of our redemption, by a sin-

offering, or a propitiatory sacrifice : Isa. liii. 10, ' When he shall make

his soul an offering for sin ; ' 2 Cor. v. 21, ' He was made sin for us,'

Before sin can be taken away, there must be a propitiatory sacrifice,

and such as God will accept as a full satisfaction for sin, so that he is

fully content ; and as to a sacrifice and suffering for sin. there

needeth to be no more done. Well, then, here is the true notion of

Christ's death, that it is a mediatorial sacrifice, not a thank-offering,

but a sin-offering made by Christ, by his condescending to a shameful

accursed death for our sakes.

4. The efficacy of this sacrifice is intimated in the last words, et?

oa/xrjv evQ)Sia<?, ' for a sweet-smelling savour.' The scripture speaketh

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of God after the manner of men. Now men are delighted witli sweet

odours; therefore, tosliow the satisfaction God took in the propitiator}"-

sacrifices offered to him, they are represented in scripture as a sweet

odour to him ; as in tlie sacrifices of Noah it is said, Gen. viii, 21, ' And

tl)e Lord smelled a sweet savour ; ' in the Hebrew it is 'a savour of

rest.' So Lev. i. 9, ' An offering made by fire, of a sweet savour to the

Lord ; ' which caiuiot be meant of nidor, or tlie fulsome smoke of

burnt flesh, but must be understood metaphorically, of God's gracious

acceptation of the required duties. So ])roportionably we may conceive

of this meritorious and acceptable sacrifice of Jesus Christ. A sweet

savour refresheth, comforteth, and quieteth the sense when it is dis-

turbed and offended with an ill scent ; so this sacrifice pleased God,

and appeased his wrath towards us. God was offended by our sins,

and his wrath is pacified by Christ's sacrifice or dying for us, as the

disturbed sense is quieted and appeased by a good savour. But we

need not labour so much about the phrase as about the thing.

To clear it, that God is well pleased with Christ's offering up himself

for us, I prove it —

[1.] From the dignity of his person : Acts xx. 28, ' Which he hath

purchased with his own blood.' It was the blood of God; the eternal

Word was made flesh out of love to sinful man, and assumed tiiis flesh

into the unity of his person, as we reckon the fruit of the graft to the

stock ; and so we call it ' the blood of God.' Tiierefore, of what rare

virtue, causality, and influence must that sacrifice be which was made

of the body and blood of Christ, who was God ? He was the highest

and greatest priest that ever could be, and he offered the best and

greatest sacrifice that ever was, a sacrifice of an infinite dignity and

value, even that flesh and blood which was assumed into iiis own person,

the dignity of which added an infinite value and price to it.

[2] From the merit of his obedience. Christ's suffering death for

the sin of man, upon the command of his Fatlier, was tlie noblest piece

of service, and the highest degree of obedience that ever was or could

be performed to God by man or angels. Tlieie was in it so much love

to God, and pity to man, so much self-denial, humility, and i)atience,

such resignation of himself to God, who appointed him to be the

redeemer of mankind, and to do this great service for them, that it is

impossible it can be paralleled. That it was an evident act of obedience,

I showed before ; he was obedient to the death ; his death was an act

of the greatest humility, charity, patience, faith, obedience. What

would you have more to increase the value of the merit?

[3.] The greatness of his sufferings. If he suffered the punishment

which sin had made our due, notiiing could be added to pacify the

wrath of God. The punishment of the sinner is either of loss or j)ain,

the desertion or the curse ; and therefore he is said to ' bear our griefs,

and to carry our sorrows, and to be wounded for our iniquities,' Isa. liii.

4, 5; 'He was made sin for us;' that is, penally handled, and died

for us, 2 Cor. v. 21 ; ' He was made a curse for us,' Gal. iii. 13. Thus

roundly doth the scripture express it: 'God spared not ids own Son,

but delivered him up for us all,' Rom. viii. 32. He put him to grief,

not out of i)atred to him, but love to our salvation. Hence came those

agonies of Christ, and prayers, and tears, and strong cries, Heb. v. 7.

Now these things do all increase the value of the sacrifice.

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[4] God hath declared himself satisfied, and hath approved the

sacritice which he offered for ns ; and therefore our sin cannot make

us loathsome and unsavoury to God, and stir up his wrath against ns,

but that we have ground of hope, yea, of sure confidence, that he hath

smelled a sweet savour of rest, and his wrath is appeased, and that he

hath accepted the sacrifice offered by our redeemer. There is no more

necessary for paying the price and jansom for our souls ; for God, the

most just judge, would not accept of an imperfect satisfaction, or give

testimony that he was well pleased with it.

But how do we know that God iiath accepted it ? Partly by Christ's

rising from the dead, which is not only an evidence of the truth and

dignity of his person, but of the fulness of his ransom, and perfectness

of iiis satisfaction ; for would a just judge deliver a debtor or his surety

from prison unless full payment had been made ? Would God, who is

the just judge of the world, who had appointed Christ to die for our

sins, raise him from the dead if he had not done his work ? Chiist's

resurrection is expressed in scri[)ture as the letting our surety out of

prison: Isa. liii. 8, 'He was taken from prison, and from judgment;'

Acts ii. 24, 'Whom God hath raised up, and loosed the pains of death,

because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.' He hath

loosed the bands of the grave : Heb. xiii. 20, ' Now the God of peace,

that brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ,' &c. ; as the

apostles would not come forth, but were solemnly brought forth by the

magistiates, Acts xvi. 28, 29. And partly because he was not only

raised from the dead, but ascended into heaven with glory and honour :

1 Tim. iii. 16, ' Keceived up into glory.' He was not taken out of prison

only, but rewarded, which still showeth that his work is perfected.

Partly because, upon the account of his full satisfaction, he had made

a covenant wherein he hath offered to the world reconciliation with

God, and the everlasting fruition of him in glory upon gracious terms :

Mark xvi. 16, 'He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.' The

legal exclusion is taken ofi"; remission of sins is the first gift, and

blessedness the second : Acts xxvi. 18. ' That they may receive forgive-

ness of sins, and iniieritance among them which are sanctified.' And

partly also because he hath procured the Sjiirit whereby this covenant

may be attested and made effectual : Acts ii. 33, ' Therefore being by

the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the

promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see

and hear ; ' Acts v. 32, ' And ye are witnesses of these things, and so

also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him,'

All these are assurances to the world that their peace is made, so far

as a sacrifice is needful to make it, and that God is well pleased with

what he halh done for the redemption of mardvind.

II. The nature of the duty theuce inferred, or what it is to ' walk in

love.' To walk in love signifielh not one act or two, but the perpetual

tenor of our lives ; our whole life should be an exercise of love.

But what love doth he mean ? Either love to God and Christ, or

love to men ? I answer — I cannot exclude the former totally, for

these reasons —

1. Love to men is of little worth unless it flow from love to God. And

the apostle John, who placeth so much weight on our love to the

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brethren, showeth that this evidence must be resolved into an higher:

1 John V. 2, ' By this we know that we love the children of God, when

we love God, and keep his commandments.' So that our love to the

people of God will not argue our sincerity unless it be founded and

rooted in our sincere love to God, and a single evidence will not estab-

lish our comfort,

2. Because it is a genuine product of this great love of Christ to us:

1 John iv. 19, 'We love him because he loved us first.' The first

impression of the love of Christ upon our hearts begets a love to God

again. To God himself ; we beat back his own beam and flame upon

himself first, and then to all that belong to him.

Now for these reasons I dare not totally exclude this sense. I inny

add a third —

3. Because not only the direct improvement of the love of Christ,

but so much of the christian life dependeth on the love of God, that it

should not be excluded when we are discoursing of it : 2 Cor. v. 14, 15,

' For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if

one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that

they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but unto him

that died for them, and rose again.' The sense of this love should

work in us certainly a great fervour of love to God, that may level and

direct all our actions to his glory, and make us study to please him.

Well, then, if we take it in this sense, how are we to walk in love ?

I answer —

1. That love is to be at the bottom of all our actions and duties,

that our whole religion may be but an acting of love : 1 Cor. xvi. 14,

' Let all your things be done with charity.' If we pray, let us act the

seeking love ; if we praise God, let us act the delighting love ; if we

obey God, let us act the pleasing love. Whatever we do, let it be

influenced by love and gratitude, which is the life of the soul, and the

heart of our religion.

2. Let us walk in love, all will be nothing else ; but let us continue

constant to the death in the profession of the christian faith ; for

vehement pure christian love casteth out all fear in danger. If we

love Christ, we will run all hazards for his sake, make no scruple to

die or undergo any danger for Christ, thereby imitating the love of

Christ to us, like unto those in Kev. xii. 11, that 'loved not their lives

to the death.' When self-love is overcome by a greater love, men will

neither be persuaded nor frighted out of a love of themselves ; it must

be another more powerful love that must draw them from it, as one

nail driveth out another. Now this can be nothing else but the love

of God and of Christ, which if it be once shed abroad in our hearts by

the Holy Ghost, Ave shall lay all things at Christ's feet, we shall suffer

all things, and endure all things, and give up self, and strength, and

time, and estate, and life itself for his glory. What is nearer to us

than ourselves ? and what will break the force of natural inclinations

but this great love ?

But the context seemeth to restrain this to the love of man, for it

hath a respect to the former precept and direction. Now then we

must inquire what it is to walk in love by the example of Christ's

dying, not for friends, but enemies, as all the world were to God when

he took their business in hand.

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1. That there must be such an impression of the love of Christ

upon us, that love to mankind may be the very habit and constitution

of our souls. Love must dwell, and bear rule, and have dominion

in our hearts, before it can be expressed in our lives : Col. iii. 14,

\* And above all things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfect-

ness.' This love to others, founded in Christ's love to us, and all

others, even his enemies, will cement the disagreeing parts of the world

together for common good, and keep them united to one another in an

indissolvable bond, much more perfectly than any other obligation can

do. But alas ! where shall we find this christian charity, which is a

true transcript of Christ's love to us, even among God's people, to

God's people, who take little care of working together for the common

good, but employ our parts and abuse our esteem for grace to one

another's prejudice ?

2. That showing love to others should be the business of our lives,^

and whatever we do towards them, we should do it in love, being as

diligent to promote their good as our own, and as tender of their

interests as our own, and, in short, loving our neighbour as ourselves.

It is a hard lesson, but we must frame ourselves to learn it, or else it

will fare ill with us in the judgment ; for wilfully to break or neglect

any one of Christ's known commands is not consistent with sincerity.

Therefore we must live in this mutual love, and it must be a Christ-

like love, patient and humble, and diligent to procure and promote the

good of those whom we love. But moral things are best known by

their opposites. They that sin against it are —

[1.] Self-seekers and self-pleasers, that are wholly taken up with

their own things : Phil. ii. 21, ' For all seek their own, not the things,

which are Jesus Christ's.' These cannot bear with others, because they

wholly seek their own contentments, and not another's good ; whereas,

if they did love others as themselves, as they would do no hurt to

others, so they should bear with their infirmities ; for ' Charity beareth

all things,' 1 Cor. xiii. 7. There is none of us but can bear with a great

many faults in ourselves, and would be borne with in them by others

also. Use the same measure in buying and selling.

[2.] Those that are proud and contentious, and full of strife for

nothing ; whereas if we did cherish that humility and modesty which

becometh people conscious to so many infirmities as we are, we should

not break love for a little disrespect. A proud man sets too high a

price and value upon himself, and is angry when others will not come

up to his price, and value him so inordinately as he doth himself :

Prov. xiii. 10, 'Only by pride cometh contention ; but with the

well-advised is wisdom.' The modest and humble have no great

expectations, are content that others go before them ; but the proud

take it ill that all others entertain not their conceits of themselves ;

they expect so much, that none about them can answer their expecta-

tions ; therefore pride is the great incendiary of the world in societies,,

churches, families, and neighbourhood.

[3.] Worldly men. Greedy dogs fall out about the carrion, which

every one desireth to feed on, and would exclude others. The whole

world is not wide enough for ambitious and covetous men ; they enlarge

their desires, and would have what another hath ; and therefore fall

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out with tliem, because they would shine alone in the earth : Isa. v. 8,

\* Woe unto them that join house to house, and lay field to field, till

thei'e be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the

earth.'

[4.] Impatient men ; for passionate persons are like fine s^lasses,

broken as soon as touched ; the least injury is enough to break them

all in pieces. But is this to be like Christ, who was meek, and lowly,

and endured the contradiction of sinners, and has bidden us to learn of

him ? Mat. xi. 29, ' Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I

iim meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest to your souls.'

[5.] The lazy and backward to do good : 2 Thes. iii. 13, ' But ye,

brethren, be not weary in well-doing.' A christian's daily business is

to promote the good of others, and to seek out all occasions of useful-

ness. If a heathen could say, Diem perdidi — I have lost a day, surely

a christian should count that day lost in which he hath not done some

good.

III. I come now to show you how we are bound to do so by the

example of Christ's love. And here I shall show you that it is both u,

motive and a pattern.

1. It is a motive to excite us to love him, because the great thing

that is remarkable in Christ's giving himself as a sacrifice for us is

love.

You may conceive it by these considerations —

[1.] To suffer for another is more than to do or act for him, for

therein is more self-denial. In doing a good turn for another, we only

bestow our labour ; but in suffering for them, we hazard our interest,

yea, life and limb ; therefoie we more oblige others when we are will-

ing to incur damage for them, than in doing an act of kindness for

them. The soldier that held up to Augustus the stump of his arm,

having lost his hand in battle for him, thought that action had much

of merit and obligation in it ; and Peter thought he expressed great

love to Christ when he told him, John xiii. 37, 'I will lay down my

life for thy sake.' Oh, then what love hath Christ showed us, who

would become not only a surety, but a sacrifice for our sake !

[2.] To suffer death for another is the greatest obligation that we

can })ut upon him : John xv. 13, ' Greater love hath no man than

this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' This is the greatest

evidence that can be ; he speaketh this to make his exam{)le the more

binding. This depriveth us of a capacity to enjoy those for whom we

suff(^r.

[3] This is the highest expression of love to friends, but Christ did

it for enemies, for the ungodly sinful world : Rom. v. 7, 8, ' For

.scarcely for a righteous man will one die ; yet ])eradventure for a good

man some would even dare to die ; but God commendelh his love

towards us, in that while we were 3'et sinners, Christ died for us.'

Here are three sorts of men, the wicked, the righteous, or a man of a

rigid innocency, and the good and bountiful man ; but now we were

in the lowest class.

[4.] To suffer for the faults of another is the greatest condescension.

A naughty man may be innocent in some cases, and it is much to die

for him out of love to justice, and to maintain liis innocency ; but for

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Christ to 'be made sin for us, \y1io knew no sin,' 2 Cor. v. 21, to be

reckoned or numbered anion;;- transgressors, this is inestimable love.

[5] Because thiw is not tit to be done among maidcind, that the

innocent should suffer capital punishment for the nocent. God would

represent this in the beasts, to show his sovereignty over them, where

the innocent creattu'e was set apart for this use to bear man's sin :

Lev. xvi. 21, 22, ' And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head

of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children

of Israel, and all 'their transgressions, in all their sins, putting them

upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a

tiL man into the wilderness. And the goat shall bear upon him all

their iniquities into a land not inhabited, and he shall let go the goat

in the wilderness.' And the blood of the beast was given on God's

altar to make atonement: Lev. xvii. 6, 'And the priest shall sprinkle

the blood upon the altar of the Loid, at the door of the tabernacle of

the congregation, and burn the fat for a sweet savour unto the Lord.'

This was thoroughly accomplished in our Kedeemer : Dan. ix. 26,

'The Messiah siiall be cut off, but not for himself;' Isa. liii. 4-6,

\* Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows ; and he was

wounded for our transgressions, and was bruised for our iniquities ; and

the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we

are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, every one to his ovvq

way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all;'

1 Peter iii. 18, ' He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring

us to God.' This was the wonderful act of God's grace to find such a

strange and unusual sacrifice for us.

[6.j That he should suffer to such ends, or that the consequent

benefits should be so great, as the remission of sins and eternal life.

Eemission of sin we have Mat. xxvi. 28, 'For this is my blood of the

new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.' The

second, eternal life, we have Heb. v. 9, 'He became the author of

eternal salvation to them that obey him.' Both together we have

Heb. X. 14, 'For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that

ai'e sanctified,' Sin is the greatest evil, the makebate or cause of

difference between us and God, and eternal life is the greatest happi-

ness that we are capable of.

[7.] That, with respect to the end, God and Cln-ist took such pleasure

in it: Isa. liii. 10, 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him ; he hath put

him to grief ; ' John x. 17, ' Therefore doth my Father love me, because

I lay down my life.' The Father is so well pleased with the reconcilia-

tion of lost sinners, that he lovetli Christ for undertaking and perform-

ing it. So Christ was satisfied : Isa. liii. 11, 'He shall see of the tra-

vail of his soul, and be satisfied.' He solaced himself with the

thoughts of it: Prov. viii. 31, 'Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the

earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.' He delighted to

appear in human shape, and longed for its accomplishment, and patiently

submitted to it.

2. It is a pattern which we should inn'tate.

[1.] In the reality of it : 1 John iii. 18, 'Let us not love in word,

neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.' As Christ did not: Gal.

i. 4, ' He g;ive hinjself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this

present evil world.'

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[2.] In the frceness of it. He was not induced to it by any overture

from us, but by his own love only : Eph. v. 25, ' Christ also loved the

church, and gave himself for it'

[3.] In the constancy of it. He was not discouraged when it came

to push of pike : John xiii. 1, ' Having loved his own that were in the

world, he loved them to the end.'

[4.] In the self-denial and condescension of it: Mat. xx. 28, ' Even

as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and

to give his life a ransom for many.' He chose not a life of pomp and

ease, not a delightful flesh-pleasing course of life, but a mean and low

estate, and ignominious sufferings. Ease and stateliness and lordly pre-

eminence should be far from the disciples of Christ. He came not in

the pomp and equipage of an eartldy prince. Strife for pre-eminence

little becometh us, but who shall be most useful to bring home most

souls to God. But because we cannot pursue all, two things I shall

commend to you from this love of Christ —

(1.) The kind of the love; it was a love to souls. If Christ gave

himself as a propitiatory sacrifice to reconcile and recover them to God,

we should have a higher value and esteem for them. Before Christ

died, men could not sufficiently understand of what precious account

souls were ; but now, unless we shut our eyes, we may see plainly that

the redemption of the soul is precious : Ps. xlix. 8, ' The redemption

of the soul is precious, and ceaseth for ever.' If a man find a pearl of

great price, and, not knowing what it is, maketh no more esteem of it

than of a piece of glass or a common bead, and is ready to sell it for

a few pence, but upon the offer of it to a skilful lapidary, who at

first sight biddeth two or three thousand crowns for it, would he not

cliange his mind, and think this jewel is of greater value than he took

it to be? So here ; man knows not the value of the soul, and did not

greatly set by it. Adam lost his own soul and the souls of all his

posterity for an apple, and we sell the birthright for a mess of pottage;

but when Christ, who made souls, and knoweth the value of them,

came to recover lost souls, he gave himself for us ; hereby he taught

us to set a higher price upon them, for nothing but his precious blood

could redeem them ; and therefore we should not despise our own souls,

so as to forfeit them for base unworthy trifles. So for the souls of others ;

if any of us be induced to show cliarity to the bodies of others, but

little regard their souls, I should think ill of them. We pity a man

that should be famished to death for want of Avhat we can give him,

but we do not pity a man that is going to hell, and is ready to perish

eternally. There is little of the bowels of Christ found among most

christians. Or if we pity them, and wish it were otherwise with them,

yet we do little or nothing to pull them out of the fire ; yea, though

many times they are nearly related to us, we are loath sometimes to be

at the trouble of a little serious exhortation, or hearty and christian

advice ; the ease of the flesh checketh us. Is this to walk in love as

Christ loved us ? Or it may be we will not venture the hazard of a

scorn or mock, or the displeasure of a carnal friend. Christ gave up

himself and all the interests of that life he had assumed for the good

of souls. We shall never do any great things, nor honour God in our

relations, till we have a love to souls fixed in our hearts, till we have

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the bowels of Christ : Phil. i. 8, Tor God is my record how greatly I

long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.' Christ thought the

gain of souls recompense enough for his ignominious death.

(2.) The next thing is the greatness and degree of this love. Let

us be ready to lay down our lives for the church of God : 1 John iii.

16, ' Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life

for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.' We must

imitate Christ in this, in his dying to reduce men to God. It is not

left arbitrary ; we must and ought.

{1st.) There must be a venturing and hazarding life. That may be

done in many cases, as for the conversion of the carnal world, in which

we may carry our lives in our hands : Phil. ii. 17, ' Yea, and if I be

offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice

with you all.' Or though it involve you in great trouble to relieve their

necessities, visit them in prison ; or to rescue the life of another from

an assassin, or when another is assaulted by thieves and ruffians, to

prevent murder.

{2d.) There must be certain death ; as when a single person dies for

a community, a private person for a more public or more useful person,

as a subject to save his prince; or when we lose a temporal good for

another's eternal good; as the apostle : Rom. ix. 1-3, ' I say the truth

in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy

Ghost, that I have great heaviness, and continual sorrow in my heart ;

for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my

brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh.' Some will not hazard

a scorn, a check, or frown, or scoff for them.

Use 1. This love of Christ must be firmly believed. Let us not

look on the death of Christ only as a tragical story and the sufferings

of an innocent person, or only believe the history of his death ; but let

us believe that he died a sacrifice for us, out of love to our souls, to

redeem us to God, and save us from wrath.

Use 2. It must be closely applied for our good and benefit, till we

are duly affected with it, so as to make suitable returns to God ; partly

ty devoting ourselves to him: Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you therefore,

brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living

sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service;'

and partly by rendering our thank-offerings of charity towards others :

Heb. xiii. 17, ' But to do good, and to communicate, forget not, for

with such sacrifices God is well pleased.'

SERMON III.

But fornication, and all uncleanness or coveioicsness, let it not be once

named among you, as hecometh saints. — Eph. v. 3.

In the words observe —

1. The things forbidden. Three sins are enumerated, ' Fornication,'

and ' All uncleanness,' and \* Covetousness.'

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2. The manner and degree of forbidding, ' Let them not be once named

among yon.' Christians 8honld liave .such a perfect abhorrence for

these tilings, that they should be as things unknown and unheard of

in the church.

3. The reason of this prohibition, ' As becoraeth saints.'

Doct. That there lieth a great obligation on christians to keep them-

selves at ihe greatest distance from, and abhorrence of, all impurity

and uncleatiness.

1. 1 siiall fix the due sense of the words.

2. Show what purity and cleanness of heart belongoth to christians.

3. Show the special impurity that there is in these kind of sins.

I. To fix the sense. The things forbidden are expressed by three

words —

1. 'Fornication,' which signifieth the unchastity of persons in a

single or unmarried estate, which was looked upon among the gentiles

as a thing indifferent, and no sin ; and some of the christians newly

crept out of gentilism thought it a light and venial fault, as at Corinth,

1 Cor. vi. from ver. 12 to the end. They thought that as eating all sorts

of meat without distinction was lawful, so promiscuous copulation. To

disprove this evil conceit, the apostle answereth by way of concession

concei'ning meats, by way of correction concei'ning fornication, ver. 13.

[1.] By way of concession concerning meats : 'Meat is for the belly,

and the belly is for meats ; but God shall destroy both it and them ; '

that is to say, it is true that meats were made to fill the belly, and the

belly to receive meats for the sustentation of life during the present

state ; but God will cause both the need and the use to cease in the

life of glory.

[2.J By way of correction concerning foi-nication.

(1.) But now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and

the Loi-d for the body ; namely, the end and use of the body is to serve

the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. The Lord Jesus is also Lord

of the body, seeing he gave himself not only for the redemption of the

soul, but of the body also, and will raise it up at the last day, ver. 14 ;

tlierefore it is to be disposed of according to his will. Therefore forni-

cation is contrary to the use of the body, as the body is for the Lord ;

and contrary to the dignity of the body, who died that it may be

raised again in glory.

(2.) Another argument is from our union with Christ. The bodies

of the faithful are a part of his mystical body, and therefore must be

used with reverence, and possessed in sanctification and honour ; not

given to an harlot, but reserved for Christ. He proveth the argument

on both parts : he that is joined to an harlot maketh himself one with

an harlot ; and he that is joined with Christ becometh one with Christ :

\* He that is joined to an harlot is one flesh ; ' namely, that conjunction

is carnal and bodily. But by way of direct antithesis or opposition he

telleth us, that ' he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit; ' namely,

this conjunction is holy and spiritual. This argument is urged

ver. 15-17. Now this consideration should have great force upon

christians, because unclean commixtures and embraces do not become

theui that profess to have union with Christ ; for no two things can be

more contrary and unsuitable than to make ourselves one with an harlot

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and one with Christ ; one with an harlot, which God hath so severely

prohibited, and one with Christ, which God hath so solemnly instituted;

yea, the things themselves are unsociable, carnal base pleasures and

spiritual delights.

(3.) His third argument is taken from the dignity of the body, the

dignity to which God hath advanced it, or the honour he hath put

upon the bodies of christians, which is to be the temples of the Holy

Ghost : ver. 19, ' What ! know ye not that your body is the temple

of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God ? ' You are

set apart for this holy use, that the Spirit may govern and employ

your bodies for the glory of God. So fornication is a polluting of the

temple of God. Shall the temple of the Holy Ghost be turned into a

swine's-sty ? It is dangerous to pollute holy things, to defile God's

dwelling-place, or to bring base lusts into the special palace of God's

residence ; therefore you are not to use your bodies as you please, not

for an unclean, but holy use.

(4.) His last argument is from Christ's right: ver. 19, 20, 'Ye are

not your own, ye are bought with a price ; therefore glorify God in

your body and in your spirit, which are God's.' Christ hath a right

to both, and therefore both must be used for him, and according to his

direction. Neither are our souls nor our bodies at liberty that we

may use them as we please. Therefore to use the body for fornication

is sacrilege, and a robbing Christ of his right ; he is Lord of both.

Let me now add some natural arguments against fornication, that

those who will not be di-awn from this carnality by scripture may yet

be moved by nature. Our submission to God's authority, as having

forbidden it in his law, and christian or gospel arguments, make the

restraint less difficult or rigorous ; but if that will not do, nature itself

will teach us that, if promiscuous lusts should be allowed, man would

in nothing differ from the beasts, and such disorders would grow in

the world as would make our abode unsafe therein. For what with

rapes and violence, and frequent forsakings on man's part, and feminine

revenge and impatiences on the woman's part, there would be no quiet

and safe living one with another ; and all interests and possessions

would be disturbed, for none could know in such a profane mixture

what children were their own ; all love to posterity would be dimin-

ished, and consequently due education hindered, that there could not

be a greater plague to mankind than this brutish and promiscuous

liberty.

2. The next word is, ' All uncleanness ; ' which is a more general

word than fornication, for it implieth also adultery and filthiness

between married persons, as well as simple fornication ; yea, incest

and all brutish pleasures, which the lawless minds of men affect.

There is uncleanness by inordinate desires: Mat. v. 28, 'Whosoever

looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with

her already in his heart.' In the eyes, by lascivious looks: 2 Peter

ii. 14, ' Having eyes full of adultery.' In the tongue, by filthy and

rotten speech : Eph. v. 4, ' Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor

jesting, which are not convenient.' In the life and conversation, by

all manner of noisome and foul i)ractices which lust puts us upon ; of

whatsoever kind they be, or by whatsoever name they be called. lu

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euch sins, modesty forbiddeth us to be too curious, or to make a par-

ticular dissGctiou, or cutting up the branches and parts of them ; there-

fore all is wrapt up in this general expression, 'And all uncleauness,'

3. The next word is ' Covetousness.' But how cometli this to be put

among the nefanda, the things not to be named ? I answer —

[1.] The word is irXeove^'ia, or immoderate desire ; take it in the

obvious sense for love to riches, or inordinate desire of wealth ; it is a

base sin, and will make us act basely. We stroke it with a gentle

oensure, but tlie scripture maketli other constructions of it, and always

useth to represent it as an odious and detestable thing : ' Filthy lucre,'

1 Tim. iii. 3 ; Titus i. 7 ; 1 Peter v. 2. Omnis impiiritas est ex

mixtura vilioris — All impurity arises from the mixture of something

that is more base. To be addicted to it argueth a sordid or filthy frame

of spirit. It is abominable to God, and should be detestable to us.

[2.] I think it beareth here a more particular sense, and may be

rendered, 'inordinate lust or luxury;' for the word signifieth not only

a desire of money, but excessive and unnatural lusts ; and that notion

it clearly hath, Eph. iv. 19, ' They gave up themselves to work all

uncleauness ev irXeove^la, with greediness.' Certainly it is some-

thing that has affinity with uncleauness, and that is, acting it with

greediness.

Secondly, The manner and degree of forbidding, \* Let it not be once

named among you.' You will think this over-strict ; and how can it

be reproved if it be not named ? But let us consider the sense.

1. The apostle speaketh thus to express the height of detestation ;

for things that we utterly detest we will not name them ; as David

would not take the names of their idols into his lips, Ps. xvi. 4, to

express the great detestation he had of them. So the apostle here ; let

never these foul practices get the least admission among you ; or that

they should be so far from committing these things, that they should

not name them, or think of them, without detestation and utter abhor-

rence.

2. That which is villanous to be done is also vile to be spoken of :

ver. 12, ' It is a shame to speak of the things which are done of them

in secret ; ' and 1 Cor. v. 1, ' Such fornication as is not so much as

named among the gentiles, that one should have his father's wife ; '

that is, it was not a thing commonly practised among them, nor

spoken of without great abhorrence. We should abstain i'rom the

needless mention of things detestable, lest we should reconcile them,

and familiarise them to our thoughts ; for vile things that are often

spoken of seem less odious, and affect the sense (being common) with

less horror then when stiange. So that they are not to be named,

that is, not without need, nor without detestation. It were well if there

were no occasion to speak of them at all.

3. Some sins are more catching than others ; the very mention of

them may revive and stir the motions of them in an unmortified heart.

And uncleauness and fornication are of this nature, because they tend

immediately to please the flesh ; other sins more remotely. Now where

the fleshly mind and appetite are not subdued, what doth immediately

please the flesh doth more j)resently stir the motions of it at the very

mention, than what doth more remotely conduce to its satisfaction.

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As the prophet taketh his similitude of condemning the idolatry of

Israel from adulterers, and expresseth it thus : Ezek. xxiii. 19, ' Yet she

multiplied her whoredoms, in calling to remembrance the days of her

youth ;' as if the remembrance of former adulteries were a new snare

to her. And divines say, in the case of considering temptations, that

we may be fore-armed against them, that it is not so safe to a man to

consider the temptation of Joseph as the temptation of Peter, because

the consideration of the first may rather ensnare than fortify the mind.

All this showeth that some sins, especially with some kind of tempers,

are more catching and apt to induce men to sin ; therefore the apostle

saith, ' Let it not be once named.'

4. There is a naming of these things which is very sinful, and that

two ways —

[l.J When it is done in such a broad and coarse way, or nasty lan-

guage, as doth rather invite sin than rebuke it. Immodest speech cometh

certainly from a vain and filthy heart, and showeth the absence of the

fear of God : Mat. xii. 34, ' Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth

speaketh.' Men have a beastly savour with them, and vent it in their

speech. As crows that are driven away from the carrion love to remain

within the scent, so many whom shame restraineth, or whom age hath

disabled to commit, do not act these sins, yet love to talk and discourse

of them, and that with a gust and relish ; and by their way of naming

these things discover their temper. This is that o-aTrpo? X070?, that

' rotten communication,' which the apostle reproveth : Eph. iv. 29, ' Let

no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which

is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers,'

Obscene and corrupt discourse cometh from a rotten heart, as un-

savoury breath doth from putrid lungs. This fire is kindled in their

hearts, and the sparks fly abroad in their language and discourse to set

others on burning. Therefore well might the apostle say, ' Let not these

things be once named,' for we propagate our taint by our speech, and

seek to make the hearers like ourselves : 1 Cor. xv. 33, ' Be not deceived ;

evil communication corrupts good manners.' The talking of these things

doth almost debauch the manners of the world, as well as the acting

of them.

[2.] When we seek to palliate foul deeds with handsome and plau-

sible names, and so speak of these things with allowance and extenuation,

and not with extreme detestation. Christians must abhor the mention-

ing of such filthy sins in other manner than will induce the hearers to

abhor them. Look, as calling drunken meetings good fellowship cor-

rupts and taints the manners of the world, and doth induce men to a

better opinion of the communion of sinners in this brutish way than it

deserves, as if it maintained amity and love, so the dressing up of ugly

sins in handsome and plausible names doth not beget such an abhor-

rence of them as Christianity would enforce. As where we call lawless

liberty platonic love ; or fornication, marriage in conscience ; or the

adopting or taking in of a strumpet into the riglits of the lawful wife,

courtship, or having a mistress ; this is but the invention of poor

deluded sinners to cheat themselves and the world, and to varnish a

filthy thing with a cleanly notion, that it may go down the more glib

with ourselves and others. How much better is it to speak as the word of

Ood speaketh ? ' An whore is a deep ditch ; and he that is abhorred

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of the Lord falletli therein,' Prov. xxii. 14; 'For an whore is a deep

ditch, and a straii<;e woumu a narrow pit,' Prov, xxiii. 27. This is

phiin and o})en, and cautions men how they slip into such a foul ditch.

But sinners have a double deceit, they represent goodness and virtue

under horrid names, as astronomers call glorious stars by the names of

the bear, and the dragon's head, and the dragon's tail ; but they insin-

uate vice with plausible names, that they may not consider how hateful

to God both their persons and their practices are ; and so keep the

greater guard upon themselves lest they incur his sore displeasure.

But let us take heed of adorning foul sins. The apostle saith, ' Let

them not be once named without detestation.'

Thirdly, The reason, ' As it becometh saints ; ' that is, christians or

believers ; all of them are saints, or should be saints.

1. Some are so only by external dedication and profession ; as by

baptism they are set apart for God as a clean and holy people. None

enter into Christ's kingdom but those that are washed and cleansed

from sin : Acts xxii. 16, 'Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy

sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' And their baptismal vow

bindeth them to die unto sin, especially to the lust of uncleanness.

But all that have given up their names to Christ have not given up

themselves to Christ ; and those that do not renounce their baptism,

yet forget their baptism and the bond and obligation of it, 2 Peter i. 9.

They forget or do not mind that once they were washed in God's

laver. Surely there is an obligation upon them still to keep them

from fornication, adultery, and all manner of uncleanness, lest they

forfeit the name of saints : 1 Thes. iv. 7, \* For God hath not called us

to uncleanness, but to holiness.' If they renounced the flesh, they must

subdue and crucify the flesh chiefly in the grosser lusts, otherwise

their baptism will be a nullity as to their comfort and benefit by it,

yet not as to their judgment and punishment. Better never have been

baptized in that sense : 2 Peter ii. 20, ' For if after they have escaped

the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and

Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and over-

come, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.' In those

early times grown persons were baptized, and none were admitted ta

it but upon some knowledge of Christ, and professed resolutions to

forsake the fxidafxaTa, the pollutions of the world ; but if they relapse

•again into them, the league and confederacy between Satan and their

flesh being never thoroughly dissolved, and wallow in the filthiness

they had renounced, better they had never meddled with religion. By

quitting holiness they forsake blessedness, and involve themselves in

the greater punishment. As they turn from the holy commandment,

they turn from the gracious promises. They do not dislike the happi-

ness offered by Christ, but the seriousness of his religion ; so that

the privilege of betaking themselves to the way of Christ maketh their

guilt become the greater and more dangerous. Christian heathenism

is worse than bare heathenism at first. Now though we are born

christians, yet the case is almost the same ; we do not renounce our

parents' act when we come to years of discretion, rather })retend to

stand to our baptismal vow and covenant, submit to the instructions

of the church, would take it ill not to be accounted christians, own

the same creed and Bible that others do. But alas ! what will your

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Christianity profit you if you live in all uncleanness, fornication, and

filthiuess ? There are certain frailties incident to tlie best, but the

/xidcrfxaTa Koajxov, the pollutions of the world, these are spots that are

not as the spots of God's children.

'1. Others are saints by internal regeneration, as sanctified and

renewed by the Holy Ghost : Titus iii. 5, ' Not by works of righteous-

ness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us,

by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.'

These have the effect of their baptism wrought in them. Now these

things are contrary to the disposition and spirit of saints, or to the holy,

new, and divine nature which is put into them. Nothing so opposite

to the spirit as the flesh ; and among all the lusts of the flesh, those

which have most turpitude in them, as the lusts of uncleanness. Hence

nature hath imprinted a shame upon them ; and conscience, till it be

debauched and seared, will never suffer men to live quietly and

securely in them. Now if bare nature thinketh it a stain and blemish

to us, much more the new nature, which checks those lusts, and bears

back as from something abhorrent and contrary to itself. If nature

blush at the sin, surely grace or the new nature should restrain it.'

II. What purity and cleanness of heart belongetli to christians ? In

the scripture they are everywhere described by it : Ps. xviii. 18, ' With

the pure thou wilt show thyself pure,' John xv. 3, ' Ye are clean

through the word which I have spoken to you ; ' Ps. Ixxiii. 1, ' Surely

God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart ;' 2 Cor. vi.

17, ' Separate yourselves from the unclean thing, and I will receive

you ; ' and in other places. God being purity, light, and perfection

itself, cannot delight in an unclean person : Ps. xxiv. 3, 4, 'Who shall

ascend into the hill of the Lord ? and who shall stand in his holy

place ? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not

lift up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.' It were endless to

instance in all places. Let us see what obligations lie upon us to be

clean and pure.

1. We are consecrated to the service of a holy God, Father, Son,

and Holy Ghost. Our God is pure : Hab. i. 13, ' He is of purer eyes

than to behold iniquity ; ' that is, so as to let it go unpunished. We

should never think of this, but we should abhor ourselves, and be

ashamed of tbe remainders of corruption in us. Much dregs and dross

of sin yet remain in the best. Christ is pure, undefiled, separate from

sinners ; so should we be who are separated from the world and dedi-

cated unto God. And he came to wash us in his blood, and cleanse us

by his Spirit, and followeth the woi k he hath begun, till we be without

spot and blemish : Eph. v. 25-27, ' Christ also loved the church,

and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it ; that he

might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or

wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without

blemish.' The Holy Spirit, if we belong to God, hath already begun

to purify and sanctify us: 1 Cor. vi. 11, ' Such were some of you, but

ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of

our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' And the great part of

our duty lietli in obeying his sanctifying motions: 1 Peter i. 22, ' Ye

have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.'

Now all this obligeth us to great purity of heart and life.

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2. We profess the most holy faith ; tliis obh'geth us also, whether

we look to the laws of God, which are the rule of our duty, or the

promises of God, which are the charter of our hopes.

[1.] The laws of God, which measure out our duty to us : Ps. c.^i.K.

140, ' Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it.' It is ])ure

in itself, as being the copy of God's holiness. There is no dead fly in

this box of pure ointment, nothing but what tendeth to cleanse the

heart of man from all that is base and filthy ; and it maketh us

pure : Ps. cxix. 9, ' Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way ?

By taking heed thereunto according to thy word.' It is not direct, or

order, but cleanse. The youngest are defiled already, and if they will

believe and obey the word, there is hope of their cure.

[2.] The promises, which are the charter of our hopes.

(1.) The thing itself, which is promised as our great happiness, en-

forceth it ; and what is that but to see God as he is, and be like him ?

And ' He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself as Christ is pure,'

1 John iii. 3. The reason is, because if we count it as a happiness to

see God, and be like him, we will desire it and endeavour it. Now

nothing can be propounded to us as the object of our eternal delight

and satisfaction but what is the object of our present desires and

endeavours. If we do not desire it now, and endeavour it now, how

can we look upon it as our blessedness hereafter ? For satisfaction is

the fulfilling of our desires, the rest of our motion. The offer of a

Turkish paradise may breed a brutish spirit in us, but to look for a

pure estate should make us pure and clean.

(2.) Parity of heart and life is necessary to the obtaining of it. Our

interest is suspended upon the performance of this condition. The

comfortable vision of God in the life to come doth only belong to the

clean and pure : Mat. v, 8, \* Blessed are the pure in heart, for they

shall see God.' No unclean thing can enter into the new' Jerusalem ;

that is no place for goats or swine. Therefore, unless we get this

cleanness of heart, we shall not be admitted into God's blessed presence.

(3.) This fitteth us for it. There is an aptitudinal as well as a con-

ditional right. As it is a condition indispensably required, so also the

preparation dispositively fitting us for this state: Col. i. 12, 'Which

hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in

light.' The riper we grow for heaven, the more pure and holy we are,

and the more without sin.

[3.] Because of our present communion with God and service of

God.

(1.) Our present communion with God in j)rayer or other duties

requires it. Surely they that are so frequent and familiar with a holy

God should be a clean and holy people : 1 Tim. ii. 8, ' I will that men

pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands;' James iv. 8, 'Draw nigh to

God, and he will draw nigh to you ; cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and

purify your hearts, ye double-minded.' In the Lord's supper : John

xiii. 8, ' Jesus answered him. If I wash thee not, thou hast no part

in me.' So in general, in our whole commerce with God : 1 John

i. 7, ' But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship

one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us

from all sin.'

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(2.) So our present service of God requires it. None but tlie pure

and clean are fitted to do God service in the world : 2 Tim. ii. 21,

' If a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour,

sanctified, and meet for the master's use, prepared unto every good

work.' \* From these,' that is, from youthful lusts ; he is more useful

for Christ, and an instrument better fitted for his glory.

III. The special impurity that is in such sins, so that holiness must

be forsaken, or else these vices so opposite to holiness. What special

impurity is there in those sins ?

1. They defile the body, and are contrary to the dignity of the body,

as it is a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Ghost, or an instru-

ment to be used for the glory of God : 1 Cor, vi. 18, ' Flee fornication :

every sin that a man doeth is without the body ; but he that committetli

fornication sinneth against his own body.' Most other sins are against

God or our neighbour, but sins of uncleanness are in a special manner

against one's self, a debasing or defiling the body, a polluting of that

which is consecrated to God to serve him : 1 Thes. iv. 3, 4, ' For this

is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from

fornication ; that every one of you should know how to possess his

vessel in sanctification and honour.' Sanctification is there taken for

chastity. A man's vessel is his body ; for the Hebrews call any instru-

ment of use a vessel. Now the keeping it in honour is to preserve it

for God's use, and not to prostitute it to our base lusts. Well, then, if

cleanness and purity be so necessary to christians, a sin of so foul a

nature must not be slighted, it dishonoureth and polluteth the body.

2, Uncleanness corrupts and defileth the mind ; for it turneth it from

the true pleasure to the false, and that procured on the basest terms of

downright sin against God. It is ill to be corrupted by any degree of

temporal delight, though the thing in itself be lawful ; as his excuse was

faulty who said, Luke xiv. 20, ' I have married a wife and cannot come.'

The entanglements of marriage should not keep thee from Christ, but

the unlawful pleasures of whoredom make the case much more un-

questionable. This carrieth away the thoughts and corrupteth the

heart, that they do not only forget God, but deny God, and do bring

in a brutishness upon the heart of man ; and therefore men are easily

taken in this snare, and hardly rescued, being bewitched by their

sensuality: Prov. ii. 19, 'None that go in unto her return again, nor

take they hold of the path of life.' And the preacher saith, Eccles. vii.

28, ' One man among a thousand have I found, but a woman among

all these have I not found ; ' Prov. xxii. 14, ' The mouth of a strange

woman is a deep pit ; he that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall there-

in.' Now all these places show, not the utter impossibility, but the

difficulty of repentance, and how hardly this sin is shaken off when

once we are inveigled by it ; for this sin is a strange enchantment on

men.

Use 1. Is information, to inform us what need we have to work in

christians a greater abhorrence of fornication and uncleanness, because

it is a common sin and a grievous sin.

1. It is a common sin ; and then it is time to cry aloud and spare

not, when persons, both single and married, make so little conscience of

this duty. Must we then come and honey them and oil them with

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grace, or feed men's curiositywith tame and smooth strains of contem-

plative divinity ? No ; this were to rock them asleep in their sins.

No ; let us rather convince them of tlieir gross immoralities, unfaith-

fulness in the marriage covenant. Possibly many of them had never

gone so far if these things had been oftener revived on their con-

sciences. Usually men are tender at first, till they be steeped in sin

and bestiality; but as their minds are further enchanted, all means are

too weak, and God's remedy insufficient. Lust cherished groweth

arrogant, and knoweth no shame ; for then they go on in sin the rather

because God forbiddeth it : Isa. iii. 9, ' They declare their sin as

Sodom, and hide it not;' Jer. v. 8, 'They were as fed horses in the

morning; every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.' Their con-

sciences are debauched and judicially hardened, and so have lost all

remorse of conscience and fear of God's judgment.

2. It is a grievous sin. We will endeavour to touch them in the

tenderest part that is left, viz., fear: Heb. xiii. 4, ' Whoremongers and

adulterers God will judge.' Men think it a small matter to satisfy

nature, but God will find them out both here and hereafter. There

fell in one day twenty-three thousand for this sin : 1 Cor. x. 8,

'Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and

fell in one day three and twenty thousand.' The inconveniency of it is

sensible. It consumeth the strength of the body : Prov. v. 11, 'And

thou mourn at last, when thy flesh and body are consumed.' It

wasteth the estate : Job xxxi. 12, ' For it is a fire that consumeth to

destruction, and will root out all mine increase.' And bringeth a

blemish upon the name : Prov. vi. 33, ' A wound and a dishonour

shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.' It with-

draweth the heart from God: Hosea iv. 11, 12, 'Whoredom, and wine,

and new wine, take away the heart ; for the spirit of whoredoms hath

caused them to err ; they have gone a-whoring from under their God.'

It unfitteth for every holy duty. Holy and sacred things never can be

seriously received by sensual minds and hearts. Nay, it tempteth you

to forget God, or question his being, and become, if not a downright

atheist, a sceptic in religion. And, lastly, it casteth men into hell :

Eev. xxi. 8, ' Whoremongers shall have their part in the lake that

burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.'

Use 2. Is caution to young men that are not yet taken in the snare.

Keep yourselves at a great distance from and great abhorrence of this

sin. Therefore, first, avoid occasions : Prov. v. 8, ' Eemove thy way

far from her ; come not nigh the door of her house.' So avoid Satan's

assemblies for the communion of sinners, to stir up lusts and filthiness

in them. Avoid the haunts of evil company, where they meet to

inflame their lusts : Prov. iv. 15, 'Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it

and pass away.' Avoid idleness : 2 Sam. xi. 2, ' And David arose

from his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house, and from

the to]) he saw a woman washing herself, and the woman was very

beautiful to look upon.' David's heart was fixed. Avoid fulness of

bread, excess in eating and drinking, Ezek. xvi. 49. Avoid obscene

discourse. They are foolisli and vain who think they have a chaste

mind when they indulge themselves in all liberty of speech. The

speech bevvrayeth the temper of the heart. Season your hearts with

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God's word: Ps. cxix. 9, 'Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his

way ? by taking heed thereunto according to thy word ; ' 1 John ii. 14,

' I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the

word abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.' But

especially get a sound fear and reverence of God rooted in your hearts :

Gen. xxxix. 9, ' How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against

God ? ' Live always as in the sight of God, who is thy maker, preserver,

and judge.

Use 3. Is advice to all christians. Upon all occasions, think what

will become saints. Let the conscience of your dedication to God be

ever upon your hearts. We that are adopted into God's family, to be

children of God, and heirs of eternal life, redeemed by the precious

blood of Christ, cleansed and sanctified by his Holy Spirit, what a clean

heart should we have within ourselves ! what an holy life should we

carry in the view of others ! Our words should be grave and serious,

our conversations such as will become the gospel ; that no filthiness

may be allowed in us, or drop from us in word or deed : 2 Cor. vii. 1,

'Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all

filthiness of flesh and spirit/ We are servants of an holy God ; we

have holy work to do, and an holy estate to expect.

SERMON lY.

Neither JiltMness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, whicli are not con-

venient ; hut rather giving of thanks. — Eph. v. 4.

The apostle having condemned three gross sins in life and practice,

he coraeth now to speak of three other sins in speech ; for all impurity,

both in word and deed, is forbidden to christians. In tlie words note —

(1.) The sins enumerated, 'Filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting;'

(2.) The reason of the prohibition, those things ' are not convenient ;'

(3.) The special duty substituted into their room and place, ' But

ratlier giving thanks.'

First, the sins enumerated are — (1.) jiLaxporr]^, ' filthiness,' called

elsewhere diaxpoXoyia, filthy communication, 1 Cor. iii. 8, which is a

broad speaking of those things that belong to uncleanness. (2.) There

is fiapoXoyLa, ' foolish talking,' which is meant either of all impertinent,

rash, and roving discourse, which doth rather bewray the speaker's folly

and indiscietion than any way edify the hearers : Prov. xv. 2, ' The

tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright, but the mouth of fools

poureth out foolishness.' When men use a multitude of useless words

to no purpose, or have a torrent of words for a drop of sense ; or of

those that make themselves fools, or act the part of a fool to please

others, as David counterfeited madness before Achish ; as if it were

the praise of a man to make himself an artificial fool or jester to

humour others. (3.) The tliird word is ivrparreXia, which we trans-

late 'jesting.' The philosopher understands by it that virtue which is

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called urbanity, which is the middle between scurrility and rusticity.

But as things easily degenerate, so do names ; therefore the apostle

useth it for that exercise of wit that may ])e called foolery or mockery,

such as idle and scoffing companions use to make themselves merry

with, or to please some with the hurt and offence of others, and suiteth

not with christian piety, gravity, charity.

Secondly, The argument or reason used against them: ra ovkuv/jk-

ovra, ' These things are not convenient ; ' that is, these things are un-

seemly, or unbefitting the seriousness and holiness of a christian ; and so

it is the same argument with the former, ' as it becometh saints,' only

delivered with some difference of expression. We are apt to extenuate

these sins, therefore consider what will become saints. Christianity is

a grave thing ; it consists chiefly of two parts — dying to sin and living-

to God ; and those that come under the power as well as the profession

of it are to behave themselves partly as men in conflict with sin, and

partly as those that study to honour and glorify God. With respect to

the first part, our life should be a perpetual repentance, always getting

farther from sin ; therefore the present season is not a time of laughter

and vain mirth, but of agony and strife against the devil, the world,

and the flesh. To live in pleasure upon earth is to gratify our

spiritual enemies, to be laughing when we should be mourning and

weeping, or sowing in tears that we may reap in joy. Therefore

obscene talk or vain babbling, that serveth for no grave use, ridiculous

mirth that only tendeth to vain pleasure, layeth us open to our enemies,

with whom we are in constant warfare ; and so it is unbeseeming chris-

tians, as evidencing a naughty spirit in ourselves, and as tending to

infect others. With respect to the second, the honouring and pleasing

God, our whole life should be a constant hymn to God, or a perpetual

act of praise and thanksgiving: 1 Peter ii. 9, ' Ye are a chosen gener-

ation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, to show

forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his

marvellous light.' Therein we have a fitter subject for our rejoicing

than obscene and scurrilous discourse, wherein profane persons most

show their wit.

Thirdly, The duty substituted into the room and place of these :

' But rather ivxapiaria, giving of thanks ; ' meaning to God (though he

be not mentioned), from whom all mercies are received, and to whom

all praises are due. This is added — (1.) To show that delight is not

abrogated, but preferred or transferred to a better object ; and so

answers the objection, Must a christian be always sad? No; let your

mirth run in a spiritual channel, and then you will have cheerfulness

enough, matter of rejoicing enough, upon better terms, and at a more

sincere rate. (2.) It specifieth what should be the christian's mirth,

the commemoration of the mercy of God, especially the great benefits

we have by Christ. We need not be beholden to sin for our joy ; we

have the innumerable benefits of God to rejoice in: Ps. Ixviii. 19,

' Blessed be the Lord, who loadeth us daily with his benefits, even the

God of our salvation ; ' and Eph. v. 20, ' Giving thanks always unto

God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.' There is

the christian's way of mirth, and that which should revive and cheer

his soul ; there he may rejoice always, and rejoice without offence, and

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needetb not run to obscene talking or unsavoury jests to cause laughter.

If we be christians indeed, and esteem what we profess to believe,

can anything be more contentful to us ? (3.) It intimateth what we

should do when our hearts are most disposed to mirth, and we are apt

to let loose ourselves to joy and gladness ; as, namely, when we are

cheered with the liberal use of the creature at feasts and banquets, we

should not wholly compose ourselves to ridiculous mirth, but rather give

thanks : James v. 13, ' Is any merry ? let him sing psalms.' When

we have our souls at this advantage, we should turn our rejoicing into a

sjjiritual channel.

From this view you see the drift of the text. I shall handle it

more diffusively in these observations —

I. That christians should make great conscience, not only of their

actions, but their words also ; for after the apostle had dissuaded them

from all uncleanness and filthiness in practice, he addeth, 'Neither

filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient."

We must make conscience of our words for these reasons —

1. We are not absolute proprietors and possessors of our own selves ;

our tongues are not our own to speak what we please. Exempt any one

faculty or member from the jurisdiction of God, and you disown his

authority and interest in you, and open a floodgate to let in sin and

wickedness into the world. They were rebels against God's government

that said, Ps. xii. 4, ' Our tongues are our own ; who is lord over us ? \*

We had them from God, and they must be used for him, not against

him; therefore we are not left to run at random in our ordinary dis-

course, to say and utter what we think good.

2. As we had our tongues from God, so we are accountable to him for

the use of them ; and therefore will our actions not only be brought into

the judgment, but our words and speeches also : Mat. xii. 86, 37, ' But

I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall

give an account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words

thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.'

As if our Lord had said, Deceive not yourselves, as if words were to(^

light to be accounted for. Words, such as they may be, may occasion

a sad reckoning between Christ and you ; for in distributing rewards

and punishments, he considereth words as well as actions. All the

business is what is that prj^a dpyov, that idle word which our Lord

there speaketh of, and how far it reacheth. The word may signify

either vain or false : those false and blasphemous words which, out of

the malignity of their hearts, they had uttered against him, are certainly

comprised ; namely, that he did cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince

of devils. But are not other words of lesser malignity included also ?

Yes ; all that bewray the evil treasure of the heart, an ill talent in men,,

as contumelies and reproaches against godliness ; yea, rotten speech,

that showeth the prevalency of uncleanness in the heart, for they are

such words as discover a man's state and temper ; for the judgment of

absolution and condemnation is to be passed according to these words.

And though we canuot extend the rigour of it so far as to say that

every word which conduceth not to some end of christian edification

shall make men miscarry in the judgment — (alas ! who then could be

saved ?) — yet smely we ought to make conscience of all our words.

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As we must take care that we prejudice not christian hope, so we must

not open a gap to looseness ; therefore do not say, It is but a matter of

words ; for how Httle soever men may esteem words, they may weigli

heavy in God's balance, and idle words must be avoided as well as

gross sins.

3. Words do much discover the temper of a man's heart. There

are three operations of man by which he is discovered to be what he

is — thoughts, words, and actions ; and all these we should make con-

science of. Certainly in all these things there should be a diiference

between the people of God and othei-s. To instance in what we are

upon, the people of God should be observably different in their words

and discourse from other men : Prov. x. 20, ' The tongue of the just

is as choice silver, but the heart of the wicked is little worth ; ' where

the tongue of the righteous is opposed to the heart of the wicked, and

compared to silver, and the heart of the wicked to dross. Because

their heart is little worth, their discourse will be accordingly, for the

tongue showeth what is in the heart. So Prov. xv. 7, ' The lips of

the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the fool doth not so.'

Men usually discourse as their hearts are. A man of a frothy spirit

will bring forth nothing but vain and frothy discourse, but a gracious

man will utter holy and gracious things, for the tap runneth according

to the liquor wherewith the vessel is filled. One place more : Ps.

xxxvii. 30, 31, ' The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his

tongue talketh of judgment, the law of God is in his heart.' All men's

discourses are vented accordingly as their hearts are busied and affected.

A man that hath the law of God in his heart, and maketh it his work

to suit his actions thereunto, will also suit his words to it, and edify

those with whom he speaketh. Thoughts, words, and actions are the

genuine products and issues of the heart. Grace in the heart discovereth

itself uniformly in holy thoughts, holy words, and holy actions ; there-

fore if our conference be not different from ordinary men's, it showeth

the temper and constitution of our souls is the same.

4. Because our tongue is our glory : Ps. Ivii. 8, ' Awake, my glory ;

awake, psaltery and harp;' Ps. xvi. 9, ' My heart is glad, and my glory

rejoiceth.' Compare Acts ii. 26, ' My heart is glad, and my tongue

rejoiceth.' So Ps. xxx. 12, ' That my glory may sing praise to thee,

and not be silent; ' that is, my tongue. But why is our tongue called

our glory ? For a double reason, both which are pertinent to the case

in hand —

[1.] Because thereby Ave can express the conceptions of our minds

for the good of mankind. It was not given to us for that use for which

the tongues of the brute beasts serve them, to taste meats and drinks

only, or to taste our food. No ; but to converse with each other.

Speech is the excellency of man above the beasts. Man is l^oiov irokt-

TLKov, a sociable creature, and therefore fitted by God that we may

entertain one another with discourse. Now it is a manifest abuse of

this excellent faculty when, instead of propagating wisdom and know-

ledge, we should only vent our corruption by it ; and should make no

other use of it but 1o vent our scum and froth to the poisoning and

infecting of other souls. This is to propagate the general taint, and

to make one another more corrupt than we are by nature. Well might

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the prophet complain : Isa. vi. 5, ' I am a man of polluted lips, and

dwell amonoj a people of polluted lips.' By the lips the contagion of

sin spreadeth from one to another, and so our glory is turned into

shame. Therefore if men do not make conscience of their words,

their tongues will run riot against all decency both of speaker and

hearers.

[2.] The other reason why it is called our glory is because thereby

we may express the conceptions of our minds, to the glory of God as

well as the good of others : James iii. 9, ' Therewith we bless God,

even the Father.' And this is proper to us, not only beyond the beasts,

but even the angels. The beasts have tongues, but no reason ; the

angels have reason, but no tongues ; but man hath reason, and a tongue

wherewith to utter it, and so man is the mouth of the creation, who can

not only think of God, but speak of God, his word and works. There-

fore the chief use of the tongue is to glorify and praise God, to magnify

his name, and delight our souls in the sweet commemoration of his

excellencies and benefits : Ps. xxxv. 28, ' My tongue shall speak of thy

righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.' This is the great

and noble use of the tongue, to give the Lord thanks for mercies

received, or what he has done for the world, for the church, for our

bodies and our souls. Now shall the mouth that is consecrated to

Ood be filled with dung, and the tongue which was designed for so

excellent and noble a use as to be God's harp be debased to so vile an

office as to become Satan's trumpet, to stir up filthiness and unclean-

ness in ourselves and others, pollute that tongue with lust and filthiness

which should speak of the holy God ?

5. Because our speeches are regarded by God ; nnd therefore j'ou

must consider not only what is fit for you to utter and others to hear,

but what is fit for God to hear. You are indeed to consider all three.

What is fit for you to utter: "Will this become saints? What is

fit for man to hear as tending to his profit, at least not to his hurt.

But this is not all ; in the close of the day, when you are making your

examen, have you spoken such words as are fit for God to hear ? Ps.

cxxxix. 4, ' There is not a word in my tongue but thou knowest it

altogether.' There is not a word we speak, vain or serious, idle or to

purpose, but the Lord considereth it perfectly : Mai. iii. 16, ' Then

they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord

hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written.' He

taketh notice of every word that is spoken for or against him. Eeason

will tell us that this certainly belongeth to the infinite perfection of

God's nature; but if it were soundly believed, it would make men

more cautious. If you have spoken wantonly, filthily, foolishly, the

Lord heareth, and you must give an account of it to him. Now tell

me, should we not make conscience of our words ?

6. Because the well ordering of our words is a great point of Chris-

tianity, and argueth a good degree of grace : James iii. 2, ' He that

oftendeth not with his tongue is a perfect man ;' that is, hath made a good

progress in religion ; for so many ways do we offend with our tongues,

that to restrain the irregularities of them showeth that we have a good

sense of our duty, or a great awe of God upon our hearts, and are able

to resist other temptations, and guide our actions according to the

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christian rule. Now, that you may not think it an arbitrary thing, let

nie tell you there is an absolute complete perfection, and there is a

perfection of sincerity. lie doth not mean it in the first sense, for he

saith there, ' In many things we offend all.' The best have much to

blame and accuse themselves of. But in the latter sense, he is a true and

sincere christian, one that hath profited in the doctrine of Christ, and

desireth to do all the will of God. But what doth the apostle say of

other manner of christians, that have gotten no manner of government

of their tongues, but let them loose to all kind of vanity and folly,

censuring, detraction, and evil speaking, &c. ? James i. 26, ' If any man

seemeth to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion

is vain ; ' that is, though he maketh show of living religiously, or

serving and worshipping of God, he doth but deceive himself if he

thinketh his religion shall stand him in any stead. Well, then, life

and death are in the power of the tongue ; upon the good or ill use of

it dependeth not only our temporal but eternal safety.

II. In making conscience of our words, we should specially take

heed of filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting.

There ai'e many evils of the tongue, but these are those which we

have now under consideration. For the first, ' filthiness,' men will

easily grant that this is an evil, but think not so of the second and

third. Natural conscience and reason may cause us to blush at filthi-

ness, but is apt to patronise and plead for fooling and jesting, as strains

of wit and pleasantness, and not matters of sin and crime ; therefore

Ave must go over them particularly, and show that they are sins which

become not sincere christians.

1. Filthiness is when we speak of obscene things in an obscene man-

ner, without any respect to modesty and christian gravity or sobriety.

Now this is a great evil, for filthy speakers bring the s])iritual miserere

upon themselves, or that disease whereby men vomit their excrements

by their mouth ; nothing is more beastly than their speeches. But

they that can speak filthy words without blushing will commit filthy

deeds without shame or restraint ; for by their filthy talk they have

polluted their own minds, and prepared themselves for the sin.

[1.] It is a sin most inconsistent with any reverence and fear of

God : Ps. xix. 9, ' The fear of the Lord is clean.' Because there is

sharaelessness and boldness in it : Isa. iii. 9, ' They declare their sin as

Sodom ; they hide it not.' Now it is a grievous temper and state of

heart to know no shame, for this is to contemn and despise God.

Others disobey him ; but such despise him, and seem to have cast off

all honesty, and glory in their shame, as if it were a credit to them to

defy the holy God and the restraint of his laws.

[2.] It is a grief to the Holy Spirit, as it obstructs that purity and

cleanness of heart which he would work in us : Eph. iv. 29, 30, ' Let

no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which

is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the

hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed

unto the day of redemption.' Tlie Spirit is represented both as the

Holy S})irit, and as the Spirit of peace, and so opposite both to filthiness

and clamour. His habitation must be clean and quiet ; therefore

clamour, wrath, and bitterness must be put away.

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[3.] You infect others, and corrupt them by filthy discourse. Many

an hopeful gentleman hath been debauched this way, by unclean

representations both from the stage and the talk of their company.

The filthy speakers are factors for hell to proselyte men to the devil, and

draw unwary souls into his snare : 2 Peter ii. 18, \* They allure through

the lust of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean

escaped from them that live in error ; ' they entice and cast them back

again into all carnality and filthiness

2. The next word is fioypdX.o'yla, ' foolish speaking.' This hath so

many branches, that it is hard to reckon them up ; as —

[1.] When they speak of foolish things. As some can spend hours

in telling vain tales, that serve for no other use but to possess the minds

of the hearers with levity and folly. Now if the ' thought of foolish-

ness be sin,' Prov. xxiv. 9, words of foolishness are much more sin, as

they are more public, and abuse the time and ears of others : Prov. xv.

14, ' The mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness ; ' it is as diet to them.

[2.] When men speak of serious things in a ludicrous and vain man-

ner, and design it for jest. This is playing with sacred things, like

the Philistines calling for Samson to make them sport, Judges xvi. 25,

or the Babylonians asking for one of the songs of Sion, Ps. cxxxvii. 3,

or the sensualists inventing themselves instruments of music like David,

Amos vi. 5, as if their carnal mirth never relished better than when it

is seasoned with something that is sacred, and religion is forced to serve

their profane mirth.

[3.] Lavish, superfluous speech to no end : Prov. xxix. 11, ' A fool

uttereth all his mind.' They can hold nothing, but, whether it tend

to hurt or profit, out it cometh. Many have gotten a custom of vain

babbling, and full of endless talk to no purpose. Now \* In the multi-

tude of words there wanteth not sin,' Prov. x. 13; and all this prattle

cometh out of a vain and foolish heart, that never had any serious sense

of holy things ; and therefore are indiff'erent what they speak, for God

or error ; things that belong to them, or belong to them not, their own

or other men's matters.

[4.] Easli speech, to speak of things they understand not. As the

apostle speaketh of some that, desiring to be teachers of the law, under-

stand neither what they say nor whereof they afiirm, 1 Tim. i. 7. As

many, like little infants, will attempt to run before they can go, so

some are full of talk, and all about matters of controversy in religion,

which they understand little of. But empty vessels and shallow brooks

make the loudest noise.

[5.] Another kind of it is personal boasting, to set off themselves and

their own excellencies. All their discourse is of themselves : Pi-ov. xxv.

27, ' For men to search their own glory is not glory.' This irepiau-

ToXoyia is foolish speaking, when all their discourse tendeth to set off

themselves, and usher in something of themselves, and I cometh in at

the end of every sentence. The rule is, another man's mouth should

commend us, not our own : Prov. xxvii. 2, ' Let another man praise

thee, not thine own mouth ; a stranger, not thine own lips.' I3iit I

will not undertake to reckon up all the kinds of it.

Now I shall prove that it is a sin that should be made conscience of.

(1.) Because it suiteth not with the seriousness of religion, which is

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the wisdom of God. As he hath manifested the riches of liis grace and

j2;oodness in the gospel, so lie hath 'ahonnded to ns in all wisdom and {)ru-

dence,' Eph. i. 8. There should not be a wiser man than a christian, wiio

is guided by the direction and counsel of a wise God, and therefore all

his discourse should be grave and wise and serious. Solomon telleth

us, Prov. X. 31, that 'The mouth of the righteous bringeth forth wisdom.

His heart is stocked with such truths as contain the highest wisdom

in the world, and therefore his mouth should overflow with it ; as he

that hath in his pocket more store of gold than of brass farthings will

at every draught bring out more gold than farthings.

(2.) It suiteth not Avith the mortified estate of sincere christians.

All foolish talking cometli from some unmortified lusts in our hearts,

such as pride, vainglory, worldliness, uncleanness ; therefore are they

talking of vain things, and boasting of themselves with the contempt

of others ; and till these lusts be mortified, in vain do we expect a

cure. Now when the heart is purified and purged from vanity, world-

liness, and pride, men's discourse is presently altered. If the heart be

set on the world, their discourse is commonly of the world : 1 John

V. 5, ' They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the

world heareth them.' If the heart be unclean, and swarm with

noisome lusts, the speech will be rotten. If the heart be proud, men

love to hear themselves talk. Vainglory will betray itself in our dis-

courses. Every carnal affection leaveth a tincture on our speech.

(3.) Because it shutteth out better discourse, and so converse with

others is rendered unprofitable. Omission of good is caused by it.

A christian should come into no company but he should bethink him-

self what he is to do or say for God there. Now when men abandon

themselves to foolish speaking, they little mind the use of edifying, or

speaking of the great and most necessary things. Better things would

come into other men's minds and mouths if they were not entertained

with such vain discourse; and so the lean kine eat. up the fi;t, and

the better part doth not only give way to necessary business, but even

impertinent vanities. Martha is rebuked for losing the season, when

Mary heard Christ's gracious words, Luke x. 39-41, and slie w^as

employed about the necessary ministry of the family. How much

then are they to be rebuked that jostle out all good discourse by their

vain and unprofitable talk !

(4.) Because it argueth great emptiness, that we have not a good

treasure within us, Mat, xii. 35, or have not hid the word in our

hearts, Ps. cxix. 11, or not taken care that it might dwell in us richly,

Col. iii. 16. The full vessel will plash over, but vain empty spirits

have nothing good to serve and supply the necessities of others.

3. We come now to the third sin enumerated, 'and jesting,' ivrpa-

•jrekia.

Here we must state this matter.

Is all jesting unlawful and misbecoming christians ?

[1.] My answer must be negative ; for honest recreation and mode-

rate laughter, to fit the mind for serious things, is certainly lawful :

Eccles. iii. 4, ' There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh ; ' and

honest and ])leasant discourses are, at fit times and opportunities, law-

ful and edifying, as they tend to maintain cheerfulness of mind, and

alacrity of spirit, which is profitable both to our health and duty : Prov.

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xvii. 22, ' A meny heart doth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit

drieth the bones.' Why then shoiikl we not exercise our tongues face-

tiously, as well as any other member ? But then —

[2.] I must tell you that, in recreating our spirits with pleasant and

delightful discourse, it is an hard matter to keep within the bounds of

lawful and allowed mirth. There is an easy passage from what is

allowed to what is forbidden : ' The fool's heart is in the house of mirth,'

Eccles. vii. 4, 5 ; whereas the house of mourning is more profitable

for us in this mixed estate.

[3.] In the use of it, all due circumstances must be observed ; as —

(1.) In the matter. On the one side, filthiness and sin must not be

matter of jesting ; for that always is matter of grief and shame to us,

whether we reflect upon it as committed by ourselves or others. It is

a dunghill mirth that must have somewhat unclean to feed it. On the

other side, nothing sacred. It is profane and impious for men to abuse

scripture, to vent the conceptions of their light and wanton wits. No ;

there must be still a care, as of christian sobriety, that nothing sinful,

so of christian piety, that nothing sacred, may be the matter of our

mirth.

(2.) For the manner. It must be harmless to others, not making

sport with their sins or miseries ; for that is against charity, which

' rejoiceth not in evil,' ovk eTrt'xap^iia'Kei, 1 Cor. xiii. 6. Especially

not to mock at parents, magistrates, and others whom for their age,

gifts, or office we are bound to reverence. Yea, we must consider what

others are able to bear, not making ourselves merry with their infir-

mities, nor using such offensive jests and tart reflections on their per-

sonal imperfections as may provoke them to wrath and anger.

(3.) For the measure. Not excessive wasting the time in vain,

especially not habituating the mind to levity ; that is scurrility when

men accustom themselves so to vain jesting that they cannot possibly be

serious ; they can as well be immortal as serious. This hardeneth the

heart in impenitency, and maketh some men look like professed jesters

rather than christians. They have hardened themselves in the excess of

a jocular way, that a man cannot tell whenever they are serious. And

so, for the warning of the world, God hangeth up some in the chains of

this sin, as well as others as instances for gluttony, whoredom, and

drunkenness.

(4.) For the time. Not when God calleth us to mourning or more

serious employments should it be taken in hand. To be jesting in public

calamities is to affront God's providence. And business must not give

way to sport. Our true mirth lieth in our duty, and that must have

the chief place, especially in its season.

(5.) The end and use must not be forgotten. Our great end is to

serve and glorify God, and everything that we do must have respect to

it, and be ]n-oportioned by it. As the apostle speaketh of other passions

of soul : 2 Cor. v. 13, ' If we be beside ourselves, it is for God ; if we

be sober, it is for your sakes.' In all tempers he minded the glory of

God and their good. So in other passions ; sorrow is allowable, as it

worketh repentance unto salvation ; so mirth, as it doth exhilarate the

spirits for the service of God, and as it may be useful to our great end ;

it is therefore to be allowed only so far as it is concomitant with and

subservient unto better thinj^s.

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Ill, One special means of checlving such sins is to consider how much

they misbecome christians ; for the apostle saith no more but ' they

are not convenient,' or do not agree with that state of grace into

which we profess to be called.

For three reasons this will hold good —

1. Because there are four affections wbich serve to draw us from and

guard us against sin — fear, shame, grief, and indignation. Our flight

irom. sin is begun in fear, continued in shame, carried on by grief or

sorrow, and endeth in indignation ; and so sin is renounced, and the

power of it broken. Now all these affections have a proper ground and

consideration to set them a-work. Fear of wrath and damnation

begins the work ; for men have a quicker sense of danger than of other

things. Shame looketh upon sin, not only as hurtful, but as filthy and

brutish, and tbat which maketh us loathsome to God. It is ^oy3o9

SiKaiov y^oyov, fear of just disgrace. The filthiness and folly of sin is the

proper object of shame. Sorrow considereth God's goodness and sin's

unkindness, causing ns to mourn that we should break the laws of

<xod, to whom we are so much obliged, for very trifles. Indignation

worketh on the unseemliness and disconveniency of sin, either to the

nature of man, or that grace to which we are called by Christ. In

short, fear looketh on sin as damning : Acts ii. 37, ' When they heard

this, they were pricked at their hearts, saying What shall we do to be

saved ? ' Shame, as defiling : Ezek. vi. 9, ' They shall loathe themselves

for the evils they have committed in all their abominations,' Sorrow,

as offensive to so good a God : Zech. xii. 10, ' They shall look upon me

whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him ; ' Luke vii. 47,

' She hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs

of her head.' Indignation looketh upon sin as unbecoming our present

resolutions and professions, our hopes and interest : Isa. xxx, 22, ' Thou

shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth ; thou shalt say unto it. Get

thee hence ; ' Hosea xiv. 8, ' Ephraim shall say. What have I to do any

more with idols ? ' this is the soul's expulsive faculty. In short, the

guilt of sin causeth fear ; the stain, shame ; the unkindness, sorrow ;

unsuitableness, indignation. Awaken this, and sin cannot have long

entertainment in the heart. Therefore it is enough to a serious christian :

It is not convenient.

2. The unsuitableness mindeth us of our dignity, as being admitted

to communion with God. Therefore to talk of filthiness with that

tongue which is to be employed in speaking of God, and to God, is a most

indecorous thing ; as it is to empty nature and put our food into the

same vessel. Will you pollute those lips that should show forth God's

praise ? There is no agreement between these things ; either we must

lay aside the one or the other. Now which will you part with, filthi-

ness and foolish speaking, or the blessing and praising of God ? Both

parts you cannot act well, for the one is destructive of the other.

3. This striketh at the root of the temptation. Many think filthiness,

foolish speaking, and jesting to be a great grace to them, and affect the

reputation of wit at such a rate that they forget honesty. No ; these

are not an honour and a grace, but a blemish and a blot. The apostle

telleth you they are ' not convenient.' You thwart not only religion,

but baffle conscience, that secretly telleth 3\*ou this is not grave and

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serious ; it is not a glory, but a baseness ; a thing you may rather be

ashamed of, than affect the venting of wit in this manner, or pride

yourselves in the deformed birth of your foolish minds.

IV. That a christian cannot want mirth as long as he hath such

abundant cause to give thanks,

I will open this note in these considerations —

1. That it is an excellent exchange when we can change a sin for a

duty; as in this case, by turning censure into admonition, and reproof

or discontent into prayer, complaining of God into complaining to God,

or carnal mirth into spiritual rejoicing, or jesting into giving thanks,

2. Evils are best cured by diversion. When our pleasantness is not

abolished, but diverted, and directed to its proper object. It would be

a shame for a man that calls himself a christian not to acknowledge

that giving of thanks is a better subject of our mirth than filthiness

and folly. The mind must have some oblectation, but let it run in its

proper channel. Thankfulness is the sweetest employment in the

world. To be always thinking or speaking of such sweet things as the

mercies of God, surely if we esteem and value them, it will be more

delightful to us than to be pleasing our fleshly lusts : Ps, Ixiii, 5,

\* My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips,'

3. None have such cause of delightful praise and thanksgiving as a

christian. He hath greater matters to talk of than those things that

are the subject of fools' boasting. Besides what is common to him with

others, all the works of God to admire, and his excellencies shining forth

in creation and providence, he hath the mystery of redemption, the grace

of the new covenant, the glory of heaven, his own hopes. Our whole

religion is an iv^aptcrTLa ; for Christianity is a partaking of the benefit,

1 Tim. vi, 2; besides many personal favours which should ever be

before our eyes,

4. There is not any case incident to a christian but still there will

be found ground of thanksgiving and rejoicing: Phil. iv. 4, ' Eejoice

in the Lord alway, and again I say, Eejoice,' We have cause to be

thankful for particular grace, for mercies in hand or hope. Well, then,

carnal mirth may be cured by such a remedy at hand.

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For tills ye Icnow, that no luhoremonger, nor unclean jierson, nor cove-

tous man, tvho is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom

of Christ and of God. — Eph, v. 5.

The apostle had argued ah incony^-uo, from what is indecent and mis-

becoming saints ; now a periculo, from the danger of such practices :

and fitly, because temptations do not usually enter by the fore-door

of reason, but the back-door of sensual appetite and carnal desires ;

which therefore must be counterbalanced by dangers and fears, that,

seeing the hook, we may be afraid to swallow the bait. The danger

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of such practices is double — there is pcena damni et sensus. Poena

damni, exchisioii from the kingdom of God, as in the text read to j'ou.

Pcena sensus, they run the hazard of his wrath and eternal displeasure ;

as ver. 6, ' For these things cometh the wrath of God upon the chil-

dren of disobedience.'

In the text there is —

1. A sentence passed on all unclean persons : they have no ' inherit-

ance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.'

2. The certainty and evidence of it : \* For this ye know.'

First, In the sentence we have — (1.) The subject, or persons spoken

of ; (2.) The predicate, what is said of them.

1. The subject : ' No whoremonger, nor unclean person, norcovetous,

who is an idolater.' Where mark, he mentioneth not the lesser sins,

filthiness of talk, foolish speaking, jesting, but the more grievous

trangressions spoken of ver. 3, on ird'i 7r6pvo<;, i) aKaOapTo^;, rj irXeov-

e/cT?79 ; not but that they in themselves deserve damnation, but they are

but appendages and degrees to the other sins.

Again observe, in the enumeration there is a special brand put upon

the third sort, 'Nor the covetous person, who is an idolater.' ITXe-

ove^ta here signifieth excessive and unnatural lusts ; because it is put

among the tiefanda, and because the word is clearly so used Eph.

iv. 19, and in other places is joined with words that signify unnatural

and unlawful lusts not fit to be named : 1 Cor. v. 10, ' With the fornica-

tors of this world, or with the covetous ; ' and Col. iii. 5, ' Mortify your

members which are upon earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate

affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.'

Certainly there is some reason why this should always bear company

with these unclean sins ; and what is it but that it hath affinity, and

is of the same nature with them ? 1 Thes. iv. 6, 7, ' That no man go

beyond and defraud his brother in any matters, because the Lord is the

avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned and testified ; for God

hath not called U3 to uncleanness, but unto holiness,' /aj) vTrep/Saiveiv

Koi. irXeoveKTUv, &c. We render it, ' That none go beyond and defraud

his brother in any matter, because God is the avenger of such.' But

the reason rendered, ver, 7, ' For God hath not called us to unclean-

ness, but to holiness,' will enforce another sense, not to yield to unnatural

and unlawful lusts, to commit filthiness with his fellow-christians,

in such a manner as is not to be plainly mentioned, or in that way

of villany for which God punished Sodom, and hath exercised

severe vengeance on the verv heathens. This seemeth everywhere the

meaning of a irkeove^la, ' inordinate lusts,' which we translate ' covet-

ousness.' Now what TrXeove^la is in the abstract, that TrXeoveKTiri

is in the concrete ; a man given to inordinate lusts, or filthiness not to

be named. But this man, be he 'covetous,' or be he an 'inordinate

luster,' is said to be an ' idolater,' as covetousness and inordinate lusting

in the Epistle to the Colossians is said to be ' idolatry.' I confess this

staggered me at first, and made me suspect my former interpretation,

because covetousness is known idolatry ; as ' Charge the rich men in

this world, that they trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living

God,' 1 Tim. i. 17 ; and Job xxxi. 21, ' If I have made gold ray hope,

or said to the fine gold, Thou art ray confidence.' This I confess

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staggered me, and made me think covetousness is to be taken in the

ordinary and vnlgar acceptation ; but I recovered myself again, when

I considered that interpretative idoUxtry is when the creatnre is set in

tlie place of God ; which may be done two ways — by confidence and

trust, and by love and delight ; for there are two chief respects due to

God — love and trust. Now though the covetous person in tlie ordi-

nary sense is an idolater, as he trusts in uncertain riches, and maketh

Avealth his all, so men given to ether sins, especially to the greediness of

uncleanness, may be idolaters also, because they prefer their brutish

satisfactions before God. And the apostle saith the same : Eom. xvi.

18, 'They serve not God, but their own belly;' and again, Phil. iii.

19, 'Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly.' Add, more-

over, they may be called idolaters also because they yet live in the same

villanies and abominable practices which heathens and idolaters do, and

are very reconcilable to them ; therefore I shall stick to the sense first

given, many of the ancients concurring, and also divers of the most

learned modern writers producing irrefragable proofs for their exposi-

tion, not fit now to be insisted on.

2. The predicate, ' Hath no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ

and of God ; ' that is, no portion in the church of God under Christ,

nor inheritance in heaven ; for there is both a kingdom of grace and of

glory. The latter is especially understood, that kingdom spoken of,

Mat. XXV. 34, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom

prepared for you.' They have no right unto, and so living and so dying,

never shall have possession of, that blessed estate. And it is called ' the

kingdom of Christ and of God,' because this kingdom is now in the

hands of Christ as mediator, and so shall be till the judgment be over ;

but after the judgment, he shall give up the kingdom to the Father, 1

Cor. XV. 24, or resign up the church to God, to live and reign with

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost for ever.

Secondly, The evidence, ' For this ye know.' In the original, eVre

yivMCTKovre^ , ye are knowing. It is a Greek circumlocution, to make

the sense more emphatical ; as if he had said. If ye have the least taste

of the christian religion, ye cannot be ignorant of this, that such filtlii-

ness and unlawful lusts deprive us of the kingdom of God ; ye have

been always taught this. Now this is added —

1. To show how heinous a sin this would be in them that have faith

and knowledge, and yet indulge these kind of lusts ; these rebel against

the light of conscience, and wilfully forfeit heaven to please the flesh :

James iv, 17, ' Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it

not, to him it is sin.'

2. To teach us that we ought to bo put in mind of what we already

know ; for temptations induce a strange kind of oblivion into the mind,

which is an ignorance for the present: 2 Peter i. 12, 'I will not be

negligent to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know

them ; ' and 1 John ii. 21, ' I have not written to you because you know

not the truth, but because )'e know it;' and Eom. xv. 15, 'I have

written to you, as putting you in mind.' Our work is not only to in-

form people of what they know not, but to inculcate and press known

truths ; not only to cure ignorance, but also forgetful ness, laziness, and

dulness.

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Doct. Tliat it is ati evident truth tliat nil unclean persons have no

inheritance in the kingdom of God and of Christ.

1. That there is a kingdom of God. This notion implieth, on God's

part, liis sovereign authority and right to command ; and on our part,

both duties and privileges. On God's part, ' One God over all, blessed

for ever,' Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who hath full right, as creator,

to command and govern us with such laws as he thought fit to give us,

with such rewards and penalties as he thought fit to annex to them.

This right God never divested himself of, nor can it be vacated by our

sin, but continueth still, while man recciveth his being from God by

creation, and the continuance of his being by daily preservation and

providence. There is dominium j\irisdictionis et j)roprietatis. The

dominion of jurisdiction is founded in the dominion of i)ropriety. We

are his own, for he created us out of nothing, and therefore hath a full

right and title to govern us. Now God will govern us, not with a rod

of iron, by necessity and force, but with the bands of a man, by laws

backed and confirmed with rewards and punishments ; for he will not

violate the liberty of his own workmanship. Man, being a rational and

free agent, is governed accordingly by moral means, induced to his duty

by the rewards of obedience, and deterred from sin by the punishments

appointed for the wicked and rebellious. On our part the kingdom of

God implieth duties and privileges.

[1.] Duties. As in a kingdom subjects are bound to obey their

proper and rightful lord, so here ; God being our lawgiver and king,

as he hath right to command, so we are bound to obey. As in the

Lord's prayer, when we say, ' Thy kingdom come,' we presently say,

' Thy will be done,' Mat. vi. 10. All that own his kingdom are bound

to obey his will. So Mat. vi. 33, ' First seek ye the kingdom of God

and his righteousness ; ' that is, approve yourselves to be the faithful

servants and subjects of God. Well, then, this is required of us, that

Ave be willingly subject to God, All creatures are subject to him by

constraint, the devils themselves not excepted, though rebels and

grievous revolters; but those are properly said to be his subjects that

willingly consent to his government.

[2.] Privileges. There are many privileges belong to God's subjects,

both for the present and in the world to come. For the present, that

they are under the special care and protection of God, both as to their

bodies and souls. For the souls, he sanctifieth them, writeth his laws

upon their hearts and minds, as he did upon Adam's heart in innocency,

and promiseth to do it in the new covenant made in Christ to those

that serve and obey him, Heb. viii. 10 ; and so the kingdom of God is

within us, Luke xvii. 21. And besides, givetli us peace of conscience

and joy in the Holy Ghost, Kom. xiv, 17. And then for our outward

man, protection and maintenance. The necessaries of this life shall

not be wanting to those that enter into his kingdom : Mat. vi. 33,

' First seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these

things shall be added unto you.' But in the world to come we enjoy

our chief privileges, and therefore our estate there is called ' his ever-

lasting kingdom,' 2 Peter i. 11 ; and Luke xii. 32, ' It is your Father's

good pleasure to give you the kingdom,' That is our blessed state,

where we are absolutely free from all evil ; therefore called the \* day of

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redemption/ Bph. iv. 30, because all the effects of sin then cease, and

therefore we enjoy all good. Every subject weareth a crown, which is

sometimes called \*a crown of life,' James i. 12, ' a crown of righteous-

ness,' 2 Tim. V. 8. A crown of life to show the happiness of that estate,

and a crown of righteousness to show tiie sureness of it. This is chiefly

considered here.

2. There is no entrance into this kingdom but by coming into the

kingdom of Christ. Besides the kingdom which belongeth to Father,

Son, and Holy Ghost, one true a-nd only God, there is the kingdom of

Christ considered as mediator ; a new right of empire and sovereignty

over the creature, not destructive of the former, but accumulative, as

superadded to it, that the government of God might be the more com-

fortable and beneficial to us in our lapsed estate. This is called ' the

kingdom of Christ,' because Christ, as mediator, hath purchased it :

Eom. xiv. 9, ' For to this end Christ both died, and rose again, and

revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living ;' Rev.

ii. 12, ' Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches,

and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' And

upon the account of his merit and redemption of captive souls, God

hath bestowed it upon him : Ps. ii. 8, \* Ask of me, and I will give thee

the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth

for thy possession ; ' and Acts ii. 36, ' God hath made this Jesus, whom

ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.' Made, that is, appointed,

ordained. It is God's kingdom by original right, but Christ's by dona-

tion and purchase. Besides, it is Christ's kingdom because he is the

administrator of it, both as to legislation and execution. Legislation :

Mat. xxviii. 18, ' All power is given to me both in heaven and in earth ; '

and John xvii. 2, ' Tliou hast given him power over all flesh, that he

should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.' The

mediator, God-man, is the supreme prince and head of the church,

that he might dispense salvation upon his own terms, and his doctrine

and faith might be embraced by all nations in the world. Here is a

new power, new government, new laws, which shall be the rule of

man's duty and God's judgment. Now this is comfortable and bene-

ficial to us, because this new kingdom was set afoot to save and recover

fallen man, who was disabled for his duty, and incapable of the happi-

ness which God offered, and obnoxious to his displeasure. Therefore

the kingdom and lordship of Christ is spoken of as medicinal and

restorative, tending to reduce man to God, that after the breach we

might again enjoy his favour, and live in his obedience : Acts xvi. 46,

'Preaching peace by Jesus Clirist ; he is Lord of all.' He is set up to

be king and lord, to make peace between God and man, who were at

odds before. His right to govern obliged him to chastise us for our

rebellions : Acts v. 31, ' Him hath God exalted to be a prince and

saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins.' This new Lord

and king hath made a new law of grace, which is lex remedians, a

remedying law, propounded as a remedy for the recovering and restor-

ing of the lapsed world of mankind to the grace and favour of God,

granting thereby free pardon and right to blessedness to all that sin-

cerely repent and believe in him, but sentencing them to death that

will not believe in Christ. Now without entering: into this kingdom of

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Christ there is no entering into the kingdom of God. These two are

not contrary, but the one is subordinate to the other ; namely, the

kingdom of Christ is derived from God, and referred to him. The

supreme right of governing is still in God, and our subjection to hiin

is preserved : Phil. ii. 11, ' That every tongue should confess that Jesus

Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' And Christ doth

redeem us that we may serve him : Luke i. 74, ' That he Avould grant

unto us that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might

serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the

days of our life.' And besides, it is impossible that we can perform the

duties that belong to the kingdom of God, or enjoy the privileges

thereof, without entering into the kingdom of Christ ; for he healeth

our natures, and giveth repentance as a prince. Acts v. 31, or a new

nature, as the foundation of a new obedience. Nor can we enjoy the privi-

leges, pardon and life. Pardon we have not till we be Christ's subjects :

Col. i. 13, 14, ' Who hath delivered us from the power of Satan, and

hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son ; in whom we

have redemption through his Ijlood, the forgiveness of sins.' As soon as

we are brought into his kingdom, then we have remission of sins.

Then for life : There is no access to the kingdom of God in glory but

by Jesus Christ as mediator : John xiv. 6, ' Jesus saith unto him, I

am the way, the truth, and the life ; no man cometh unto the Father

but by me.' Christ first took possession of it in our name : John xiv.

2, 3, ' In my Father's house are many mansions ; if it were not so, I

would have told you : I go to ])repare a place for you ; and if I go and

prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto my-

self, that where I am ye may be also.' And so in due time we get

possession also, and reign for ever with him : Kev. iii, 21, ' To him

that overcometh I will grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I

overcame and sat down with the Father in his throne.' After we have

a while resisted the devil, and approved ourselves to Christ, we attain

that immortal glory, a part of which is reigning with Christ, and

dominion over the creatures.

3. The title or right to the privileges of Christ's kingdom is by way

of inheritance. This Avord is solemnly used in this case ; as Mat. xxv.

34, ' Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for

you ; ' and Acts xxvi. 18, ' That ye may have remission of sins, and

an inheritance among the sanctified.' So Col. i. 12, 'Made meet to l)e

partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light ; ' and innumerable

other places. Those excellent things which are prepared for us in

another world are of the nature of an inheritance, not purchased by us,

but freely l^estowed upon us, by virtue of our adoption and sonship.

God adopteth us in Clu-ist, and receiveth us into his family. What

followeth ? ' If a son, then an heir of God through Christ,' Gal. iv. 7 ;

and Rom. viii. 17, ' If sous, then heirs, joint heirs with Christ.' Our

right to the heavenly inheritance cometh to us by virtue of our sonship

and adoption, which is begun in the kingdom of grace, and perfected

in glory. God, of rebels, at first maketh us sons, before we can lay

claim to heaven and glory as our portion and inheritance. All the

business then will be, who hath a right to sonship ? If you search

the scriptures, you will find that it belongeth only to those that

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\* believe in Christ,' wlio recovered our lost and forfeited privileges : John

i. 12, ' To as many as received hira, to them gave he power to become

the sons of God.' Well, then, thus far we have gone. Inheritance

depends upon adoption and sonship ; sonship upon the grace of the

Redeemer ; and a right to the Redeemer's grace we have b}' faith.

But will every faith serve the turn ? No ; none but such as produceth

purity and obedience ; for the property of faith is to purify the heart,

Acts XV. 9 ; and without purity of heart no man shall see God, Mat.

V. 8. Again, faith produceth obedience ; for the mystery of the gospel

is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith, Rom. xvi. 26,

and none but such have a right : Rev. xxii. 14, ' Blessed are they that

do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life/

Those that obey and fulfil the will of God have a right to be admitted

into heaven.

4. By the tenor of the christian doctrine it plainly appeareth that

whoredom and all uncleanness excludeth men from this inheritance ;

therefore unclean persons, and men given to unnatural lusts, have no

right, and cannot, without usurpation, pretend to any hopes of this

blessed estate. It appeareth plainly by these particulars —

(1.) Because it is contrary to that covenant by which all enter into

Christ's kingdom: Mark xvi. 16, 'He that believeth, and is baptized,

shall be saved.' Now baptism implieth a renouncing the devil, the

world, and the flesh, and a dedicating ourselves to Father, Son, and

Holy Ghost, as our creator, redeemer, and sanctifier; and therefore by

the baptismal covenant none can be saved but those whose faith effec-

tually turneth them from the world and the flesh to the love, service,

and obedience of God, so that they first live to him, and do hereafter

live with him. And this covenant doth still bind them, under the

penalty of damnation and losing the hopes of glory, to mortify and

subdue the desires of the flesh more and more : Gal. v. 24, ' They that

are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts

thereof.' Those' that are baptized into his name have entered into his

kingdom, profess themselves to be his subjects ; they not only ought,

but it is presumed that they have, crucified the flesh. In what a woful

case then are all those that obey the inclinations of the flesh, and suffer

their lusts to have their full career, without check or stop, and take no

course to mortify them, that do neither combat nor overcome, that live

in all uncleanness and filthiness ! They must seek another religion to

comfort them, for Christianity is not for their turn.

(2.) Because of God's express exclusion. Surely they are excluded

from this inheritance whom God excludes and Christ excludes. Now

everywhere God has declared his mind not by consequence, but direct

sentence: 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not

inherit the kingdom of God, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor

adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

nor thieves, nor covetous, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of

God ? ' These things are inconsistent with a christian's duty and reward ;

and to flatter yourselves with a belief or hope of the contrary is to give

God the lie. So Rev. xxi. 8, you have another black catalogue : ' But

the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and

whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have

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their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, wliicli is

the second death.' It is opposed there to the saint's inheritance : ' He

that overcometh shall inherit all things.' Bnt they that will neither

fight, nor strive, nor seek the assistance of Christ's Holy Spirit, that

they may overcome their lusts, bnt wallow in these sins and vices,

shall be damned into hell. So again, Eev. xxii. 15, ' Without are

dogs, sorcerers, and whoremongers.' Dogs are they that eat what they

have vomited, and after repentance fall into their former sins. The-

other sinners are sufficiently known by their own names ; only you sec

whoremongers are not forgotten, but expressly mentioned as those that

shall be without, that is, excluded from the blessedness of the saints.

Now what can such sinners say for themselves against such express

denunciations of God's word against them ? It may be they say they

do believe in Christ, and all that believe are pardoned, and justified

from all their sins; but Christ will be no patron of wickedness. He

that believeth giveth up himself to be sanctified and governed by him,

as well as to be pardoned and reconciled to God. If faith be used to

cross obedience, it is no true faith ; for ' Christ is the author of eternal

salvation to all them that obey him,' Heb. v. 9. To all them, and only

them. If you believe Christ, you must believe that you cannot be

saved unless you be converted to God. It is the devil, and not Christ,

that telleth you you may be saved in an unregenerate estate. If a bare

strong confidence in Christ that we shall be saved notwithstanding our

sins were true faith, the hardest heart would make the best faith. WhO'

fuller of confidence and foolish presumption than they that are hardened

in their sins? Therefore the business is not about faith and believing,

but whether you believe Christ or Satan. If you hear Christ's voice in

the word, this controversy is at an end. He hath flatly told you that

you thus living and dying cannot be saved, and have no inheritance

among the saints in the kingdom of Chi-ist and of God.

[3.] From the heinous nature of the sin. It is a sin of great atheism

and great infidelity. By the scriptures you know, or might easily

know, that if you live in uncleanness, you incur the loss of heaven ; yet

you are so violently bent upon the fulfilling of your lusts that this can-

not reclaim you. Certainly faith cannot consist with these sins. A man

may run blindfold into hell if he will wink hard and go on securely ;

but he that will with open eyes run into the bottomless pit, he doth

not believe the danger. You cannot drive a dull ass into the fire that

is kindled before him ; and Solomon telleth us, ' In vain is the net

spread in the sight of any bird.' If men that have reason and con-

science had eternity in their sight and view, would they venture thus ?

You never knew a soaken sinner in this kind, but he had ill thoughts

of God and the world to come.

[4.] It is idolatry. Primary idolatry is when divine honours are

given to any creature. But how is whoredom and uncleanness idol-

atry ? Because by it men are addicted to some base thing which they

prefer before God. They love brutish pleasures more than Godr

2 Tim. iii. 4, ' Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God ; ' and for

the satisfaction of their lusts are deaf to all God's counsels ; that is

our god who is most valued by us, and for whose sake we will do

most. Now if men can dispense with God's honour and their duty to

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him for a sense-pleasing and flesh-pleasing life, they will do more for

the flesh than they do for God ; therefore the flesh and the belly is.

their God. Now how justly are they deprived of salvation who put

such a vile scorn upon the great God, our creator and preserver, who

prefer the belly and the flesh before him ! All their business is to

have their will and pleasure for a wliile ; but how long will they have

their will in these things ? Besides, such a base god as they have set.

up must needs breed a base spirit ; for every man's temper is as his god

is. As the psalmist saith of gross idolaters, Ps. cxxxv. 8, ' They that

make them are like unto them ; so is every one that trusteth in them ; '

so it is true of interpretative idolatry ; this idol of carnal pleasure

embaseth the spirit, and maketh them unfit for everything that is-

worthy, noble, and generous.

[5.] Because they have not that spirit that should fit them and make-

them meet for heaven. All the world issue themselves at length into,

two places, heaven or hell ; and by the way they have a several sort of

spirit that disposeth them to either. The godly and sincere christians

have the Spirit of Christ ; it is absolutely and indispensably necessary

for them : Piom. viii. 9, ' He that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none

of his.' If you have any part in Christ, you are possessed with his-

Spirit, which is the earnest of your everlasting abode with him : 2 Cor.

i. 22, 'Who hath sealed us, and given us the earnest of his Spirit in our

hearts ; ' for he stirreth up heavenly desires and motions, and putteth

you upou serious preparations for a better estate. And it is God's-

wisdom to put all things in their proper places ; and therefore in time,

when they are sufficiently prepared and made meet, he will translate

heavenly creatures into heavenly places and mansions, where they shall

live with him for ever; for the grossly carnal, such as the whoremongers

and unclean are, they are possessed by an unclean spirit, which hurrieth

them violently into hell, as he did the swine into the great deep ; and

they are making themselves more meet company every day for the

devil and his angels.

[6.] This exclusion is so absolute and peremptory that it admits no-

exception but that of sincere repentance, which is both a change of

heart and life. For the present the exclusion standeth in force against

you, like the flaming sword that guarded paradise ; but your case is

not remediless, because Christ is an all-sufficient saviour, and his

sacrifice for sin so full and valuable that nothing can hinder you from

pardon and salvation but your own impenitency and unbelief. Cer-

tainly this may be done, for this hath been done after a like sentence-

and denunciation, that no whoremongers have inheritance in the king-

dom of God : 1 Cor. vi. 11, ' But such were some of you ; but ye are

washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the

Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' It giveth some hope to a

sick man when like deadly diseases have been cured. Surely an ocean

can cleanse one nasty sink, and an emperor's revenue can pay a beggar' s-

debt. Your case is foul, but it admitteth of this change ; and if you

yield to it at last, you may be accepted at last, after all your great and

heinous sins. The covenant of grace doth promise pardon and salvation

to every penitent believer whenever they truly turn to God, without

excepting any ])er.son in the world ; only you must look that your

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repentance be sincere, and that there be a thornngh change of heart

and life. No other repentance is true but a quitting and leaving these

sins before they leave us. Three things are aj)t to deceive you —

(1.) Some trouble for these sins while you go on still to commit

them. There is no question but conscience will smite when tlie sin is

past, and the fog that blinded the mind begins to be dissipated, and

reason recovereth the throne again ; it will pierce the heart with sharp

reflections because appetite and lust have been preferred before it. All

unclean persons are not past feeling, nor have gotten the victory of

conscience ; but though the soul be scourged with some remorse, yet

as often as the temptation returneth they are still carried away, as

marsh land is drowned with the return of every tide. Therefore in

repentance it is not enough that there be sorrow for the sin, but there

must be a forsaking and leaving of it : Prov. xxviii. 13, ' Whoso con-

fesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy.' These great and

heinous sins must be forsaken, or else we are wicked men. Ahab wept

for Naboth, 1 Kings xxi. 29, yet afterwards imprisoned Micaiah.

Saul with tears confesseth his injustice to David, yet continueth to

persecute him, 1 Sam. xxiv, 16, and xxvi. 2. There is repenting and

sorrowing for sin in hell. The repentance is never sound till the heart

be so turned from sin that it may be turned against it. If we have

smarted for eating forbidden fruit, we must meddle no more: Ps. li. 6,

\* In the hidden part shalt thou make me to know wisdom.' Broken

bones must make us wary and cautious.

(2.) The next thing that will deceive you is some faint resistance or

striving against sin, but it groweth upon you. There are some sins

where striving is conquering, as in the case of infirmities that we can-

not wholly get rid of in this life ; but in the case of heinous sins it is

otherwise ; they must not only be striven against, but left, otherwise no

difference between godly and ungodly. The conatus, the endeavour,

is not enough ; the evenius, the event or issue, is considerable. If a

man live in gross sins though he hath strivings and convictions, and

ineffectual wishes to be better and to turn to God, this showeth he doth

sin against conscience, and resist the Spirit, that should turn him from

these sins : 1 Peter iv. 1, ' Arm yourselves likewise with the same

mind ; for he that suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.' Christ

bad his innocent reluctances, but his love to God and men broke

through all. Take heed of being rebellious against the importunities of

grace. Such sins must not only be resisted, but conquered. A

usurper may reign though there be much contradiction. Turn the

tables. Should the feeble oppositions of sin against the life and reign

of grace make the saints question their sincerity ? Why then should

this ineffectual striving acquit you from the reign of sin ? It is not

enough to disuse sin, l)ut he must mortify it also.

(3.) That which will deceive you is a hope to cry God mercy upon

your death-beds ; and so, after an impure life, men hope still to go to

heaven. We do not wholly exclude a death-bed repentance (if it be

sincere^ and we do it at last) ; it is possible, though men have but so

little time left. It is great folly, as well as wickedness, to ]mt it off till

Ihen ; yet if God renew you by his Holy Spirit, you shall be accepted.

But all the business is to prove it sincere; for how shall we know

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whether our repentance cometh from fear or love ? What cometh from

fear will die again when your fear is over. Gocl hath not your hearts

till he hath your love. Now this sensible death-bed work is hard, not

only for the most skilful about you, but for yourself, to discern from

what cause it cometh, whether you are frightened into an unsound

repentance, or be effectually and sincerely turned from sin to God,

whether your heart and will be changed or not. Alas ! it is easy to

renounce and detest sin when we can keep it and cherish it no longer,

and it is the mere fruit of necessity and fear. Besides, what hope of

this, when we are contented to live longer in a course of known foul

sin, provided at length we may be saved ? To live a sinful life against

conviction of conscience bringeth on final and judicial hardness.

[7.] If the children of God fall into any of these sins, they lose not

their right, but their present fitness, to enter into the kingdom of God

and Christ. When you hear or read such a saying as the text, a doubt

may arise in your mind, What then shall become of Samson, David,

and Solomon ? I answer —

(1.) One act doth not denominate a man, but habits ; such cannot

be called whoremongers. The reign of sin in the heart cannot consist

with a right to heaven : Kom. viii. 13, ' If ye live after the flesh, ye

shall die ; ' that is, in a course of sin.

(2.) They lose their fitness : Gal. v. 21, ' They that do these things

shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' Our divines at Dort, by the

leper who w^as to dwell apart, say that he lost not his right in his

house, but his fitness to dwell in it for the present. Sins are bound in

heaven till repentance. They need a new pardon, though they are not

put into a state of condemnation again, nor their former justification

nullified. Infirmities have pardon of course : John xiii, 10, ' He that

is washed needeth not save to wash his feet.' But great and known

sins must have actual repentance before they can be pardoned ; they

must be confessed and forsaken.

Use. Let sinners propound this to their choice, either these sins must

be laid aside, or the kingdom of God must be lost. It is the highest

profaneness this, to sell the birthright, Heb. xii. 6, to forfeit our

glorious inheritance for a little brutish satisfaction. Will you for

your unclean delights forsake the delight of angels, and choose the

filthy pleasures of sin before the pleasures at God's right hand for ever

more ? The very punishment showeth the nature of the sin, which is

loving pleasure more than God.

To quicken the children of God to avoid all uncleanness and ten-

dency to it. You should check temptations to sin, and strive for an

abundant entrance : 2 Peter i. 11, ' Give diligence to make 3'our

calling and election sure, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto

you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour

Jesus Christ.' Reason with yourselves, as it is said of the trees in

Jotham's parable,' Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they

honour God and man, to be promoted over the trees ? Should I for-

sake my sweetness, and my good fruit, to be promoted over the trees ?

Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be

promoted over the trees?' So should )^ou repel all temptations to sin,

jukI abstain from all appearances of evil.

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SERMON VI.

Let no man deceive you ivitli vain tvords ; for because of these tilings

Cometh the lurath of God upon the children of disobedience. —

Eph. v. 6.

The apostle had argued ab incon(j7nio, from what was indecent and

misbecoming in us ; now a pericido^ from the danger of such practices.

There is poena damni, the punishment of loss, exclusion from the

kingdom of God ; and poena sensus, the punishment of sense, the

hazard of God's eternal wrath and displeasui-e : ' Let no man deceive

you,' &c.

In the text we have two things —

1. A caution, ' Let no man deceive you with vain words.'

2. A commination, ' For because of these things cometh the wrath

of God upon the children of disobedience.'

First, The caution is against error, and showeth the certainty of their

punishment, whatever false teachers whispered to the contrary. This

is premised that we may neither deceive ourselves nor suffer ourselves

to be deceived by others.

1. That we may not deceive ourselves. Frequent warnings are given

against this self-flattery : 1 Cor. vi. 9, 'Be not deceived; neither forni-

cators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of them-

selves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor

revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God ; ' 1 John

iii. 7, ' Little children, let no man deceive you ; he that doeth right-

eousness is righteous ; ' 1 Cor. xv. 33, ' Be not deceived ; evil communi-

cation corrupts good manners ; ' Gal. vi. 7, ' Be not deceived ; God is

not mocked : for what a man sowetli, that shall he also reap.' Men do

what they can to live securely and undisturbedly in their sins, and

to guard their hearts against the apprehension of all danger and

punishment.

2. That we may not be deceived by others. There were false teachers

in those early days, that countenanced profane and licentious christians;

some that taught fornication was an indifferent thing, or at least no such

great matter, or not so dangerous ; that a man might be righteous, and

yet live in sin ; that a bare profession of faith without a strict life was

enough to salvation ; which poison was greedily sucked up by careless

christians, who were convinced of the truth of Christianity, but as yet

had no power to overcome their lusts. It is strange that such gross

conceits should possess their minds. But there is that which the apostle

calleth ' a reprobate sense or mind,' Ptom. i, 28. There is such an efficacy

of error and deception in our corrupt natures, that men soon hear in this

ear, and please themselves with the thoughts of impunity, though they

live in gross sins : 2 Peter ii. 18, ' They allure through the lusts of the

flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from

them who live in error.'

Secondly, A denunciation of God's wrath, 'Because of these things

cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.' You have

it again, Col. iii. 6.

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lu which words observe —

1. The evil denounced, ' The wrath of God cometh.'

2. The meritorious procuring cause, ' For these things.'

3. The persons, or proper seat and subject of his vengeance, 'Upon

the children of disobedience.'

1. The evil denounced, \* The wrath of Grod cometh ; ' meaning by

\* wrath,' punishment from God, who is angry and displeased with these

sins. And it is said, 'it cometh ;' it is an allusion to a thing that falleth

from a higher place, and crusheth those upon whom it falleth. So this

wrath is said to be poured down upon them from heaven : Ps. xi. 6,

' Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible

tempest ; this shall be the portion of their cup;' that is, their judg-

ment shall be terrible, irresistible, and remediless. So Rom. i. 18, ' For

the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and

unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.' They

cannot make a wall against heaven to keep off that which shall come

upon them from thence.

2. The meritorious procuring cause, ' For these things,' fornication,

uncleanness, and such like gross sins. God is not severe upon ordinary

failings and frailties, but these sins are of another nature.

3. The persons upon whom this vengeance cometh ; it shall light

"^ upon the children of disobedience.' What children of disobedience

signifieth I shall show anon. Some by it here understand infidels, as

if that were the argument : How could these things be tolerable in

christians, when they were the sins for which God plagued the heathens

or infidels ? Or rather, take the common sense ; children of disobedi-

ence are such as live in an open defiance of God's precepts, and will by

no means be reclaimed, and forsake their sins, or be persuaded to seek

after God, and his healing and renewing grace. And so it teacheth us

two notes —

[1.] Those that are given to these sins are to be reckoned among the

children of disobedience, or accounted rebels to God. Though they be

christians in name, yet they are heathens, profane christians, that never

heartily obeyed the gospel, nor thoroughly renounced their heathenish

impurities : ' As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according

to the former lusts of your ignorance,' 1 Peter i. 14. TeKva viraKorj'^,

\* obedient children,' are opposite to these u/oi)? rf/? aTreiOeLa^, 'children

of disobedience,' that profess obedience, and yet relapse into their old

practices.

[2.] That the wrath of God lighteth not upon them that have once

fallen into these sins, or it may be often, in their unregeneracy, but

afterwards repent and return to an holy life, but upon the ' children of

•disobedience,' that remain obstinate and impenitent, and will not be

reduced from this impure course of living.

Doct. 1. That all those words which promise impunity or immunity

from the wrath of God to gross open sinners are vain words.

They are vain, because they cannot make good what they promise,

being expressly both against the light of nature and scripture. And

here I shall inquire —

1. What are the vain words wherewith sinners usually deceive

themselves.

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2. How it cometli to pass that such gross self-flattery can ever pos-

sess theh' minds.

I. What are the vain words or pretences by which they usually

harden their hearts ?

1. That God will not call them to an account, or punish them for

their sins. That there is such a thought in their minds appeareth

plainly in their actions to any discerning beholder: Zeph. i. 12, 'I will

search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled

upon their lees, that say in their hearts, The Lord will not do good,

neither will he do evil.' There are implicit thoughts and explicit

thoughts ; explicit thoughts are what we actually and inwardly conceive

in our minds, and do expressly think of; implicit thoughts are the latent

principles which lurk in our hearts, which, though they do not bubble

up into actual thoughts and opinions, yet secretly govern us and taint

our actions. And these are usually called in the scripture, ' Saying in

their hearts,' and are known by interpreting and running up our actions

into their proper principle ; for man being a reasonable creature, it is

supposed that all he doth is influenced by some reasonings of his

mind, either more close or reserved, or more apparent and open.

And now, though we in bashfulness and unconfidence of their truth

for a while suppress our principles, yet their force and influence

is too discernible in our actions. As, for instance, men that live

securely in open sins, condemned not only by the light of scripture

but nature, surely they are influenced by this thought, that either

there is no God, or that he is careless of human affairs, and will not

call them to an account whether they do good or evil : Ps. xxxvi. 1,

\* The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is

no fear of God before his eyes;' that is, their lewd life showeth that

they have no reverence of God, and plainly bespeaketh this thought

in their mind and observation, that either they think there is no God,

or that he is a senseless idol, and taketli no notice of human affairs so

as to call men to any account for them ; for what could they do more

wickedly if they were professedly leavened and plainly possessed with

these opinions ? But these are but vain words ; for if there be no

God, how could things fall into this order and proportion wherein

we see them ? Scripture and nature, reason and conscience, will

tell thee there is a God. Look within thee, without thee, upward,

downward, round about thee, everything thou seest, hearest, and

feelest, proclaimeth a God to thee. And if there be a God, doth

he not take notice of what men do ? Surely there is such a thing

as good and evil, vice and virtue, sin and holiness ; the one worthy

of blame, the other of praise. If it be not so, whence is it that we all

affect to be counted honest and good ; to seem so at least, if we have

no mind to be so? The most wicked are offended to be taken for

such as they are, and endeavour to cover their vices with the appear-

ance of virtue and goodness. If all things were utterly indifferent in

their own nature, it were no more crime for a man to kill his father than

his neighbour's dog, or to rob and murder men in the woods than to

hunt a hare, to lie and forswear in our denlings than to be honest,

just, and sincere. Surely there is a God, and there is moral good and

evil ; and if it be so, will not God punish the evil and reward the

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good? If yon think he will not, it is because he hath no right, or no

jDOwer, or no will to do it. You cannot say no right, because man is

his creature, and therefore his subject. You cannot say no power, for

our life is in his hands. Now if he will not trouble himself with

human affairs, or mind what is done liere below, if he is neither pleased

with our good deeds nor angry with our offences, why then hath he

made a law with a sanction ? This is against all sense, reason, and

experience. It is against the purity of his holy nature that he should

be indifferent to good or evil, and wholly connive at the disorders of

mankind. How then can we pray to him for mercies, or praise him

for benefits ? Or could there be any such thing in men towards God

as fear and hope ; fear that God will avenge their misdoings, or hope

that he will support them in a righteous cause ? Which yet is against

the universal sentiment of all mankind and common experience ; for

God doth daily make known himself by punishments and benefits :

Heb. ii. 2, ' For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every

transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward,'

&c. ; Kom. i. 18, ' But the wrath of God is revealed from heaven

against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men ; ' Acts xiv. 17,

' He left not himself without a witness, in that he did good, and gave

us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food

and gladness.' We see the effects of his wrath in pestilences, tem-

pests, inundations, and of his goodness in fruitful seasons. Therefore

why will you cherish such vain thoughts, as if God would never call

you to an account, when he is known by the judgments which he

executeth daily ?

2. That God will be merciful to them ; though they sin against

him, they shall notwithstanding escape well enough ; that he will not

be severe against his creatures. But you reflect but upon one part

of God's nature, liis mercy, without his holiness and justice, and so

fancy an unrejiKonablo indulgence in God. You lessen his holiness :

Ps. 1. 21, ' Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thy-

self.' They feign God to be what they would have him to be, and

judge of his goodness by their own interest. A good man is troubled

and grieved and offended with the impurities of others : 2 Peter ii. 7, 8,

' And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the

wicked ; for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and

hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful

deeds.' And yet a good man is but a partaker of the divine nature,

hath but some strictures of it. Besides, you overlook his justice,

which belongeth to his office as governor of the world, as if he would

be merciful however men are qualified.

But doth not God deal with us in pure mercy, without any respect

to qualifications ?

1 answer — We must distinguish between the mercy which God

exerciseth as a free lord, and the mercy which he exerciseth as a

righteous governor. The one is spoken of Piom. ix. 16, 'So then, it is

not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that

showeth mercy.' The other, 1 Cor. ix. 24, 'So run that you may

obtain.' There is a mercy that he showeth in converting some as a

free lord, and a mercy that he showeth as a righteous governor, in

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rewarding and punisliing. The first is not that you depend upon, for

you are yet in your §ius, and care not to come out of them ; and the

second you cannot presume of, that you shall find mercy though you

1^0 on in your sins ; for God, that is arbitrary in his gifts, is not so in

his judgments. Mercy is for the support of the penitent. There is a

duty God rcquireth of us before we can expect it from him: Isa. Iv. 7,

\* Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his

thoughts ; and let him turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy ;

and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' It is their cordial

and thy poison : Ps. Ixviii. 20, 21, ' He that is our God is a God of

salvation ; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death. But

God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such

an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.' Besides, you abuse God's

mercy, and put it to the worst use, when you think it shall spare all

and pardon all : Jude 4, ' Turning the grace of God into lascivious-

ness.' They only make a dung-cart of God's mercy to carry away all

their filth ; for God will show mercy only to true penitents : Ps. cxxx. 7,

\* Let Israel hope in the Lord ; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with

him there is i)lenteous redemption.' Mercy is wrested from its proper

use to increase our carnal security and boldness in sinning, and not to

invite us to return to God. Well, tlien, according to rule, licentious

persons cannot expect mercv, or they that impenitently live in a course

of sin hope that they shall escape his vindictive justice.

3. That they are christians, and by external profession have received

the faith of Christ. But the name will not save you without the

power : 2 Tim. ii. 19, ' And let every one that nameth the name of

Christ depart from iniquity.' Christ came to save sinners, but from

their sins, not m their sins : Mat. i. 21, ' He shall save his people from

their sins.' And you mistake the nature of faith if you think it lieth

in a strong confidence, and freedom from trouble for sin. No ; it is a

hearty consent of subjection to Christ. He is not the best christian

that hath least trouble, but the least cause for it. Otherwise to wink

hard, and shut our eyes against all knowledge of christian duty and

obedience, would make the best faith. No ; this is a purifying as well

as a comforting grace : Acts xv. 9, ' Purifying their hearts by faith.'

And they are the best christians where Christ performeth most of his

office in turning them to God : Acts iii. 26, ' God having raised up

his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you

from his iniquities.'

4. That none is ])erfect, and the rarest saints have fallen into as

great faults, and so are persuaded that these gross sins are but frailties

and human infirmities. SI David, cur non et ego ? — If David fell,

why may not I ? was an old excuse in Salvian's time. They fell into

sin, but did they wallow and lie in it? Will you live in sin, because

in some rare case some of God's choicest servants have fallen into it ?

Is the rest of your lives like theirs ? Did not they smart grievously

for these sins ? and was not their repentance as remarkable as their

fall ? Surely there is a difference between imperfection and Avicked-

ness, as there is between falling by the stumbling of an horse into the

mire, and wallowing therein in our drunkenness, or between the

drowning of fields in a land-flood, and their being overflown by every

tide.

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5. Others say they are justified, and depend on the righteousness of

Christ. You may, if you liave a right to it ; but, 1 John iii. 7, ' He

that doeth righteousness is rigliteous.' Wliere Christ is made right-

eousness, he is also made sanctification : 1 Cor. i. 30, \* But of him are

ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and right-

eousness, and sanctification, and redemption.' You have very great

cause to doubt of your justification when you constantly live in sin.

There are some sins which are not consistent with sincerity and an

interest in Christ's righteousness ; otherwise there were no distinction

between the godly and the ungodly : but the scripture tells us the

distinction is clear and manifest : 1 John iii. 10, ' In this the chil-

dren of God are manifest, and the children of the devil : whosoever

doeth not righteousness, is not of God.' It is strange and groundless

arguing, I am justified, therefore my sins of oppression, drunkenness,

fornication, &c., shall do me no harm ; but it is sound arguing, I live

in ordinary wilful heinous sins, therefore I am not justified or sincere,

nor can I by the laws of Christianity look upon myself such, the scrip-

ture witnesses, as shall obtain acceptance with God.

6. That if they be in an unjustified estate for the present, they hope

they shall repent at last, and then they will leave off their sins, and cry

God mercy. But you live in fiat disobedience to God for the present :

Heb. iii. 7, ' The Holy Ghost saith. To-day, if ye will hear his voice,

liarden not your hearts.' And besides, you only presume of future

grace out of self-love, but can be content that God be dishonoured longer,

provided that at length you may be saved. And besides, you leave a

necessary indispensable duty to great uncertainties. God may take

you away in the next act of sin, as he took away Zimri and Cosbi, and

Korah and his accomplices, and so leave you no space to call for mercy ;

or you may be smitten with an apoplexy, lethargy, or some stupid disease,

that shall take away all opportunity of making your peace with God.

If we were sure of repentance, it is great folly to play the mountebank

with our own souls, and give ourselves a deadly wound to try the strength

of a plaster or sovereign unguent ; or drink poison, and contract a sur-

feit, in expectation to remove the distemper by a vomit. The presum-

ing delayers are usually given up to hardness of heart, so as that they

never repent: Gen. vi. 3, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man.'

Therefore to defer the forsaking of wilful sins and known enormities is

to run a desperate hazard in the most momentous case. The grieved

Spirit may at length be tired and wearied out, and you may grow more

sottish and blockish every day. Therefore these are but vain words.

7. That they do make amends for a course of sin in one kind by

abounding in other duties ; as some that live in uncleanness will be

charitable, hoping to expiate the offences of a filthy life by charity, and

so make alms a sin-offering, which should be a thank-olfering : Heb.

xiii.16, ' But to do good and to communicate forget not ; for with such

sacrifices God is well pleased.' So some will be just, and do no wrong,

yet cannot deny their intemperance : Ezek. xxxiii. 13, 'If he trust in

ins own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall

not be remembered ; ' that is, upon that account, or presumption of his

other righteousness and good qualities. The apostle taxeth this want

of entire and uniform obedience: Kom. ii. 22, 'Thou that abhorrest

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idols, (lost thou commit sacrilege ? ' The Jews' form was abhorrinf]^

idols ; but they were entangled in a crime as enormous, and robbed God

of his offerings. Most men's goodness is but to hide their secret indul-

gence to some other lewd practice or sinful course wherein they live.

I say, to hide it, not only from the world, but their own hearts, as if

our delinquency in some things might be excused by a supererogation

in other duties ; as the Jews hoped to repair their want of mercy by a

multitude of sacrifices ; as the stomach, when it hath no solid food,

filleth itself with wind. But God will be obeyed in all things : ' God

spake all these words,' Exod. xx. 1. The same authority tliat forbids

stealing forbids adultery ; therefore we must be complete in all the will

of God. These are some of the sorry fig-leaves by which men hope to

cover their nakedness, those sandy foundations upon which they build

their hopes.

II. The reasons how it cometh to pass that such gross self-flattery

can possess their minds. Though it be as plain as noon -day that they

that live in gross sins shall be damned, yet the most profane have good

thoughts of their condition. -

1. The causes lie in themselves ; as —

[1.] Self-love, which is very partial, and loath to think of the evil of

our condition : Prov. xvi. 2, ' All the ways of man are clean in his own

eyes ; but the Lord weigheth the spirits.' Alas ! few bring their actions

to the balance of the sanctuary, and desire to know the worst by them-

selves.

[2.] Unbelief of God's word and divine promises and threatenings.

Unbelief and obstinate impenitency always go together. God hath his

word, and they have their word. Now rather than believe God's word,

they will put it to the venture and trial, whose word shall stand, God's

or theirs ? Jer. xliv. 28, ' And all the remnant of Judah, that are gone

into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall

stand, mine or theirs ; ' that is to say, which shall be fulfilled and made

good, their foolish confidence or God's threatenings ?

[3.] Non-attendance to God's warnings, if they are not guilty of ex-

press unbelief: Mat. xxii. 5, 'But they made light of it;' Eccles. v. 1,

' Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God, and be more

ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools ; for they consider not

that they do evil ;' compared with Acts xvi. 14, ' Whose heart the Lord

opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.'

[4.] Non-application : Job v. 27, ' Lo ! this, we have searched it ; hear

it, and know it for thy good ; ' Rom. viii. 31, ' What shall we say to

these things? ' Jer. viii. 6, 'No man repented him of his wickedness,

saying, What have I done ? ' Now when men neither believe, nor

consider, nor apply, no wonder if self-love carrieth it ; and in the greatest

soul-dangers they flatter themselves into a fool's paradise, that they

shall do well enough though they live in their sins.

2. The devil joineth with our self-love, and lulleth us asleep in our

carnal security and abuse of grace: Gen. iii. 4, 5, 'And the serpent

said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die ; for God doth know that

in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall

be as gods, knowing good and evil.' In the first temptation he per-

emptorily denieth the terror of the curse, as if it were a vain scarecrow.

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As the cunning huntsman playeth least in sight till the beast be gotten

into the snare and toil ; all is hushed and quiet, and then he appeareth

witli shouts and outcries ; so Satan glutteth men with carnal delights,

and taketh care their pleasures be not disturbed Avith any thoughts of

the world to come, or serious minding of their danger, till they are past

remedy, and then torments with despairing fears as much as he hard-

ened us before with presumptuous thoughts of mercy. He that now

tempts you to disobey the command, at death or sickness will tempt

you to distrust the promise.

3. He stirreth up instruments, that, with the charms of false doc-

trine, he may hinder the sight of sin and fears of judgment, and strengthen

the hands of the wicked : Jer. xxiii. 17, ' They say still unto them that

despise me, The Lord hath said. Ye shall have peace ; and they say

unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No

evil shall come upon you.' They confirm people in their wickedness,

and keep them from repentance, by bearing them in hand, that God

will be merciful to them ; and if they can but trust in the merits of

Christ, or God's mercy, they are safe. These are those that are said to

'daub with untempered mortar,' Ezek. xiii. 10, and to 'sew pillows under

men's arms,' ver. 18 ; that is, lull men asleep in their sins. The church

of God hath ever been troubled with such unskilful and unfaithful guides,

and daubers with untempered mortar ; and they are found in every

party that delude poor drossy unsanctified souls with promises of peace

and pardon, and by loose strains of grace hinder their conversion.

Use. Let no man deceive you.

1. It is sure you are not justified while you are yet in your sins. Men

are first regenerated and then pardoned : Acts xxvi. 18, ' To open their

eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of

Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sin.' Till you are

converted you cannot determine your right. So in the golden chain,

sanctification is one necessary link. It is not omitted by tlie apostle,

but included in one of the things there mentioned : Eom. viii. 30,

'Whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called,

them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.'

Sanctification is included in effectual calling ; there is initial sanctifica-

tion, and the progress of it is in the word 'glorified,' for it is a part

of glory. You cannot imagine God can err in judgment ; and justi-

fication is an act of judgment, as condemnation is ; he deemetli and

accounteth none just but those who are really changed. There is

sententia ler/is and senientia judicis, the sentence of the law and the

sentence of the judge ; the sentence of the law is justification constitu-

tive, the sentence of the judge is justification declarative.

2. How much God is concerned to right himself, the honour of his

providence, and the truth of his word, against such as flatter themselves

in their sins : Deut. xxix. 19, 20, ' And it come to pass when he heareth

the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall

have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add

drunkenness to thirst : the Lord will not spare him, but then the anger

of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the

curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord

shall blot out his name from under heaven.' When men excuse or

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extenuate tlie greatest sins, and the danger of them, when they think

light of them, or presume of impunity, God is concerned to vindicate

himself.

Doct 2. It should deter us from wilful and heinous sins to think of

the wrath of God that shall come upon those that live in them.

First, It is a powerful motive ; for God's wrath is very terrible. It

is God's anger makes ns truly miserable, and not man's. God is our

supreme Judge, and God liveth for ever. Man's anger is finite and

limited : Heb. x. 31, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the

living God.' The great and mighty men are afraid of this : Eev. vi.

15-17, ' The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men,

and the chief captains, and the mighty men, shall hide themselves in

dens, and in the rocks of the mountains ; and say to the mountains and

rocks. Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the

throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb : for the great day of his wrath

is come, and who shall be able to stand ? ' and the thing itself showeth

it. Consider —

1. The intension of this wrath. It is compared to a ' consuming

fire,' Heb. xii. 29. It is a fire that burnetii, not only to the ground or

the surface of the earth, but to the lowest hell: Deut. xxxii. 22, 'For

a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell ; '

that should not only manifest itself by visible judgments in the world,

but invisible and unknown judgments in the world to come. There is

often a standing out against God by our obstinacy and rebellion ; but

there is no standing before him when his anger is kindled but a little.

It can not only destroy the body, and those bodily things which gratify

it, but it can light upon the conscience and the souls of men. Here if

but a spark of his wrath light upon the conscience, what a burden are

men to themselves?

2. As to extension ; the wrath of God compriseth all those evils

which are the fruit of sin, be they bodily or spiritual, in life or death, or

after death. It is said, Deut. xxix. 21, ' The Lord shall separate him

unto evil ; ' ver. 27, ' The anger of the Lord was kindled against this

land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book.' The

book of the law is full of curses to the sinner ; it hath a mouth to speak

terrible things. But, Deut. xxviii. 61, 'And also every sickness, and

every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will

the Lord bring upon thee until thou be destroyed.' What is written

or unwritten, revealed in the word or dispensed in providences, by way

of plague or punishment, that is included in the wrath of God.

3. For duration ; the wrath of God ' abideth ' on the impenitent,

John iii. 3G, and that not for a while, but ' for ever.' We despise God

who is an infinite good, and forsake eternal happiness for a little tem-

poral delight ; and therefore the punishment is eternal. A wound may

be received in an instant that is never healed. A man may suddenly

slip into a pit out of which he shall never recover ; he may be in a

moment bound with a chain that shall never be loosed. Now can we

remain in carnal security whilst this wrath of God hangeth over our

heads ?

Secondly, It is a kindly motive. That is a question whether it be

so or no, therefore let us state the matter.

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1. We are principally to avoid sin as sin and as displeasing to God:

Gen, xxxix. 9, ' How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against

God? ' If we see not the evil of sin in itself as well as in the effects,

we may be tempted to think God is unjust in over-punishing it. And

true repentance lieth in hating sin as sin, for the evil that is in it as

well as after it, as it is a repugnancy to God's will, or a transgression

of his law,

2. We must abstain from it, as it will bring down wrath and judg-

ment upon us. So God urgeth this argument, Ezek. xviii. 30, ' Repent,

and turn yourselves from all your transgressions ; so iniquity shall not

be your ruin.' Not only our obligations to God should hold us to our

duty, but our fear of his dreadful displeasure.

3. The p<xna damni, to fear the punishment of loss, is out of ques-

tion. Timor separaiionis a Deo itiduditui' in charitate — A man can-

not love God and not fear the loss of his favour. To a gracious heart

this is more grievous than all the fire and brimstone of hell. The soul

that placeth its happiness in acceptance with God, and the enjoyment

of God, is afraid to lose him : 2 Cor. v. 8, ' We are confident, I say,

and willing, rather to be absent from the body, and present with the

Lord ; ' 1 Cor, ix. 27, ' Lest that by any means, when I have preached

to others, I myself should be a castaway.'

4. The poe7ia sensus, the punishment of sense, is necessary also to

quicken men to their duty, and to guard their love, and to show that

God doth not make little reckoning of sin ; for, 2 Cor. v. 11, 'Know-

ing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men," This is necessary in

case of great deadness and numbness of conscience, and especially when

a man is apt to miscarry by boisterous temptations, such as great fears

and passionate and pleasing lusts. Fears: Luke xii. 4, 5, 'Be not

afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that

they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear : Fear

him which, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell ; yea, I

say unto you, Fear him.' As one nail driveth out another, so the fear

of God driveth out the fear of men and pleasing lusts : Rom. viii. 13,

' If you live after the flesh, ye shall die.'

5. The effect which it must produce is not such a fear as driveth us

from God, but bringeth us to him ; not torment, and perplexity, and

despairing anguish (1 John iv. 18, ' Fear hath torment '), but flight

and caution. We ought to represent it as a great evil, from whence

we must fly by faith and repentance : Mat. iii. 7, ' Who hath warned

you to flee from the wrath to come ?' and Heb. vi. 18 ; to quicken us

in our flight to Christ, and taking sanctuary at the grace of the gospel ;

and to engage us to more thankfulness for our deliverance by Christ :

1 Thes. i. 10, ' And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised

from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come ; '

and so keep at a distance from those things that may bring the wratli

of God upon us.

6. Punishments on others are for our warning. When God's judg-

ments are upon others for sin, his hand is to be observed with great

reverence; as David: Ps. cxix. 119, 120, 'Thou puttest away all the

wicked of the earth like dross : my flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and

I am afraid of thy judgments.' Natui-alists say a lion will tremble to

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see a dog beaten before him : Ps. Hi. G, ' The righteous shall see, and

fear, aud shall laugh at him.' It is observable in the text, he doth

not say the wrath of God shall come upon you, but upon ' the children

of disobedience;' for he speaketh to the Ephesians as believers, or

persons justified and sanctified. And it teacheth us that the dreadful

wrath of God, that lighteth on reprobates, is for our warning. Tliough

we do not look upon it as the portion of our cup, yet we nmst look U[)on

it as dehiium ijeccaii, as an evil that God doth inflict for such sins ;

therefore that sin ought to be shunned by the saints. God scourgeth

and punisheth the wicked in our sight, that the regenerate may make

use of their experience, and by their dying horrors, when they come

to feel the effects of these sins, may tremble the more, and abhor those

sins which are so displeasing to God.

Use. To teach us in what rank to place principles of obedience.

There are several principles by which men are acted and influenced.

1. Some are false and rotten; as custom : Zech. vii. 3, 'As I have

done these so many years.' Vainglory : ' To be seen of men,' Mat.

vi. 1. Rapine: Mat. xxiii. 14, ' To devour widows' houses.' Envy:

Phil. i. 15, IG, ' Some preach Christ out of envy and strife, and some

also out of good will : the one preach Christ out of contention, not

sincerely.'

2. Some are more tolerable ; as the hope of temporal mercies : Hosea

vii. 14, ' Tliey have not cried unto me with their hearts when they

howled upon their bed : they assemble themselves for corn and wine.'

Fear of temporal judgments : Isa. Iviii. 5, ' Is it such a fast that I have

chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul ? is it to bow down his head

as a bulrusli, to spread sackcloth and ashes under him ? Wilt thou

call this a fast, and an acceptable day unto the Lord ? ' Jer. ii. 2G, 'As

the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed ; '

frightened into a little religiousness, when death is at their backs : Ps.

Ixxviii. 34, ' When he slew them, then they sought him, and they re-

turned and inquired early after God.' To this rank 1 reckon also fear

of hell, when it is alone. They shall be damned ; all their duties are

a sin-offering, a sleepy sop to appease a guilty conscience ; all their

repentance is but attrition, not contrition.

3. Some are very good and sound ; as when duties are done out of

obedience to God, ujkju the urgings of an enlightened conscience, with-

out the bent of a renewed heart ; for a regenerate man obeyeth not

only as enjoined, but inclined. The principle is sound in the other,

but the heart is not fitted. When a man considereth himself as a

creature bound to obey his creator, whether willingly or unwillingly,

he must do it : 1 Cor. ix. IG, 17, ' For though I preach the gospel,'l

have nothing to glory of ; for necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto

me if I ])reach not the gospel : for if I do this thing willingly, I have

a reward ; but if against my will, a dispensation of the gos])el is com-

mitted to me.' There is a bond of duty lying upon us. But now it

is better when it is enlarged and fitted by grace : Luke i. 74, 75, ' That

he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of

our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteous-

ness before him all our days ; ' Heb. viii. 10, ' I will put my laws into

their mind, and write them upon their hearts ; ' Ps. xl. 8, ' Thy law is

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in ray heart.' So fear of hell : ' Destruction from God was a terror to

me,' Job xxxi. 23. Hope of heaven : Heb. xi. 26, ' He had respect to

the recompense of reward.' Their state of happiness is a state of like-

ness to God. These principles with others do well. So also thankful-

ness and love to God : Kom. xii. 1, ' Present your bodies a living

sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service ; '

Titus ii, 11, ' The grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men,

hath appeared,' &g. ; 1 John iv. 19, ' We love him, because he first

loved us.' The glory of God : 1 Cor. x. 31, ' Whether ye eat, or drink,

or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' Love to the work for

the work's sake, when holiness hath our very hearts : Ps. cxix. 140,

\* Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it.' And then —

4. Some are rare and excellent ; as when we love God not only for

his benignity, but holiness, and eye our reward for his sake, and love

the glory of God above our own happiness, and can subordinate the

happy part of our eternal estate to his glory : Kom. ix. 3, ' For I could

wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren and

kinsmen according to the flesh.' Now we are brought from one prin-

ciple to another, from rotten to tolerable, from tolerable to sound, from

sound to rare and excellent.

Doct. 3. That their condition is of all most miserable who are not

only sinners, but stubborn and obstinate in their sin. The wrath of

God cometh on the children of disobedience.

1. Who are the disobedient ? It may be said of two sorts — First of

all, men in their natural condition with respect to the law : Rom. viii.

7, ' The carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to

the law of God, neither indeed can be.' And, secondly, of those that

refuse the gospel : 2 Thes. i. 8, ' In flaming fire, taking vengeance on

them that know not God, and obey not the gospel ; ' 1 Peter iv. 17,

' What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel ? ' viz.,

those that will not submit themselves to God, or be persuaded to for-

sake their sins.

2. Now as to tlie disobedient sinners — (1.) They are slaves to sin :

Titus iii. 3, 'We were sometime foolish, disobedient, serving divers

lusts.' They do what their lusts bid them, are at the whistle of a

temptation ; but all the reasons in the world shall not persuade them

to do what God commandeth them. (2.) They are of the devil's

party : Eph. ii. 2, ' According to the prince of the power of the air, the

spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.' (3.) They

are rebels to God : Job xxiv. 13, ' They are of those that rebel against

the light ; they know not the ways thereof, they abide not in the paths

thereof.' They have light enough to condemn their practices, but yet

they live in them: 'Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge?'

Ps. liii. 4. Tiieir light hath no authority to bind them to their duty,

'but rather irritateth their corru{)tions : ' They are a very f roward gene-

ration, children in v»'hom is no faith,' Deut. xxxii. 20.

Use. Well, then, let us be none of these. A man may err and

■straggle out of the way through ignorance, incogitancy, or being over-

come by the violent incursion of a temptation, but let us have a care

of being children of disobedience. When we wander out of the way

of our duty, let us look to God's word for direction in our way, and

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follow the guidance of it ; as the wise men, that look a long journey to

see Christ, followed the star that went before them, till it brought them

to the house where Christ was, Mat. ii. 9, 10. [See this more largely

handled in the next sermon.]

SERMON VII.

Be not ye tlierefore partakers luitJi them. — Eph. v. 7.

We have handled in the 6th verse —

1. A caution, ' Let no man deceive you with vain words.'

2. A denunciation, ' For these things' sake the wrath of God cometh

upon the children of disobedience,'

Now I come to —

3. A dissuasion ; this is in the text, and is inferred out of the former

verse ; where we have —

[1.] The evil dissuaded from, avfi/xero-xot avrcov, ' Be not partakers

Avith them,' that is, do not join with them in their evil ways, by com-

mitting these and the like sins.

[2.] The reason, ' Therefore ; ' that is, because the wrath of God

cometh upon the children of disobedience, do not join in their sins,,

that you may not be involved in their punishment ; as Rev. xviii. 4,

\* Be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.'

Doct. The dreadful estate of the children of disobedience should keep

us from joining with them in their evil ways.

Here let me show you — (1.) Who are children of disobedience ; (2.)

The misery of their condition ; (3.) Why this should deter us from

being partakers with them.

I. Who are children of disobedience,

1. Tho.se who are not only sinners, but stubborn, obstinate, and

ignorant sinners ; such as are prone to all evil, and are not only

indisposed, but aver.se from all good. Both parts of the character

must be minded. They presently do what lust biddeth them, and are

at the beck of a temptation, but all the reasons in the world shall not

persuade them to do what God commandeth them. They are as wax

to Satan, but as a stone to God. They find an irresistible force in

temptations: Prov. vii. 21, 22, 'With her much fair speech she

caused him to yield ; with the flattery of her lips she forced him. He

goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a

fool to the correction of the stocks.' But as to good, they are not only

weak and indisposed, but cannot endure to be subject to God. The

more holy any creature is, the more readily does he obey God : Ps.

ciii. 20, ' Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that

do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word.' But for

others, a small matter serveth their turn ; neither promises nor threaten-

ings will gain them to their duty.

2. This good is either to be determined by the light of nature or the-

light of the gospel.

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[1.] Wicked men are called ' children of disobedience/ because the7

rebel against the light of nature : Job xxiv. 13, ' They are of those

that rebel against the light ; they know not the way thereof, nor abide-

in the paths thereof.' They have light enough to condemn their

practices, yet live in them : Ps. liii. 4, ' Have the workers of iniquity

no knowledge ? ' Yes, they know better ; but the light hath no autho-

rity to bind them to their duty, it doth rather irritate their corruptions,

than break the force of them; and therefore justly are they left to.

destruction : Ps. ix. 17, ' The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all

the nations that forget God.' They do not improve the natural

impressions of God, and the distinction of good and evil that is writtea

upon their hearts ; they drown the voice of reason and conscience.

[2.] Those that have heard the gospel, and will not suffer themselves.

to be persuaded to embrace the blessed offers made therein, nor will

they give up themselves to the obedience of Christ. Their conditioa

is more terrible, for these are desperately sick, and refuse their remedy :

1 Peter iv. 17, ' For the time is come that judgment must begin at the-

house of God ; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of

them that obey not the gospel of God ? ' Their condition is more-

deplorable and desperate than that of other men ; for they will not

enter into the kingdom of God when invited thereunto, though they do-

so apparently need this healing dispensation. There are two things ia

the gospel — the doctrine of salvation, what God hath done on his part ;.

and the counsels of salvation, what we must do on our part.

(1.) The doctrine of salvation, or the rich preparations of grace

which God hath made for our recovery. On God's part, 'All things,

are ready,' Mat. xxii. 4. He hath given his Son to die for us, and to

be the foundation of that new and better covenant wherein pardon and

life are offered to us. But this is coldly entertained by many ; either

they do not consider it : Mat. xxii. 5, ' They made light of it ; ' or they

do not believe it : 1 Cor. ii. 14, ' For the natural man receiveth not

the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him ; neither

can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned ; ' or they

do not apply and improve this blessed offer, that it may be ' the gospel

of our salvation,' Eph. i. 13. There is not a cordial assent or lodging:

the truth in the soul : ' My word hath no place in you,' John viii. 37.

Whatever general profession there is made of believing this doctrine,

there is no room for it in their hearts, they believe it not heartily so-

as to affect it, and so as to build upon it for the saving of their souls.

It is not received by sound evidence, as is seen by the little influence

it hath upon them, by the doubts and questionings that frequently arise

in their minds whenever they are serious ; by their hatred of those that

seriously embrace this truth, by the scorn they cast upon those that

improve it to a holy conversation and godliness. Alas! generally it

is received in the christian world, as it was said of the reports about-

Christ's resurrection, as an idle tale or vain dream : Luke xxiv.

11, ' And their words seemed unto them as idle tales, and they believed

them not.' And the doctrines of Christ, heaven, and hell, and judgment

to come are made matter of scoffing and mockage : 2 Peter iii.

3, ' Knowing this, that there shall come in the last days scoffers,

walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his

cominir ? ' and the root of men's disobedience is unbelief.

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(2.) The counsels of salvation, or what we must do on our part, that

we may partake of the righteousness and Spirit of Christ : Luke vii.

30, ' But the pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against

themselves.' There is the counsel which God giveth us, if we will have

sin pardoned and be eternally happy. Many look to what he hath done

for us ; but they do not seriously consider what he hath required of

us. We are to obey tlie counsels of the gosj)el, as well as to believe

the doctrines of the gospel. Now what hath God required ?

(1st.) That we should believe in Christ as the redeemer of the world,

with such a faith as may make him precious to us, and value his grace

above all the world : 1 Peter ii. 7, 8, ' Unto you therefore which believe

he is precious : but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the

builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone

of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the

word, being disobedient, whereunto they were also appointed.' The

iipostle divideth the hearers of the gospel into believers and disobed-

ient ; and there he showeth what Christ is to believers, ' precious,' as

the alone refuge and sanctuary of distressed souls, who are ever

hungering and thirsting after Christ, and more of his renewing and re-

covering grace. The other party are the disobedient, and to them he

is ' a stone of stumbling,' with allusion to them that travel by land,

and ' a rock of offence,' with respect to them that travel by sea. They

are loose and careless in this matter (we do not speak of every disobed-

ience, but of wilful disobedience), they are ' a froward generation,' Deut.

xxxii. 20. Preach and say what we will, it moveth them not ; teach

them their duty, warn them of their danger, all is to no purpose ; they

still reject Christ, and despise his benefits, and refuse to take on them

his yoke, or embrace the noble and heavenly life. To the serious and

broken-hearted, he is their life, light, food, strength, righteousness, and

all ; but to others a fancy, or nothing. Believing in Christ is God's

great command : 1 John iii. 23, ' And this is his commandment, that

we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.' There-

fore it is called 'the obedience of faith ; ' Rom i. 5, 'Made known to

all nations by the obedience of faith,' Pom xvi. 26 ; 'And bringing

into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,' 2 Cor. x. 4.

But the rebellious world little valueth God's authority ; they are so

addicted to ])altry vanities, and their own will and lusts, that they

slight the offered Saviour, and all the grace he tendereth to them.

(2d.) Pepentance is another part of the counsel given to us. Christ

told his disciples what they should do to perform their charge : Lidce

xxiv. 47, ' And that repentance and remission of sins should be

preached in his name among all nations.' And the apostles ])ressed it

on all that would enter into the gospel kingdom : Acts ii. 38, ' And

Peter said unto them, Pepent, and be baptized every one of )'ou in the

name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins ;' Acts iii. 19, ' Pepent,

that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall

come from the presence of the Lord.' Now repentance implielh an

hearty detestation and renunciation of our former ways, whereby we

have offended God, and a serious dedication of ourselves to his use

and service. Now many regard not this, and though they hear their

personal sins reproved, and the curses of the law denounced against

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them, yet the}^ bold on their course still, and cannot be persuaded to

leave' those sins ; and when God would heal them, they will not be

liealed, but are wholly led by their corrupt affections, and will not be

persuaded to abandon their bewitching lusts : 2 Chron. xxx. 8, ' Now

be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto

the Lord ; ' (Hebr. Give your hand unto the Lord). We press men

to return, and not keep God out of his right any longer ; but we do

ijut water a rock, and seek to mollify a flint, that yieldetli not ; nor will

they strike hands with God. We cannot bring it to a bargain or

thorough conclusion, so as to lay down the buckler, and say, ' Lord,

what wilt thou have me to do ? ' Acts ix. 6.

{3d.) New obedience. This is part of the counsel of God to you if

you would be saved : Heb. v. 9, ' He is the author of eternal salvation

to them that obey him ;' Isa. i. 19, ' If ye be willing and obedient, ye

f^hall eat the good of the land.' And grace teacheth us, Titus \_ii.

12, 'That, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live

soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.' We should be

sober as to the government of ourselves, righteous as to our carriage to

our neighbour, godly as to the Lord himself, not defrauding him of his

due worship, internal and external, love, trust, deliglit, reverence,

daily commerce with him in company and alone. Though we persuade

these things by the strongest and most cogent arguments, yet still

there are some that will be intemperate, incontinent, that will iiot live

soberly ; christians that will not live soberly, that cannot bridle the

desires of the flesh ; unrighteous christians, that will not make con-

science of giving everyone their due ; and ungodly persons that forget

God days without number. Though much of this duty be evident by

natural light, and necessary to preserve a comely order in human

society, yet neither restraints of conscience nor the laws of men or God

will keep them within the bounds of their duty ; but men will be dis-

obedient still, and run out into many excesses and disorders, without

all shame, especially when they have habituated themselves to some

€vil custom and practice : Jer. xiii. 23, ' Can the Ethiopian change

his skin, or the leopard his spots ? then may ye also do good, that are

accustomed to do evil.' Alas ! who is able then to preach away the

cup out of the drunkard's mouth, or wantonness out of the heart of

the unclean person ? Yea, to bring vain people to part with a iashion,

or a recreation, which hath often been a snare to them ? they are brought

under the power of these things, and cannot leave them. A child of

God may err and straggle out of his way through ignorance or incogi-

tancy, or be overcome and borne down through the violent incursion of

a temptation. It fareth with them as with the wise men who came a

long journey to seek Christ ; when they went out of the way, the star

left them, but they stayed not there till the star appeared to them

again. So God's people may straggle from their duty, but they do not

rest there. But the children of disobedience cannot cease from sin in

the several kinds wherein they are captivated: 2 Peter ii. 14, ' Having

€yes full of adultery, and cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable

souls ; an heart they have exercised with covetous practices : cursed

children, they have forsaken the right way.' It is their element, out

of which they cannot rest.

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3. This obslinacv and disobedience is aji^frravated —

[1.] From the person who is disobeyed. It is not our counsel, but

God's. To weary and grieve men who do entreat them to forsake tlieir

sins and seek after God, is ill, for they nuist give an account : Heb.

xiii. 17, 'Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your-

selves ; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account,

that they may do it with joy, and not with grief.' But that is not all:

Isa. vii. 13, 'Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye

weary my God also ? ' They rebel against God himself while they

shake ofi' his authority : Ps. xii. 4, ' Who have said. With our tongue

we will prevail ; our lips are our own, who is lord over us ? ' and

refuse to accept his gracious oflfeis: Heb. ii. 3, ' How shall we escape

if we neglect so great salvation?' It redounds to the contempt of

God, who hath provided such an excellent salvation for us in Christ.

You despise him that speaketh from heaven, as well as weary them

that speak on earth : Heb. xii. 25, ' See that ye refuse not him that

speaketh ; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth,

much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that

speaketh from heaven.'

[2.] From the manner of the persuasion, which is by the word and

Spirit. In the word there are the highest motives to allure, the

strongest arguments to persuade, the greatest terrors to scare men out

of their sins. For motives, God outbiddeth them that bid most for

your hearts ; he oflPereth you an eternal infinite happiness, both for

your bodies and souls. A little dreggy delight, profit, honour, or vain

pleasure is nothing to it ; it is not worthy to be compared with it. In

other cases we would take the best bargain ; here is life, and pleasure.

and honour, for evermore: Ps. xvi. 11, 'In thy presence is fulness of

joy ; and at thy right hand pleasures for evermore.' Here are the

strongest arguments to persuade God s authority : James iv. 12, ' Thei-e

is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy.' Christ's love : 2

Cor. V. 14, ' The love of Christ constiaineth us.' For terrors, God doth

not tell us of mean penalties, but of a pit without a bottom, a worm

that shall never die, a fire that shall never be quenched : Mark ix. 44,

'Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.' Is hell

a vain scarecrow, where the damned spirits are perpetually exercised

with a bitter remembrance of what is past, a sense of what is present,

and a fear of what is to come ? If all this will not work, what will

do ? Ps. Iviii. 4, 5, ' Their poison is like the poison of a serpent ; they

are like the deaf adder, that stopiieth her ear, which will not hearken

to the voice of charmei-s, charming never so wisely.' An allusion to

charming for the taming of serpents, which were used in those eastern

countries ; not to approve them, but to improve a vile practice. Men

will hold on their way, saj God what he will to the contrary. See the

words of the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xiii. 11, 'But the people would

not hear.' But this is not all. The motions of the Holy Spirit go

along with it : Acts vii. .51, ' Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost ; ' ye

stop him in his sanctifying work, and refuse the help that God offers,

which maketh it the more heinous.

[3.] From the plenty of offers. God hath called often and long :

Prov. xxix. 1, ' He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall

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vsuddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.' It is dangerous to

sliglit frequent warnings ; these are obdurate in their sins.

[4.] From the concomitant dispensations of providence. When our

obstinacy and resolved continuance in sin is not broken by afflictions ;

as Pharaoh was Pharaoh still from first to last. Ahaz had a brand set

upon him : 2Chron. xxviii. 22, ' And in the time of his distress did he

trespass yet more against the Lord ; this is that king Ahaz.' God may

break their backs by his judgments, but not their hearts : Prov. xxvii.

22, ' Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a

pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.' Spices bruised

and pounded are more fit for medicine, but these depart not from their

luxury, profaneness, and uncleanness, when they are not softened by

mercies : Isa. xxvi. 10, ' Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will

he not learn righteousness ; in the land of uprightness will he deal

unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.' God shall not

have their heart for all this ; they despise his goodness : Eom ii. 4.

' Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and

long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to

repentance ? '

4. This disobedience, the longer it is continued, the more it is

increased. There is a natural averseness from God. Take a man in

liis pure naturals, he hath nothing to incline him to God ; but the

longer we continue in it, we every day make ourselves seven times more

the children of hell. Still it increaseth till it come to the height of

senseless judicial hardness of heart : Zech. vii. 11, 12, ' But they refused

to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ear that

they should not hear ; yea, they have made their hearts as an adamant

stone, lest they should hear the law.' So still they grew more and

more disobedient.

II. The misery of their condition. It is either matter of sense or

matter of faith; of sight, because of present judgments, or foresight,

because of the threatenings of the word.

1. It is matter of sight, as God doth inflict remarkable judgments

on obstinate sinners in this life, to teach his children to beware of their

sins. These judgments are either spiritual or tempoi-al.

[1.] Spiritual. These men are in a miserable and voluntary servi-

tude both to sin and Satan ; and both are the basest masters that any-

one can have. To sin : Titus iii. 3, ' For we ourselves also were

sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and

pleasures.' They do all things which their lusts command, and

cannot by any reason be persuaded to shake off this yoke. The less

they feel this bondage in themselves, the more dangerous it is, and

the more they are obnoxious to it ; for then both will and mind

is oppressed, and they know no better things. They that are slaves

by force are not in so bad a condition as they that are slaves by consent,

that sell their souls, their religion, their God, their Christ, their happi-

ness, their all, for a little brutish satisfaction, and are so governed by

their carnal affections that they know not how to come out of this

thraldom, but suffer the beast to ride the man, and have gotten such

an habit and course of sinning, that they are wholly enslaved by these

brutish pleasures, and cannot help it. To Satan : The other master

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is the devil ; they are of liis party and confederacy : Eph. ii. 2,

' Wherein in times past ye walked accordinjj^ to the course of this

world, accor(lin<i^ to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that

worketh in the children of disobedience.' Their hearts are Satan's shop

and proper workhouse, where his weapons of defiance are formed

against God. They carry on a defensive war, shutting up their hearts

against all his invitations to repentance and offers of grace, so that

God can get no entrance there. An offensive war, as they do not only

despise his offers, but hate his ways. Thus God hangeth up some in

chains of darkness for a warning to the rest.

[2.] Temporal judgments ; for the wrath of God that cometh on the

children of disobedience is not to be confined to the other world;

much of it cometh upon them here ; as when it is said, Heb. xiii. 4,

' Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge ;' that is, punish, nofc

only eternally after this life if they repent not, but also temporally in

this life ; yea, though they may repent, as is evident in David, who,

though he repented, yet he suffered grievously for his adultery. If

God's own children will act the part of the children of disobedience,

they smart for it ; for this is necessary to prevent the taint of their

example in the world. Well, but these judgments are not lightly to

be passed over, especially when they are executed before our eyes, and

God cometh near and close to us, for they are the holy and righteouw

dispensations of the wise God ; not things casual, indeterminate, or

done at random, nobody knoweth by whom, or to what end and purpose.

You cannot imagine that a holy, just, and wise God should have no

end and scope in what he doth. The scripture calleth often God's

judgments ' his arrows.' Now these are not shot; at rovers, as the man

that killed Ahab drew a bow at a venture. No ; God hath a certain

and steady aim at which he levelleth and directeth his shaft ; and God's

aim is our instruction. All his judgments are speaking lessons and real

warnings, that we may not involve ourselves in the same sins, and so in

the same punishment. They are appointed, not only for our admiration,

but our instruction : Zeph. iii. 7, ' I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou

wilt receive instruction.' God promiseth it to himself that the world will

not be so stupid as to run the hazard of the same fearful judgments

which have overtaken others : Deut. viii. 19, 20, \* I testify against you

this day, that you shall surely perish, as the nations which the Lord

destroyeth before your face, because ye would not be obedient unto the

voice of the Lord ; ' Deut. xix. 20, ' And those that remain shall hear,

and fear, and henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.'

When any malefactor was executed, and found out by God's justice,

he expected they should make this use of it : Deut. xvii. 13, ' And all

the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.'

2. It is matter of faith and foresight. And so by this Avrath of God

is meant eternal destruction, which cometh upon them for their dis-

obedience, which is a sin of the highest nature, and a chief cause of

their danmation. At death they feel the sad effects of it : 1 Peter iii.

19, 20, ' By which he also went and preached to the spirits in prison,

which were sometimes disobedient, Avhen once the long-suffering of God

waited in the days of Noah.' They had God's word then, for Noah

was ' a preacher of righteousness,' 2 Peter ii. 5. They had the Spirit

then, for God saith, Gen. vi. 3, ' My Spirit shall not always strive with

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man.' Well, then, these children of disobedience, when their body is

sent to the grave, the soul is sent to hell ; which the psalmist expres-

seth by being torn in pieces : Ps. 1. 22, \* Lest I tear you in pieces, and

there be none to deliver.' So for the day of judgment : 2 Thes. i. 7, 8,

' The Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty

angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God,

and obey not the gospel.' The great business then is to convince the

reprobates of their disobedience. They see then how many warnings

and invitations they have despised ; so many sermons, so many stings

in the conscience. Those that despise his richest grace now, how glad

would they be of one favourable look from Christ! It is not simplicity

that is their ruin, but obstinacy and impenitency in sin, for which they

shall have no excuse or cloak : John xv. 22, ' If I had not come and

spoken unto them, they had not had sin ; but now they have no cloak

for their sin.'

III. Why this should deter God's people from being partakers with

them. Here I shall inquire — (1.) Wliat it is to be partakers with

them ; (2.) Why God's wrath should deter us from this ?

1. What it is to be partakers with them.

[1.] There is a principal sense, and chiefly intended here, that we

should not follow their example. We are not so ready to anything as

to follow ill examples. Man is a ductile creature ; they had need be

well resolved for God and holiness who are not carried down the

common stream. The example of the multitude hath a great force to

pervert mankind : Isa. vi. 5, 'I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell

in the midst of a people of unclean lips,' Eph. ii. 2, 3, ' The spirit that

ruleth in the children of disobedience ; among whom also we all had

our conversation in time past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the

desires of the flesh, and of the mind ;' 1 Peter iv. 2, ' That he no longer

should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to

the will of God.' It doth at least take off the odiousness of sin, and

reconcile the hearts of men to it. It is hard to be singular, and not to

follow a multitude, though in an evil way ; for by common practice

things are authorised : Gal. ii. 13, ' Peter dissembled, and the other

Jews dissembled also with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was

carried away with their dissimulation.' Now lest this should prevail

with us, the apostle would have us consider the danger ; we involve our-

selves in the same punishment if we take not heed of the sin : ' Because

for these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of dis-

obedience ; be not ye therefore partakers with them.' God punisheth

the disobedience of his people very sharply.

[2.] There is a limited sense of the phrase : 1 Tim. v. 22, ' Neither

be partakers of other men's sins.' There it signifieth not committing

the same sins, but being accessory to the sins of others. Some are

ringleaders and chief actors in a sinful course ; others are assessors

and abettors. Now how many ways may we partake of the sins of

others ?

(1.) By counselling ; as Jonadab gave Amnon pernicious counsel

how to fulfil his carnal and incestuous desires, 2 Sam. xiii. 5.

(2.) By alluring and enticing ; as Prov. i. 10, ' My son, if sinners

entice thee, consent thou not.' Hear God persuading rather than a

carnal companion enticing.

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(3.) By consenting ; as Ahab did to Jezebel's plot to destroy Naboth,

1 Kin^^s. xxi. 19. His part was less in the sin than hers, therefore his

punishment was less than hers; the dogs licked his blood, but they

<levoured her body.

(4.) By applauding or flattery, and lessening the sin : Eom. i. 32,

\* They not only do these things, but have ])leasure in those that do

iheiu.' So some are glad when they can draw others to drunkenness, or

inflame others with lust.

(5.) Conniving, contrary to tlie duty of our place : 1 Sam. iii. 13, ' I

-will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he kuoweth, because

his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.' Their sin

was a sin of commission, but his a sin of omission, and so he came into

-a fellowship of the guilt. Now as we should not imitate the sin, and

^0 make it ours, so we should not be any way accessory to these sins,

and so be partakers in the guilt, as when we have power to hinder the

«in and do it not.

2. Why the wrath of God should deter us from this.

[1.] Because of the impartiality of God's judgment ; he will not only

punish heathen sinners without the pale, but christian sinners who

profess and own the true religion; for there is no acceptance of persons

Avith God : 1 Peter i. 17, ' And if ye call on the Father, who without

respect of persons judgeth according to every man's works.' There by

' person ' is meant either Jew or Greek, christian or pagan ; if there

he any difi'erence, it is worse with them, and wrath will come upon

them first, because they know more of God's mind, and have greater

■obligations and advantages of doing his will : Eom. ii. 9-11, ' Tribula-

tion and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew

first, and also of the gentile ; but glory, honour, and peace to every

man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the gentile ; for

there is no respect of persons with God.'

[2.] Because of the greatness of his mercy. That God will instruct

lis at their cost, and sealeth our instruction on their backs, scourgeth

them so sorely in our sight, is for a warning to us. And in this sense

is that fulfilled, ' Prov. xxi. 18, The wicked shall be a ransom for the

righteous, and the transgressors for the upright ; ' that is, God will

make them spectacles of his judgment, that he may make us objects

of his mercy. Now it is stupidness not to observe the instances of God's

•svratli on others, that we may not be made instances ourselves. David

trembled when he saw Uzzali smitten, 2 Sam. vi. 9 ; so should we when

God avengeth the quarrel of any commandment, as he frequently doth

in his providence : Eom. i. 18, ' For the wrath of God is revealed from

heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men ; ' and Heb.

ii. 2, ' For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every trans-

j^ression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;'

surely then it concerneth us to lay it to heart.

Use 1. To show us that we are not to be idle spectators of God's

judgments on others, but judicious observers and improvers of them.

Observe here — (1.) The use of observing God's providences on others ;

(2.) The manner of it.

First, The use and benefit of observing God's providences is great in

these particulars —

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1. To cure atheism : Ps, Iviii. 11, ' So that a man shall say, Verily

there is a reward for the righteous ; verily he is a God that judgetli

in the earth.' They that know what to think of God's providence

before shall find that God doth govern the affairs of the world as a

righteous judge. Were men greater students in providence, and did

they observe what judgments he bringeth to light every day, they

would soon see tliat God is not indifferent to good and evil, that he

taketh care of things below ; that the world is not governed by blind

chance, but with great wisdom, and justice, and equity. It is not only

the cavil of the wicked : Mai. ii. 17, ' Ye have wearied the Lord with

your words ; yet 3'e say, Wherein have we wearied him ? when ye say,

Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he

delightetli in them ; or, Where is the God of judgment? ' As if God

did approve of wicked men, and were not a just and impartial judge,

or there were no providence at all. But it is the temptation of the

godly : Ps. Ixxiii. 11-13, \* And they say. How doth God know ?

and is there knowledge in the Most High ? Behold, these are the

ungodly, who prosper in the world, they increase in riches. Verily, I

liave cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.'

The poet Claudian —

' Res hominum tanta caligine volvi

Aspiceret, Isetosque diu florere uocentes,

Vexarique pios.'

He much doubted-

But at length —

\* Curarunt superi terras ? an nuUus inesset

Rector ? et incerto fluerent mortalia casu ? '

\* Abstulit hunc tandem Ruffini pcena tumultum,

Absolvitque Deos.'

He would no more call in question God's providence and the just

government of the world.

2. To make us more cautious of sin, that we meddle not with it.

God's judgments feed our holy fear and awe of God, and so stir up

watchfulness and care for our own safety, that we may not fall into

like offences, or do anything that is displeasing unto God. We have

to do with a just and holy God, who we see is tender of his laws, a

God that will not be dallied with. When he beginneth to execute his

judgments against the children of disobedience, we should fear for our-

selves. When Uzzah was stricken, \* How shall I bring the ark of God

home to me?' saith David, 1 Chron. xiii. 12. Will not God be so

severe to me if I behave myself irreverently ? Certainly it is stupid

incogitancy when God puts such examples before our eyes and we are

not afiected with them. The Gibeonites were more wise and cautious,

Josh. ix. 3 ; when they saw the cities of Ai and Jericho destroyed,

and their inhabitants cut off by the sword, they did not expect the

coming of Joshua, but sent messengers to him, and by a wile struck

up a covenant before he came any farther. Or as that captain, when

two beiore him with their fifties were destroyed by fire, he fell upon

his knees before the prophet : 2 Kings i. 13, 14, ' And besought him,

and said unto him, man of God ! I pray thee let my life, and the

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life of these fifty, be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire-

down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties,

with their fifties ; therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight.'

But our stupidness and blindness is such that we are not moved with

these judgments so as to be more cautious : Prov. xxii. 3, 'A prudent

man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself ; but the simple pass on, and

are punished.'

3. To humble us, and make us more earnest in deprecating the

wrath of God, and suing out our pardon in Christ. We see sin goeth

not unpunished. Alas ! if God should enter into judgment with us,

who could stand ? Ps. cxliii. 2. When we see his judgments executed

upon others, every humble heart will sue out liis pardon. AVhat

miserable wretched creatures should we be if God should stir up all

his wrath against us !

4. To make us thankful for our mercies and deliverances by Christ,

that, when others are spectacles of his wrath, we should be monuments

of his mercy and grace. Were it not for the Lord's pardoning and

healing grace, we had been in as bad a condition as the worst : Rom.

xi. 22, ' Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God ; on them

which fell, severity ; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his

goodness ; otherwise also thou shalt be cut off.' When the Israelites

saw the Egyptians drowned in the waters, they saw the more reason ta

bless God for their own escape ; and Moses pens a song of thanksgiving,

Exod. XV. Our deserts are in part represented to us in the bitter

experience of others. It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not con-

demned with the world, and left to perish in our sins ; but that we see

by their sufferings what an evil and bitter thing sin is.

Secondly, The manner of making these observations. This is need-

ful to be stated, because men are apt to misapply providence, and to sit

as a coroner's inquest on the souls of their neighbours, and so rather

observe things to censure others than for their own caution. These

pervert the providences of God, and speak to the grief of others whom

God hath wounded. Shimei was one of this sort of men : 2 Sam. xvi.

7, 8, ' Come out, thou bloody man, thou man of Belial : the Lord

hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose

stead thou hast reigned, and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into-

the hand of thy son Absalom ; and behold, thou art taken in thy

mischief, because thou art a bloody man.' As if God had been call-

ing him to an account for the injuries done to Saul's house, and his

rebellion against his father-in-law was punished by the rebellion and

usurpation of his own son. Such bold glosses and comments do

men put upon providence, and make it speak their own language, and

so they pry into God's secrets without God's warrant and direction.

Eules concerning the observation of God's providences towards others.

1. Certain it is that judgments on others must be observed. Provi-

dence is a comment on the word, and therefore it is stupidness not to

take notice of it. They that will not observe God's hand shall feel it.

If we will not take the warning at a distance, and by others' smart and

rebuke, there is no way left but we ourselves must be taught by ex-

perience. He that will plunge himself into a bog or quagmire, where

others have miscarried before him, is doubly guilty of folly, because he

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neither feareth the threatening, nor will tahe warning by their example

and punishment. Observe we must : Amos vi. 2, ' Pass ye unto Calneh,

and see ; from thence go ye to Hamath the great ; then go down to

Gath of the Philistines : be they better than these kingdoms ? or their

border greater than your border ? '

2. This observation must be to a good end ; not to censure others,

that is malice ; or justify ourselves above them, that is pride and self-

conceit, condemned by our Lord Christ : Luke xiii. 2-5, ' And Jesus

answered and said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were

sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things ? I

tell you, Nay ; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or

those eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them :

think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem ?

I tell you, Nay ; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.'

3. In making the observation, we must have a care that we do not

make providence speak the language of our fancies.

[1.] There must be a due reasoning from the provocation to the

judgment, sed non e contra ; not judge of the wickedness of the per-

son by the judgments on the person ; as the barbarians at Melita

showed little reason and less charity in misconstruing the passage of

ihe viper that fastened on Paul's hand, that therefore 'he was a

murderer,' Acts xxviii. 4. The dispensations of God's providence are

commonly alike to good and bad, Eccles. ix. 1. By a sudden stroke

God may take off the godly as well as the wicked. Josiah died in the

same way that Ahab did, by an arrow in the battle, after being dis-

guised, 2 Chron. xxxv. 23 ; Jonathan died in the field by the hand of

the uncircumcised, as well as Saul, 1 Sam. xxxi. 1, 2. Did Simon

Magus break his neck ? so did good old Eli, 1 Sam. iv. 18. We can-

not conclude some great sin from the judgment. No ; our reasoning

must be the contrary : Prov. xxi. 12, ' The righteous man wisely con-

sidereth the house of the wicked, but God overthroweth the wicked

for their wickedness.'

[2.] Sometimes the sin is clearly written on the judgment, and the

name of the sin is engraven on the rod wherewith we are scourged :

Judges i. 7, 'As I have done, so God hath requited me.' There are

some remarkable circumstances wherein sin and judgment meet :

Obad. 15, 'As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee.' The judg-

ments have a signature and impress on them. The Israelites' children

were drowned in the waters ; so were Pharaoh, and all his nobility,

and men of war.

[3.] When the judgment treadetli on the heels of the sin, as Zimri

and Cosbi perished in the very act of their sin ; and Herod was

immediately smitten with lice when he usurped divine honour, Acts

xii. 22, 23.

[4.] When by the very means by which they hope to secure them-

selves, and so, whilst they think to avoid their danger, they hasten and

increase it. The builders of Babel, being afraid of scattering, Avould

build a stupendous tower for a place of retreat, Gen. xi. 4. God con-

founded their language, and by that means they were scattered. Jero-

boam, to secure the kingdom to his house, sets up calves at Dan and

Bethel, 1 Kings xii. 26-28. This became a snare to his house to cut

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it off, 1 Kings xiii. 34. The Philistines threatened Samson's wife to

burn her and her father's house with fire unless she would betray her

husband's secrets, Judj^es xiv. 15. She doth so, and Samson taking

his revenge ; they fulfilled what they threatened, Judges xv. 6. The

Jews being afraid lest the Romans would take jealousy of the people's

following of Christ, consult to kill him, John xi. 48 ; and for that

reason wrath came on them to the uttermost. Zedekiah disobeyed

God for fear of mockage, Jer. xxxviii. 19-22 ; and the Chaldeans,

when they had taken the city, put out his eyes, Jer. xxxix. 7. Thus

they readily fall into those evils they would most gladly escape. Now

it is much for the instruction of the world that these things should be

noted.

[5.] When they fall l)y those means by which they seek to entrap

others: Ps. ix. 15, 16, ' The heathens are sunk down in the pit which

they made, in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The

Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth ; the wicked is

snared in the work of his own hand. Higgaion, Selah.'

[6.] When the word, Kara pi^rov, in the express letter, is made good

on wicked men : Hosea vii. 12, ' I will chastise them, as their congrega-

tion hath heard.' When the word doth fully take effect as it is laid

down, it is fully accomplished ; and the danger they would not believe

they are made to feel. Thus 'every morning he bringeth his judg-

ments to light,' Zeph. iii. 5.

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For ye were sometimes darJcness, hut noio ye are light in the Lord:

loalk as childi-en ofligJd. — Eph. v. 8.

The apostle having dissuaded them from foul practices, which would

be a blemish not only to christians, but heathens, he now exhorteth

them to walk suitably to their profession and that blessed estate into

which they were translated. Change of state calleth for a different

course of life. You were darkness, and if you had so continued, we

could look for nothing else from you than the works of darkness. But

when you become light in the Lord, you must ' walk as children of the

light,' as those that know their way, and see their danger, if they go

amiss : ' For ye were sometimes darkness,' &c.

In the words we have — (1.) An antecedent ; (2.) A consequent, or

an argument and an inference.

First, The antecedent, or argument, is taken from their present

compared with their past estate, what they are with what they were.

Formerly they were heathens, and did as other heathens do, but they

were now become christians ; and if christians, they should live chris-

tianly. Both estates are spoken of in the abstract, ' darkness ' and

' light ; ' scclus pro scelerati. If we call a wicked man wickedness it-

self, we say more than if we only said that he were a naughty or wicked

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person. To express the extreme misery of the carnal state, ' Ye were

darkness ; ' and the exceeding happiness of the renewed estate, ' Ye are

light/

1, The apostle representeth their past estate, ' Ye were sometimes

darkness.' But doth he do well to nphraid them with their former

condition ? I answer — He doth not upbraid, but exhort. There is a

difference between envious exprobration and a christian exhortation.

Upbraiding is a remembering the sins of others committed before con-

version, with a purpose to reproach and shame them ; a practice usual

among base spirits, whose eye is evil, because God's hand is good.

Christ representeth it in the practice of the elder brother : Luke xv.

30, ' This thy son hath devoured thy living with harlots.' This is

sometimes done by the profane, who would fain represent others as

bad as themselves, that their own practices may be less odious, because

more common ; or else in carnal professors, who would shine alone,

and therefore envy the reputation of religion to others, yea, begrudge

the divine grace vouchsafed to them. But a christian exhortation is

a thing quite different ; it is a putting others in mind of their former

condition, to stir them up to more zeal and thankfulness. To re-

member it by way of exprobration is unlawful ; it is to rake in the filth

which God hath covered : Ps. xxxii. 1, ' Blessed is he whose trans-

gression is forgiven, whose sin is covered ; ' a revoking as much as in

us lieth God's grant of grace to them. Ananias objecteth against Paul

his former practices, not knowing his change. Acts ix. 13-15. Then

Ananias answered, ' Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much

evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem. But the Lord said unto

him, Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me.' Satan is called

a slanderer, though most of his allegations against the saints are true,

because he accuseth them of what God hath pardoned. But enough

of this.

2. Their present estate, ' Ye are light in the Lord.' Where —

[1.] The grace received, ' Ye are light.'

[2.] The author of it, ' In the Lord.'

[1.] The grace received, 'Ye are light;' that is, filled with the

liglit of wisdom and holiness. No question the expression heightens

the sense ; to be enlightened is a great thing in itself, but he speaketh of

some eminent and glorious privilege bestowed upon us : ' Ye are light.'

But can it be used of any mere man liable to such imperfections ?

(1.) It noteth not their perfection so much as the perfection of the

dispensation they are under. Not their perfection, as if there were no

darkness in them at all, but the clearness of the gospel which then

sinned brightly to them. There is a difference between the gospel and

believers ; the gospel is a perfect light, but we do but imperfectly

receive it. Compare two places : 1 John ii. 8, ' The darkness is past,

and the true light now shineth.' This I understand of the gospel,

which was then set afoot, as the sun risen and shining in our horizon.

The other place is Eom. xiii. 12, \* The night is far spent, and the day

is at hand.' Not wholly gone, but pretty well over ; day not altogether

come, but it is at hand. This I understand of a christian in his mixed

and imperfect state.

(2.) It noteth some good measure and degree of participation, but

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not complete fruitiou. Participation it noteth, for otherwise it could

not be said tliat we are not only enlightened, but light itself ; not com-

plete fruition, lor those that are said to be ' light iu the Lord' are pre-

sently called ' children of the light ; ' which doth somewhat abate of

the expression.

(3.) It noteth that we have received grace, not only for ourselves,

but for the good of others. He that is enlightened receiveth a benefit

for himself ; but he that is hght is to shine forth to direct others :

Phil. ii. 15, 'Shining as lights in the world ;' and Mat. v. 16, ' Let

your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,

and glorify your Father which is in heaven.'

[2.] The author of this grace, ' In the Lord ; ' that is, Christ ; for

there is, but 'one Lord,' as well as 'one God and Father of all,' Eph.

iv. 5, 6 ; and whatever good we have, we have it from Christ and in

Christ.

The light is said to be in him, and to come from him.

(1.) In opposition to Satan, who is the prince of darkness. The

devils are called \* The rulers of the darkness of this world,' Eph. vi.

12 ; and their kingdom is a kingdom of darkness ; but Christ is a

fountain of light, and his kingdom the kingdom of light.

(2.) In subordination to God, God is light, and Christ is light.

Originally God is light, and in him is no darkness at all ; but deriva-

tively Christ as mediator is light: John viii. 12, 'I am the light of

the world ; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall

have the light of life.' The Father is a light to whom no man can

approach, and before whom the angels cover their faces ; but this light

is brought near to us by Christ : John iii. 19, ' Light is come into the

vs^orld.' It is more comfortable to us, as it shineth forth in the person

of the mediator, and so the better conveyed to us, he being one in our

nature.

But how is this communicated from the Lord ?

Ans. He enlighteneth by his word and Spirit. His word : 2 Cor.

iv, 4, ' Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image

of God, should shine unto them.' By his Spirit : Eph. i. 17, 'That the

God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you

the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.' The

Spirit of wisdom and revelation dolh open the eyes of their minds,

that so they may be light in the Lord.

Secondly, The consequent or inference. From their change of state

he inferreth a change of life. Therefore, before I come moi-e particu-

larly to discuss the force of this argument, let us a little see the

necessity or need of this exhortation. For some might argue, If they

be ' light in the Lord,' then what need is there to exhort them ' to

walk as children of the light ? ' Is it not all one as to say. If thou beest

a sun, shine as a sun ; if thou beest fire, burn as fire ? So some

argued in Augustin's time, as if believers had no need of exhortation,

because of the potency and inclination of grace. I answer —

1. There is a difference between natural agents and moral. Natural

agents, positis omnibus ad agendum r-equisitis, inanimate and unreason-

able creatures, follow the inclination of their natures or the tendency

of their principles of necessity ; but such as are endued with understand-

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ing work with a kind of liberty and choice. Fire bnrneth wliere it

ineeteth with matter combustible, but a reasonable creature needeth to

be exhorted to perform acts agreeable to his principle ; for in reasonable

creatures, though the inclination be necessary, the acts are voluntary ;

therefore though they have an inclination, they need to be quickened by

counsel and exhortation. Though it be in vain for us to bid the sun

shine, whether we will or no it will do so, if there be no impediment ;

yet it is not in vain to bid a reasonable creature to walk suitably to his

principles.

2. Exhortation is God's appointed means, necessary for us while we

are in our imperfect state. Sluggish nature is backward to good, and

we have much opposite corruption in us. Earth would be heaven,

grace would be glory, our way would be our country, if we could not

at all obey the flesh. In heaven the being of sin is abolished ; therefore

there will be no room for exhortation, there is no preaching there, no

calling upon men to serve God, no dissuasions from sin, no corruption

remaining in the saints, no liberty left unto them of hearkening to

temptations ; that liberty which they have as' reasonable creatures is

swallowed up by the amplitude of their love to God ; as the good

angels have a liberty which doth not consist in an indifferency to good

and evil, but in largeness of love to God, and a happy necessity of

doing that which is pleasing to him, and an impossibility of doing

otherwise.

Doct. That those who are called out of darkness to light have a great

obligation upon them to walk as children of light.

1. I shall open the two opposite states, 'darkness' and 'light.'

2. Show that there is a mighty change wrought in them that are

called out of the one into the other.

3. That it is good often to compare these two estates, and consider

what we are by nature, and what we are by grace.

4. If this change be wrought in us, it must be manifested by a suit-

able conversation.

I. Let me speak of the two opposite states, ' darkness' and ' light,'

and there show you that the carnal estate is an estate of darkness, and

the renewed state is a state of light.

1. The carnal estate is an estate of darkness. So the apostle telleth

the Ephesians, Ye were not only darksome, but o-voto?, darkness itself,

for the greater vehemency of the expression.

[1.] The darkness of the understanding is ignorance ; they are in-

capable of discerning between good and evil, know nothing of the

nature and will of the true God. These Ephesians were given to

curious arts, Acts xix. ; they were the flower of all Asia for curious

knowledge. But a people that lie in their sins, without the saving

knowledge of the gospel, are in great darkness. A drachm of sanctified

knowledge is better than all the curious arts in the world, and those

most lawful.

But you will say, Thus he spoke of them as heathens ; are all carnal

men to be accounted darkness? I answer — Yes; they are blind and

dark as to those things that relate to God and heaven. To God : Eph.

iv. 18, ' Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the

life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the

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blindness of their heart/ Whatever understanding and quickness of

judgment they have in other things, yet they are gross, brutish, and

wild in such things as appertain to God and their communion with

God. And as to heaven : 2 Peter i. 9, ' He that lacketh these things

is blind, and cannot see afar off.' ' These things,' that is, the graces of

the Spirit. There is a mist upon eternity, and a carnal eye cannot

look through it. His eyes are not anointed with spiritual eye-salve ;

he cannot see these things so as to take off his heart from his vain

pleasures.

But you will say. Many carnal men that live in the bosom of the

church are orthodox, have good opinions in religion, and great know-

ledge of the mysteries of salvation. I answer — But this knowledge is

neither accompanied with application nor affection to what they know.

First, Not with application. It is not a directive light, to show them

how to come out of their misery, or to guide their choice : Eom. i. 21,

' They became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was

darkened.' It doth not teach them how to love, and please, or trust in

God, as the heathens with their ro <yvoiarov deov. So it is with carnal

christians : 1 Cor. viii. 2, 3, ' And if any man think that he knoweth

anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any

man love God, the same is known of him.' Secondly, Nor persuasive,

and with affection, so as to change their hearts, so that they may seek

after God in Christ. It neither restraineth evil, nor constraineth to

that which is good. Light that is unable to discliarge its office, to

bridle corruptions, is but as darkness : Eom, i. 18, ' They withhold the

truth in unrighteousness ; ' like a prisoner in fetters. It may talk its

fill, but can do nothing. It urgetli not to good ; they are secure and

careless ; they are Christ's, but prepare not to do their master's will :

Luke xii. 47. It doth not overcome their prejudice against the holy

and heavenly life : 1 Cor. ii. 14, \* But the natural man receiveth not

the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him;

neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.\*

The name is prized, but the thing hated, Christ's offices and government.

Or else if there be any motion towards Christ, it is as their knowledge

is. If it be a sensible, awakening, practical knowledge that we have,

accordingly will our esteem of Christ be ; but if it be a superficial

speculative knowledge, either of sin or misery, or of Christ our reinedy,

our faith is opinionative and superficial ; we shall not value him as a

saviour indeed ; and therefore it is not talking by rote after otliers wliich

will excuse. There is a vain mind in every unconverted man, and a

dark understanding which cannot do its office. Now this is a miser-

able estate, either to be altogether ignorant, or to have but a speculative

traditional knowledge of the things of God ; either to have no knowledge,

or not that which is directive and persuasive. This breedeth doubt-

fulness: John xii. 35, 'Ho that walketh in darkness knoweth not

whither he goeth ; ' 1 John ii, 11, 'He that hateth his brother is in

darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth,

because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.' He wandereth in a maze

of uncertainties, not knowing whether he goeth right or wrong, whether

he be in the way that leadeth to heaven or hell ; he liveth by guess,

and knoweth not what to fear or hope for.

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[2.] There is downri'ojht and apparent wandering from God. The

Greek scholiast isaith Panl calleth darkness rov iv irXavr) ^lov, a life

spent in error ; for by their ignorance men run into all profaneness,

and become very slaves of sin. To walk in darkness is often put in

scripture for living in a course of sin : Prov. iv. 19, ' The way of the

wicked is as darkness.' He compares the course of the godly to a

growing light, ' that shines more and more unto the perfect day,' ver.

18 ; and the course of the wicked to a growing darkness, till it comes

to the dead of the night.

[3.] Eternal misery is the issue and close of it, called \* outer dark-

ness,' Mat. XXV. 30 ; and 2 Peter ii. 17, ' To whom the mist of dark-

ness is reserved for ever ; ' because the sunshine of God's presence

never cometh there ; they are for ever separated from the face of God,

and presence and communion with him. Well, then, you see one

darkness maketh way for anotlier — the darkness of ignorance for the

darkness of sin, and both for everlasting darkness.

2. The renewed estate is an estate of light. Light is a quality pure

and unmixed, and implieth both knowledge, holiness, and happi-

ness. Knowledge, as it discovereth all things ; holiness, as it is pure,

and can shine on the filthiest dunghill without any stain ; felicity, a»

it is the smile of heaven upon the earth. Light is pleasant. Surely

this ought to be' the more prized by us, because originally man's life is

light : John i. 4, ' And the life was the light of men.' Man had a

reasonable soul, but it is in a great measure eclipsed by sin. Now, to

restore us, Christ's doctrine, which bringeth life, is also light, and the

new man begins in light : Col. iii. 10, \* And have put on the new

man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that

created liim.' When once we receive the saving knowledge of saving

truth, then all other things follow which belong to the spiritual life;

such truth for the object, such manner of apprehension for the kind

as may be saving. This introduceth and leadeth on other things.

Because I shall have occasion to speak of it afterwards, I shall say the

less now ; only show you how great a l)lessing divine illumination is.

Common knowledge of divine things is an excellent gift, though it be

cold and weak, and doth not warm the heart with love to the tiling

known ; but the grace of illumination is much more excellent to

further the glory of God. The bare gift is used to the interest of the

flesh, for fame and esteem in the world: 1 Cor. viii. 1, 'We know that

we all have knowledge : knowledge pufifeth up, but charity edifieth.\*

The gift, if it be single and alone, puffeth us up with a lofty conceit

and vain ostentation of ourselves and a disdain of others ; but the grace

keepeth us humble, for the more we know affectively, the more we see

our defects, not in knowledge only, but in holiness. And the grace is

wrought in us by the special and sanctifying influence of the Holy

Ghost, and is not only knowledge, but wisdom, and maketh us serious,

operative, and full of good fruits : James iii. 17, ' But the wisdom that

is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be

entreated; full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and with-

out hypocrisy ; ' begetting earnest desires and endeavours after the

things known : John iv. 10, ' If thou knewest the gift of God, and who

it is tliat saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of

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him.' Now when our eyes are thus opened, and turned from darkness

to hght, we begin to be serious christians : Acts xxvi. 18, ' To open

their eyes, and turn them from darkness to liglit, and from the power

•of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an

inheritance among them wliich are sanctified by faith that is in me ; '

and carry ourselves as those that ai'e affected with their misery and

remedy. They talked before of sin as a thing of course, and were

wont to marvel why men kept such a deal of do about it ; but the case

is altered. God hath opened their eyes, and therefore they complain of

sin as the greatest bui'den, and would fain be rid of it at any rate.

They also seek after Christ as the only remedy ; nothing will satisfy

them but Christ : ' All things are dung and dross in comparison of the

excellency of the knowledge of him,' Phil. iii. 8. And they are resolved

to venture all with him and for him : Mat. xiii. 45, 46, \* The kingdom of

heaven is like unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls ; and when he

hath found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and

bought it.' Certainly then a great privilege it is when God doth

thus cure the blindness of our minds, and open and incline our hearts

to spiritual and heavenly things ; whether you consider —

[1.] The objects known are the highest and most important matters

in the world. The knowledge of the profoundest science is question-

less more than skill in some low and petty employments. As Themis-

tocles said. To know how to govern a city is more than how to play

upon a lute. But to have the saving knowledge of God and the life

to come is more than all the admired wisdom of the flesh, or all the

common learning of the world. Therefore how much are we bound

to praise God if we may be light in the Lord ! It is more than to

know how to govern kingdoms and commonwealths, and to do the

<ijreatest business upon earth. To know God, the first cause of all

things, Jesus Christ, who is the restorer of all things, and the Holy

Spirit, who cherisheth and preserveth all things, to know his heavenly

•operations, the nature and action of his several graces, this is the happi-

ness and glory of a man ; all other knowledge is a poor low thing to

this. Alas ! what are all the mysteries of nature to the mysteries of

godliness. To know our disease and remedy, danger and cure, our

work and end, what is to be believed and practised, what we shall en-

joy, and what we must do to obtain it, these are the things do most

concern us ; all other knowledge is but curious, and hath more of

pleasure than profit. To know our own affairs, and our greatest and

most necessary affairs, these are the things we should busy ourselves

about ; other knowledge may be well spared. To know our misery,

that we may prevent it ; our remedy, that we may look after it in time ;

our work, that we may perform it ; our end, that we may intend it,

and be encouraged by it, and what course we must take that we may

be everlastingly happy ; this is the greatest favour can be bestowed

upon us : we should beg it of God.

[2.] The manner of knowing. To see these things with clearness,

certainty, efficacy, and power. Now this is diversely expressed in scrip-

ture ; sometimes to know them ' as we ought to know them,' 1 Cor. viii.

2 ; \* To know the grace of God in truth,' Col. i. 6 ; to get a ' spiritual

discerning,' 1 Cor. ii. 14 ; to get not a sight only, but a taste, 1 Peter

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ii. 3. It is a sweeter knowledge than all learned men have who are

ungodly. Others may have more of the words and notions, but less of

the thing itself ; they have the sign, but true christians the thing

signified ; they break the shell, but others eat the kernel ; they dress

the meat, but others feed upon it and digest it ; they dig in the mines

of knowledge as negroes, but others have the gold. True christians take

up religion out of inspiration, but others out of opinion and tradition ;

they have a divine faith, whilst others have but human credulity ; they

may talk of what they hear and read from others, but these receive it

' not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much

assurance,' 1 Thes. i. 5. They are not only affected with the truths

they know, but transformed by them, and changed into the divine

nature. Now what a mercy is this, that when they might have gone

to hell as witless fools, as others do, God hath given them counsel in

their reins !

II. That there is a mighty change wrought in tliem who are called

out of one estate into the other. A great difference there is certainly

between the carnal and regenerate estate ; they differ as much as dark-

ness and light, as death and life, as the new man and the old : ' Ye

were sometimes darkness, but are now light in the Lord.' There is a

difference between them and themselves, and between them and others ;

both are of respect in this place. Not, They are darkness and ye are

light, but, ' Ye were sometimes darkness, but ye are now light in the

Lord ; ' because the apostle speaketh of the same men ; and to this

€nd it is spoken, that they may have no fellowship with evil ones, or be

partakers with them in works of darkness. Now both these are proved

by the same reasons.

1. Because they have a different principle ; the internal principle is

not alike in both. Umimquodque operatur secundum suam formam —

All things work according to their nature ; as fire ascendeth and water

descendeth ; fishes go to the water, and beasts keep on dry land ; it

is according to their nature, and that principle of life which they

have. The saints have a divine nature : 2 Peter i. 4, ' Whereby ye are

made partakers of the divine nature.' And the carnal are scarce men,

because they are governed by their sensitive appetite, and so come nearer

to the nature of beasts ; and so the one are led by the flesh, the other

by the Spirit, as is often observed in scripture. But you will say. There

is an old nature in God's children, flesh as well as spirit. I answer —

[1.] By concession there is indeed a diversity or contrariety of prin-

ciples : Gal. V. 17, ' For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the

spirit against the flesh ; and these are contrary one to the other.' These

two powers and j)rinciples are of contrary natures and tempers. By

the one they delight in the law of God : Eom. vii. 22, ' I delight in the

law of God after the inward man ; ' and avoid sin : 1 John iii. 9, ' Who-

soever is born of God doth not commit sin ; for his seed remaineth in

him : and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' Yet there is

corruption, which often opposeth and rebelleth against the new nature,

so that its operations are much hindered and obscured.

[2.] Though there be an opposite principle, and though it impede,

and hinder, and obscure the operations of the new nature, and the

inclination of it be weakened by the back bias of corruption, yet there

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is a prevalency of tlie better principle, which doth most usually discover

itself in our conversations. Frincipiata respondent suis principiis —

The constant effects declare the prevailing principle. As the children

of Israel brought under the Canaanites in the land of promise, and had

the chief sway of affairs there, so doth giace abate the power of corrup-

tion, and restrain its exorbitancies, that it doth not ordinarily break

out. The man is not what he was before : Gal. v. 24, ' They that are

Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.' They

have crucified, and do crucify it still in their desire and endeavours,

and gain more success against it. The work is not quite done, but it

is begun, and carried on with an intent to be finished. Already there

is enough done to bridle the corrupt nature, and to constitute a })laini

difference between them and others, who are wholly guided by the fletsh.

They are differenced from others by change of heart, from themselves

by a change of life.

2. As the internal principle of our operation is unlike, so the exter-

nal rule of our conversations are quite different, viz., the will of God

revealed in the word, which they study to know and obey : Eph. v. 10,

' Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord ; ' ver. 17, ' Be not unwise,

but understanding what the Avill of the Lord is ; ' Eom. xii. 2, ' That

ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of

God.'

III. That it is good often to compare those two estates, and to con-

sider what we are by nature and what we are by grace.

First, That we ought frequently to reflect on our former woful

estate. The apostle often directeth christians to look back : Eph. ii.

2, 3, ' Wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this

world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that

now worketh in the children of disobedience : among whom also we all

had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling

the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children

of wrath, even as others ;' Col. i. 21, 'And you that were sometimes

alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he

reconciled,' God appointed ordinances to this end among the Jews.

The passover to remember their bondage in Egypt ; and the parents

were obliged to interpret it to their children : Exod. xii. 26, 27, ' And

it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What

mean you by this service ? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the

Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel

in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.' So

the first-fruits : Deut. xxvi. 5, ' A Syrian ready to perish was my father,

and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and be-

came there a nation great, mighty, and populous.'

Reasons there are for this —

1. To magnify the riches of God's mercy in our deliverance from that

woful estate. We wonder at it more when we compare both together :

1 Peter ii. 9, ' But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy

nation, a peculiar people ; that ye should show forth the praises of him

who halh called you out of darkness into his marvellous light ; ' 1 Tim.

i. 13, ' Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious ;

but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief.'

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2. That we may admire liis power in the change : 1 Cor. vi. 11, 'And

such were some of you ; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but

ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our

God,' That ever our sins should be washed and cleansed : Isa. i. 18,

\* Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; and

though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'

3. To keep us humble : 1 Cor. xv. 9, ' For I am the least of the

apostles, and am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted

the church of God.' A man may be proud of spiritual enjoyments, so

far as he is unholy : 2 Cor. xii. 7, ' And lest I should be exalted above

measure through the abundance of revelations, there was given me a

thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be

exalted above measure.' Now, to take us down and to humble us, let

us remember the sin and misery we were once in when we knew it not.

God will do much to keep gracious souls humble as long as they live.

They were once as bad as the worst, and were children of wrath even

i\s others. Though God forgets their sins so as to forgive them, yet they

cannot forget them, but are humbled in the remembrance of them ; they

condemn themselves v/hen God justifieth them : Exek. xx. 34, ' Then

«hall ye remember your own ways, and all your doings wherein you have

been defiled ; and you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all

your evils that you have committed.' They set those sins befoi'e their

faces, which God hath cast behind his back ; not to breed a distrust of

God's mercy, but to humble their own souls. Though mercy hath

washed, and justified, and sanctified you, yet you were as bad as others ;

no poverty, beggary, and reproach in the world will be so humbling to

them as this.

4. It maketh us more compassionate to others, we having once as

blind a mind and as hard a heart as they • Titus iii. 2, 3, ' To speak

evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness

unto all men. For we ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient,

deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy,

hateful, and hating one another.' We had as bad natures as any, and

lay in the same puddle of corru})tion, were hewn out of the same rock,

and digged out of the same pit, and came into the world as naked and

destitute of grace as any others. Israel knew the heart of a stranger,

therefore they were to pity strangers : Dent. xxiv. 18, 19, ' Thou shalt

remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God

redeemed thee thence; therefore I command thee to do this thing.

When thou cuttest down thine harvest in the field, and hast forgot a

sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it ; it shall be for

the stranger, for the fatherless, and the widow ; that the Lord thy God

may bless thee in all the work of thy hands.'

5. It maketh us more watchful. A man that hath escaped a danger-

ous disease or surfeit is very careful from his own experience that he

doth not lapse into it again. Alas ! too much corruption still remain-

eth with us ; we still have flesh that fighteth against the Spirit, Gal. v.

17. Old lusts soon awaken at the knock of a temptation. Paul groaneth

sorely that so much of this carnal nature was left ; to find such rem-

nants of that odious sin, which cost us so dear, and had cost us dearer

if our Lord Jesus Christ had not paid our ransom. We were darkness;

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but alas ! how dark are we still ! how far from heaven ! how little do we

know, atid believe, and love ! We know but in part, and love God

but in part, and serve God with such constant weakness, and the old

working warring principle doth often get the advantage of us, and pro-

duce some actual sin ot thought, word, and deed, that we have need to

take heed to ourselves lest we be again brought under the captivity and

bondage of the law of sin. Shall we drink once more of the bitter waters ?

Josh. xxii. 17, ' Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we

are not cleansed unto this day, though there be a plague in the con-

gregation of the Lord ? '

G. It doth quicken us to greater fruitfulness for time to come. Was

I so zealous for sin, and shall I not do so much for God ? Kom. vi.

19, ' As ye have yielded your members servants unto uncleanness, and

to iniquity unto iniquity ; even so now yield your members servants to

righteousness unto holiness ; ' Acts xxvi. 11, ' Being exceeding mad

against them, I pei'secuted them even unto strange cities ; ' compared

with 2 Cor. v. 13, ' For whether we be beside ourselves, it is for God ;

or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.' Since we set out so late,

let us mend our pace : 1 Peter iv. 3, ' For the time past of our life may

suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles, when we walked in

lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abomi-

nable idolatries.'

7. It maketh our conversion more evident and sensible, and so

quickeneth us to thankfulness and praise. When we compare the two

extremes, darkness and light, nature and grace, it doth much hurt to

believers, in judging of their condition, to forget what they once were,

and not to consider what they now are. The comparing of these two,

what they were with what they now are, Avould make the change more

sensible and evident : 2 Cor. v. 17, \* Whosoever is in Christ is a new

creature ; old things are passed away, and all things are become new.'

Old things are passed away, and are passing away still. Our gradual

progress in holiness is more insensible, and therefore we may overlook

the mercy ; but the first work is more sensible, we may find a great

change in ourselves. All that belong to God may say, as the blind

man, John ix. 25, ' One thing i know, that whereas I was born blind,

I now see.' By comparing the two extremes they find they are not the

same men they were before. Once they had no delight in communion

with God, now it is a trouble to keep out of God's company. Nothing

was so tedious and burdensome as the duties of religion, now their

hearts are more agreeable to them, and they are sweeter to them than

their appointed food. Before they were slight and sluggish, now they

are hard at work for God. Before, they abandoned themselves to all

manner of carnalities, now they are troubled about the first risings and

bubbling up of sin ; the conscience which was stupid is made tender ;

the stream of their thoughts, desires, and endeavours run in another

channel ; their hearts are altered, life altered, speech altered. And by

comparing these extremes it is the ready way to interpret our condi-

tion. Men forget the estate they once were in, and the great change

which the Spirit of God hath wrought in them, and because such altera-

tions are not wrought in them continually, live in doubt and fear.

Look, as the forgetting our poverty and affliction maketh us undervalue

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a more plentiful condition, and those comforts which we should have

counted a wonderful mercy before ; or when we are recovered from a

sickness, and live in health, we forget the tediousness of sickness, and

are not thankful for the health which we enjoy; so we undervalue, or

overlook, or question the present state of grace, because we forget the

unfruitful works of darkness, or the evil disposition and practices of

our unregeneracy, and have not such comfortable apprehensions of the

mercy which God hath bestowed in our change. Time was when you

had little savour of the things of the Spirit, little mind to Christ and

holiness, and were wholly given up to the pleasures of the flesh, and

profits of the world ; but your minds and ways are changed, and you are

not the persons that you were, and that will help you to interpret your

condition before God.

8. It increaseth your confidence and hopes of eternal life : he that

could take us with all our faults, and love us, and pardon us, and heal

our natures, and reconcile us to himself, will he not give us eternal

life after we begin to obey him, and love him, and serve him in our

measure ? Kom. v. 9, 10, ' Much more then, being now justified by his

blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we

were enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son,

much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.' You can-

not be worse than you were at first.

9. It putteth an argument in your hands against sin : Eom. vi.

20, 21, ' For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from right-

eousness : what fruit had you then in those things whereof ye are now

ashamed ? ' and ver. 22, ' But now being made free from sin, and

become servants to God, you have your fruits unto holiness.' Shall a

servant of God walk as he did when he was a servant of sin ? Right-

eousness had no whit of your service, why should sin have any part of

your service now ? especially if you consider how little fruit, benefit,

or satisfaction your sins brought you in the time of enjoying them ;

but now having given over yourselves to the service of God, sanctifi-

cation must daily increase in you.

Secondly, We ought to remember what Ave were by nature, so as not

to deny what we are by grace : Rom. vi. 17, ' But God be thanked that

ye were the servants of sin ; but ye have obeyed from the heart the

form of doctrine which was delivered you.' Christ checketh Peter,

John xiii. 10, for not owning grace. Though his feet need to be

washed, God would not have us deny our renewed estate. Remember

your past estate for humiliation, not for your confusion. Remember

, old sins and old mercies. So David : Ps. xxv. 6, 7, \* Remember, O

Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindnesses ; for they have ever

been of old. Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgres-

sions : according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake,

Lord.' Not to tear open the wounds of an healed conscience, not to

terrify conscience, but admire mercy, and to ' love much, because much

is forgiven,' Luke vii. 47.

IV. This change must be manifested by a suitable conversation :

\* Walk as children of the light.' We have the same exhortation, Rom.

xiii. 12, 13, ' The night is far spent, the day is at hand ; let us there-

fore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of

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light. Let us walk honestly as in the da}'^, not in rioting and drunk-

enness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying ; '

1 Thes. V. 5-8, ' Ye are all the children of the light, and the children

of the day ; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let

us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober : for they that

sleep, sleep in the night ; and they that are drunken, are drunken in

the night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the

breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation.'

Children of the light may refer to the dispensation we are under, or the

grace we have received by it.

1. The dispensation we are under, as those that live in the clear-

ness of gospel light are children of the day. Ye are not of the night ;

walk as children of light, that have the light of the gospel, or

becoming that most holy religion which Christ hath taught us. (1.)

In the light all blemishes are soon discovered, and so our sins are

without excuse ; whereas people that have not the gospel, or not so

fully preached, are more excusable. Men might plead this, that they

knew no better ; but now they ' have no cloak for their sin,' John xv. 22.

Men have some cloak to hide the odiousness of sin from themselves

and others ; their ignorance, their infirmity ; yea, the Lord himself

doth pity men, considering their education, prejudices, temptations;

but the gospel holdeth out such convincing light as taketh away all

excuse from wicked sinners. (2.) As they are without sin, so without

shame, when they sin in the open light : Zeph. iii. 5, ' Every morning,

doth he bring his judgment to light; he faileth not, but the unjust

knoweth no shame.' While the light of nature is not violated, sin

breedeth a bashfulness and unconfidence ; but when men despise both

the light of nature and scripture, they grow impudent, and lose all

tenderness, and awakening of conscience, and outgrow the heart of a

man. (3.) Sins are more dangerous and deadly: John iii. 19, 'And

this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men

loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.' It is

an affront to the light that shineth to us, gives a double dye to our

sins, and so increases our punishment and condemnation.

2. The grace received by it. Now the children of light are those

who are enlightened by the Holy Spirit, have a new nature, and a sense

of the other world. Luke xvi, 8, the 'lord commended the unjust

steward, because he had done wisely ; for the children of this world

are wiser in their generation than the children of light.' Surely they

should watch and be sober, and plainly distinguish themselves from

the carnal world.

[1.] To show their thankfulness for the grace received : Luke i. 74,

75, ' That he would grant unto us that we, being delivered out of the

bands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and

righteousness before him all the days of our life.'

[2.] That they may not obstruct the new natiu'e put into them, and

liinder its operations, and so grieve the Spirit of God, who would work

in them all righteonsncss, godliness, and holiness : ver. 9, ' For the

fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth.'

[3.] That they may obey the light, and comply with the sense of

their duty written on their hearts ; otherwise they offer violence, not

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only to their duty, but to their nature ; not only to their rule without,

but their conscience within, or the law written upon their hearts:

Heb. viii. 10, ' I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in

their hearts.'

[4.] They have tasted of all waters, the bitterness of sin and the

sweetness of grace, the terrors of the Lord, and the sweetness of the

mercy of God and the grace of Christ ; atid shall they give way to sin

and folly ?

[5.] They are posting to a better estate, and preparing for it : Col.

i. 12, 'Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance

of the saints in light.' Therefore for them to walk in works of dark-

ness is more blameworthy, as if the way to hell would bring them to

lieaven.

Use. Eemember it often to your humiliation, lest God permit you

to remember it to your confusion. Tliose whose sins are pardoned

may to their sense have their guilt raked out of its grave. It is pos-

sible the wounds of an healed conscience may bleed afresh, when wo

walk not humbly and cautiously. Though God doth not recant his

sentence of pardon, yet the sin may occur to us, and ghosts haunt us

of those who were long since buried.

SERMON IX.

For tlie fruit of the Spirit is in all r/oodness, and righteousness, and

truth. — Eph. v. 9.

These words do show both how and why we must walk as children of

the light ; and so are both an explication and confirmation of the former

exhortation. An explication, wdiat it is to walk, or how we must walk,

\* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.' A confirmation, or new

reason, as tlie causal particle, 'for,' showeth. The apostle had argued

from tlieir profession of being christians. Now from the grace by which

they were made christians ; they were regenerated by the Holy Ghost.

To be light in the Lord and to be renewed by the Spirit is all one thing ;

and if you be enlightened and regenerated, the fruit of this must be

\* All goodness, and righteousness, and truth.'

In the words we have —

1. The author, the Holy Spirit.

2. The fruits of his sanctifying operations enumerated, ' All good-

ness, and righteousness, and truth.' This is the conversation that may

be called ' Walking as children of the light.'

The three words may be taken in a more general sense, or in a more

limited and restrained sense. In a general sense: Rom. xv. 14, ' And

I myself also am ])ersuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full

of goodness.' So goodness is taken for all saving graces ; and righteous-

ness for a preparedness to discharge our duty to God and man. As

Zacharias and Elizabeth were both righteous, ' Walking in all the com-

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mandments and ordinances of tlie Ivord, blameless,' Luke i. 6. And

truth for sincerity, called elsewhere ' The girdle of truth,' Eph. vi. 14.

Or in a more limited sense, so goodness is that grace wherel)y we are

inclined to do good to otliers to the uttermost of our power : Gal. vi. 10^

' Let us do good to all men, especially to them that are of the household

of faith.' This goodness is reckoned among the fruits of the Spirit :

Gal. V. 22, ' Gentleness, goodness, faith.' Righteousness implieth justice

in our dealing, which giveth every one his due: 1 Tim. vi. 11, 'Follow

after righteousness.' Truth signifieth fidelity in our speech and actions,

when we live free from lying and dissimulation. Now which sense shall

we prefer, the general or more limited ? It mattereth not much which

of them we prefer, for they are not contrary, but subordinate. But that

you may conceive aright of the words, let me give you these expository

observations —

1. The apostle, for example's sake, mentioneth some parts of the holy

life, not to exclude, but imply the rest ; for there is a secret ' and such

like ' understood. When he saith, ' This is the fruit of the Spirit,' you

must not think it is all When we bring a sample of a commodity, we

bring a little to show the quality of the rest, not as if that were all we

had to sell ; so these graces are mentioned, but not to exclude the rest.

2. He instanceth in such graces as concern the second table, kind-

ness, justice, and fidelity, as is usual in such cases. The world is most

capable of knowing and approving these things, but they suppose higher

graces ; for all our goodness, justice, and truth must come from love

and obedience to God, and faith in Christ, as their true and proper

principle, or else they are but moral virtues, not christian graces : Job

j. 1, ' There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and

that man was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed

evil.' And Joseph of Arimathea was a good man and a just man, ' who

also himself waited for the kingdom of God,' Luke xxiii. 50. When

they are accompanied with these higher graces, then these things are

good. Sometimes tlie new creature is described by the state of the

heart, as it standeth affected to God and the world to come ; so other

graces, as fruits of the Spirit, are mentioned : 2 Tim. i. 7, ' For God

hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a

sound mind.' Sometimes the Spirit is spoken of as it fitteth us and

frameth us ibr our duly to man, as here in the text. There is not a

more benign thing, that doth more fit us to live peaceably and usefully

in human society,than the gospel spirit ; and the world looketh to these

things, and chooseth these things.

3. These are spoken of as in combination. We must not so follow

after one as to neglect the other. Goodness must not make us neglect

justice, nor justice, goodness; and in the acts of both we must be sin-

cere and true. Some divide these things : Rom. v. 7, ' For scarcely

for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some

would even dare to die ;' for one really performing what he pretends to

do. Our duty to our neighbour is either negative, not wronging them ; or

positive, promoting their good. Justice bindeth our hands, and keepeth

us from doing hurt to our neighbour, but goodness inclineth us to seek

their good by all ways possible. And truth commendeth both. Right-

eousness keepeth us from the wrong that is done them by open violence.

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and truth keepetli us from tlie wrong that may be done tliem by fraud

and deceit. Goodness inclineth to seek our neighbour's good and bene-

fit, and truth bindeth us to seek it sincerely, not in word and tongue

only, but in deed and in truth : 1 John iii. 18, ' My little children, let

us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.'

4. I observe that there is a note of universality joined to the word

goodness, ' All goodness,' to show this is of chief regard, and that we

must not be good in one sort or kind only, but ' fruitful in every good

work,' Col. i. 10. A christian should be made up of goodness ; his very

constitution and trade must be goodness.

5. I observe that these are called fruit, not only by a Hebraism, who

are wont to express the works of a man by the term ' fruit ; ' for man

is, or should be a tree of righteousness ; but there is a distinction : Gal.

V. 19, 22, now the 'works of the flesh' are manifest, but ' the fruit of

the Spirit;' so also here compare the text with ver. 11, 'Unfruitful

works of darkness.' But why is it called ' fruit ? ' Partly to show

it is the native and genuine product of the Spirit in our hearts, as

fruit groweth on a tree ; and partly to show that sin is an unprofitable

drudgery, but holiness is fruit. There is toil, here benefit : Eom. vi.

21, 22, ' What fruit had you then in those things whereof ye are now

ashamed ? for the end of those things is death. But now, being made

free from sin, and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit imto

holiness, and the end everlasting life.' There is no fruit in sin ; the

work is drudgery, and the reward is death ; but holiness is fruit, for

it is the way to eternal life.

6. All these graces, and duties consequent, are fruits of the Spirit.

The Vulgar read lucis ; some Greek copies, tov (^coto? ; most, rov

TTvev/xaro';. The Holy Ghost produceth this fruit in us ; he worketh

and dwelleth in the hearts of all those who are light in the Lord.

7. He speaketh of habits, not of acts : ' Walking as children of the

light,' relateth more to the acts or exercise of the grace which we have

received ; but here the apostle speaketh of goodness rather than good,

works, of justice rather than just works. The habits give facility and

easiness to all acts. When the soul is thus constituted, it is hard to

do otherwise. So in opposition to the ' Works of darkness ' there is

' Putting on the armour of light,' Rom. xiii. 12. The habit is opposed

to the act, because the work will follow, when once the heart is framed

and fitted for these things.

8. These are ascribed to the Spirit by the apostle for two reasons —

[1.] Partly because of man's ineapacity to produce these things of

himself. We are not only defective in the duties which concern our

commerce with God, but also in the lower hemisphere of duties, those

which concern our dealings with men. None is good of himself, but

only God: Mat. xix. 17, 'Why callest thou me good? there is none good

but one, that is God ; ' that is, originally good.' As all the stars derive

their light from the sun, so do we receive every good and perfect gift

from the Father of lights, James i. 17. God is originally good, but we

are good by participation. This was true of man in innocency; but

there is another reason for man in his fallen estate, for there we were

altogether bent on evil : Ps. xiv. 3, ' There is none that docth good, no

not one.' Surely in that estate, whatever good we do is from the Spirit

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of God : Acts xi. 24, ' Barnabas was a good man, and full of the Holy

Ghost, and of laith.' Wc are made so by the Holy Spirit, not born

so ; none of us love good, and hate evil, and sincerely set ourselves to

do that which is holy and righteous, till he hath framed us for this use.

Therefore all true goodness and righteousness is from him.

[2.] And partly because all the etlects carry such a resemblance

with the Spirit. The fruit must be correspondent with the root or

nature of the plant on which it grows. If you are made light in the

Lord by the Spirit, you will bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in all

goodness, righteousness, and truth. Goodness; the Spirit is called the

good Spirit : Ps. cxliii. 10, ' Teach me, for thou art my God ; thy Spirit

is good ; lead me into the land of uprightness ; ' Neh. ix. 20, ' Thou

gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them.' Now this operation is

accordingly ; he maketh us good, kind, to love all with a love of

benevolence, and our fellow-christians with a love of complacency.

So for righteousness, or justice in all our dealings, giving every one

his due ; this is the fruit of the Spirit ; for, Eph. iv. 24, ' The new man

is created after God in righteousness and true holiness.' God hath

done so much to demonstrate his righteousness, that christians have

not the spirit of their religion if they be not righteous. So for truth

or fidelity, whereby we carry ourselves sincerely, and free from all

hypocrisy and craft. The Spirit is often called the Spirit of truth; and

that holiness which he worketh in us is holiness of truth, or true

holiness : ' Therefore put away lying,' Eph. iv. 25 ; it is a sin contrary

to the new nature.

9. This Spirit God hath sent among us by the preaching of the gospel ;

for when he saith, 'Ye are light in the Lord,' it implieth both the know-

ledge of the gospel and the illumination of the Spirit ; the one as

concomitant with the other, and settling the belief of it in our henrts.

The doctrine of Christ bringeth the Spirit to us, and we receive it by

faith : Gal. iii. 2, ' Keceived ye tlie Spirit by the works of the law, or

by the hearing of faith ? ' John vii. 39, ' But this spake he of the Spirit,

which they that believe on him should receive.' We receive the Spirit

more plentifully by the gospel than by the law, and we receive it by

faith in Christ. Having made this \vay, I come now to propound a

[)articular point.

Doct. 1. That the Spirit which we receive by the gospel worketh all

goodness in the hearts of believers.

To illustrate this point, I shall show — (1.) What is goodness ; (2.)

How this is the product of the Spirit of the gospel.

I. What is goodness ? I answer — Goodness is either moral or

beneficial.

1. Moral goodness is our whole duty required by the law of (jlotl,

whatever is just and equal for us to perform : Deut. xxx. 15, ' I have set

before you life and good, death and evil.' Holiness is called good, and

sin evil ; and the whole duty of man elsewdiere is called good : Micah

vi. 8, 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth

the Lord require of thee?' The Mum hominis, the whole duty of

man, is honum hominis, the avIk^Ic good of man.

2. There is beneficial goodness, Avhicli is a branch of the former, and

implieth a readiness to do good to others to the utmost of our capacity ;

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for all good is commnnicative of itself: Heb. xiii. 16, 'But to do

good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is

well pleased.' This duty must not be forgotten nor neglected, because

it showeth tlie due impress of our religion upon us. Well, then, the

first sort of goodness is holiness, the second beneficence.

II. Tliat this is the fruit and product of the Spirit by the gospel,

1. Let us see what the gospel doth to promote this goodness in the

world.

2. Upon what grounds we may expect the Spirit to co-operate there-

with.

First, What the gospel doth to promote this goodness in the world,

1. By the laws and precepts of it, or the duties it requireth ; it re-

quireth us to be good, and to do good.

[1.] To be good ; for we are first made good before we can do good :

Lidje vi, 45, ' A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringetli

forth that which is good ; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of

his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil : for out of the abundance

of the heart the mouth speaketh.' Every man hath a treasury or store-

liouse within him, from whence all his actions are brought forth. He

that hath an honest heart, or a repository of good purposes and resolutions,

in short, whose whole heart is set upon doing good on all occasions, he

bringeth forth from thence good actions. Now the design of the chris-

tian religion is to make men good and to cure them of all evil ; it not

only inviteth and persuadeth men to be good, but offereth grace whereby

they may become good : Eph, ii. 10, ' For we are his workmanship,

created in Christ Jesus vinto good works.' It offereth grace, whereby

men may be changed ; and being naturally bent to evil, may be dis-

posed and inclined to good. This religion would not have us do good

by accident, but by nature, as having our hearts set towards it ; and

to work not occasionally, but from a habit and a principle of good-

ness in ourselves, as being thus constituted and framed that we may

do it easily and with delight ; yea, it is a force if we do the contrary.

[2.] To do good, both as to God and men.

(1.) As to God, the great duty is love ; that we should love him,

and obey him as our rightful Lord and chief good and happiness.

This was our primitive duty, which we owed to our creator ; and

Christ came not to dissolve, tjut to establish it. He never intended to

rob God of a creature when he made any man a christian ; for he

' redeemed ns to God by his blood,^ Rev. v. 9. That we might love

him and serve him ; love him with all our hearts, and serve him with

all our might, Mat. xxii. 37, Oh, what a good religion is this, where

our principal work is love and delight in him whom we serve and wor-

ship ! We begin our happiness in our duty and love to God, that we

may be beloved of him. Whole cln-istianity is but an holy art to

t(>ach us the way of loving and enjoying God.

(2.) To do good to men. Certainly that religion is good which only

employeth men in doing good, and obligeth us to seek the welfare of

others as we would do our own. It enjoineth us ' to do good to all,

especially to the household of faith,' Gal. vi, 10. We cannot take

delight in all, for some are an offence to the new nature which is in

lis ; but we must do good to all, and seek their happiness. The love

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of benevolence or good will is opposite to the hatred of enmity, and the

love of complacency and delight to the hatred of aversation and ofVence.

We cannot take pleasnre in sinners, bnt yet must do them good. Suppose

they have disobliged us, yet enemies are not excepted : Mat. v. 44,

' Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that

hate you.' None can bo such enemies to us as we were to God in our

natural estate. Now it is the duty of a christian to revenge injuries

with courtesies : Eom. xii. 14, ' Bless them which })ersecnteyou ; bless

and curse not ; and ver. 21, 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome

evil with good.' This doing good God expecteth from men in every

capacity and relation. The magistrate is ' the minister of God to thee

for good;' Eom. xiii. 4. He is not so much to mind his own greatness

as the public benefit. The minister is to seek the good of souls, ' to

impart some spiritual gift,' Rom. i. 11, to be an instrument of" increas-

ing light or life. Fellow-christians should seek to do good one to another,

and value all their talents, not by possession, but use: Luke xvi. 8,

'The lord commended tlie unjust steward, because he had done wisely.'

People in an inferior quality, as servants: Eph. vi. 8, 'Knowing that

whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the

Lord, whether he be bond or free.' If they make conscience of doing

good in their callings and relations, and go about these duties as service

to God, and profitable to men, it is a good thing, and accepted by the

Lord. Thus the gospel requireth we should still be doing good, some-

thing that conduceth to the glory of God and. the benefit of others.

2. By the discoveries it maketh. The greatest, truest, and fullest

prospect of God's goodness to mankind we have in the gospel There

' the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared,'

Titus iii. 4. When God was displeased for the breach of tlie first

covenant, and man had fixllen from his primitive holiness, and brought

himself irreparably under guilt and a curse, the Lord took occasion by

his misery to open a door of hope to us by Christ, and hath set up a

new covenant of righteousness and life founded on the death of his Son,

where grace taketli the throne, and the judge is Christ, and tlie rule is

the gospel, and pardon and salvation is offered to all those who with a

ready and thankful mind are willing to return to their obedience to

God ; and God standeth with open arms to receive all those that run

for refuge to this covenitnt, and take sanctuary at this grace, as willing

to bestow upon them all kind of mercies and grace to help. Surely

this word may well be called ' the good word of God,' Heb. vi. 5, and

' the glad tidings of good things,' Rom. x. 15, the best news that ever

was brought to man's ear. Now the impress should be according to

the seal ; a good religion should breed a good peoi)le. When such

wonders of goodness are discovered, it should make us more ready for

our duty to God and man.

[1.] To God. The love and goodness of God in Christ is the great

engine of the gospel, and the great motive and encouragement to per-

suade us to our duty : 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, 'For the love of Christ constraineth

us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead ;

and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth

live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again.'

God would be obeyed by his people, not as slaves, but as children, and

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^\•ould have the sprint]: and rise of our obedience to be love and gratitude ;

.1 herefore doth he obh'ge us at so high a rate, and cany on the tenor

of his grace and mercy in such an astonishing and wonderful way, that

none of his commandments might be grievous to us, being\_ sweetened

by his love. He will be served^ not as an imperious sovereign, but as

the God of love ; not with a grudging mind, but with delight and

readiness ; not as doing good by force, but as encouraged wdth a deep

«ense of this goodness.

[2.] To men. Surely we will imitate what we prize and esteem.

No man can be thankful to God who is not merciful to his brother ;

so much goodness demonstrated will breed goodness in us. When the

apostle had asked a contribution to the necessities of the poor saints at

Jerusalem, he useth this argument, 2 Cor. viii. 8, 9, ' I speak not by

commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to

]-)rove the sincerity of your love ; for ye know the grace of our Lord

Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became

{)Oor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.' Christians can want

no motives to goodness when they consider the liberality and bounty of

God to them in Christ, and those riches of grace provided for tliem.

If they sincerely believe these things, they will have somewhat in their

own bosoms that will strongly persuade them not to be wanting to

occasions and opportunities of doing good.

3. The examples it propoundetli to our imitation, not mean and

blemished ones, such as we may find among our fellow-creatures, but

the high and glorious examples of God and Christ himself. There is

a good God set before us, that we may not take up with any low pattern

ofgoodness. He is represented to us as all goodness : Ps. cxix. 68,

' Thou art good, and doest good.' He is good in his nature, and

his work is agreeable to his nature; nothin^^ is wanting to it, or

defective in it. Nothing can be added to it to make it better.

'O oWo)? ov TO irpoiTov — Philo, The first being must needs be the

first good. As soon as we conceive there is a God, we presently con-

ceive that he is good, as being both the fountain and pattern of all the

good that is iu the creatures.

[1.] As to his nature, he is originally good, good in himself, and

good to others ; as the sun hath light in himself, and givetli light to

Tdl other things. Essentially good ; not only good, but goodness

itself Goodness in us is an accessary quality or superadded gift ; but

in God it is not a quality, but his essence ; as a vessel that is gilded

with gold, and a vessel tliat is all gold ; the gilding or lustre is a

superadded quality ; but in a vessel all of gold, the lustre and the sub-

stance is the same. God is infinitely good ; the creature's good is

limited, but there is nothing to limit the perfection of God, or give it

any measure. He is an ocean of goodness without banks or bottom.

Alas ! what is our drop to this ocean ! God is immutably good ; his

goodness can never be more or less than it is ; as there can be no

addition to it, so no subtraction from it. Man in his innocency was

jjeccabilis, afterward peccatpr ; but God ever was and is good. Now

this is the pattern propounded to us, but his nature is a great deep.

Therefore —

[2.] As to his work, he doeth good. What hath God been acting

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upon the great theatre of the world but goodness for these six thousand

years ? Acts xiv. 17, 'Nevertheless he hath not left himself without

a witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and

fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.' He left

not himself Avithout a witness, dyaOoTroicov, not by taking vengeance of

their idolatries, but by inviting benefits, Noav this is propounded to

our imitation, that our whole life may be nothing else but doing good :

Mat. V. 48, ' Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Fatlier is perfect.' It is

in Luke vi. 36, ' Be ye therefore merciful, as your heavenly Father is

merciful ;' that is, learn of God how to exercise and show forth your

goodness, not in a confined way to friends only, but to enemies ; not

in a scanty measure, but in full proportion. The other example is

Jesus Christ, or God incarnate : Acts x. 38, ' How God anointed Jesus

of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power, who went about

doing good;' that is, to the bodies and souls of men, giving sight to

the blind, limbs to the lame, health to the sick, and life to the dead.

Christ did nothing by way of malice and revenge, he used not the

power that he had to make men blind, or lame, or to kill any ; no,

not his worst enemies, when he could easily do it, and justly might

have done it. No ; he went up and down doing good. He rebuked

his disciples when they requested him to destroy those that had con-

temned tiiem by calling for fire from heaven, telling them, 'They knew

not of what spirit they were of,' &c., Luke ix. 55, 56. It was unlike

his spirit and design ; all his miracles were acts of relief and succour,

not pompous nor destructive, bating only his blasting of the unfruitful

fig-tree, which was an emblematical warning to the Jews, and suffering

the devil's entering into the herd of swine, which was a necessary

demonstration of the devil's malice and destructive cruelty, who, if he

could not afflict men and destroy men, would enter into the herd of

swine that the poor creatures might perish in the sea. I say nothing

now of his abundant grace discovered in our redemption. Surely if it

be true religion to be like what we worship as God, we must be like

this God and this Christ. Certainly goodness should wholly possess

us, and dispose of our lives and actions ; a religion that holdeth forth

such a good God and a good Christ should breed a good people.

4. The arguments by which it enforceth this goodness, or the rewards

and encourngements which it olTereth, which is the supreme blessedness

or the chief good. We all desire good ; any good will serve a carnal

brutish heart : Ps. iv. 6, ' There be many that say, Who will show us

.any good ? ' but the sober and thinking part of mankind will not be

put off so ; they are groping and feeling about for an eternal good ;

and grope they may, but still fail of what they seek after, till they

come to the gospel to find it. There God hath showed man what is

his chief good and proper happiness, or the greatest good that can be

attained or imagined, for beyond God there is nothing. And the

happiness which the gospel offereth is —

[1.] God reconciled.

[2.] God finally and fully enjoyed. Our happiness by the way con-

sists in reconciliation with God, but at the end of the journey, in the

vision and fruition of God ; this is happiness indeed.

(L) Our reconciliation with God through Christ, as soon as we

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enter into his peace. This is that which we only are capable of here,

and the good we are now only admitted unto : Rom. v, 1, ' Being-

justified by faith, we have peace with God tlirough Jesus Christ our

Lord.' As soon as ever we turn to him by faith and repentance, he

giveth us the pardon of all our sins, and accepteth us in Christ. The

sentence of death is reversed, and we are delivered from wrath to come;

and not only so, but are also made heirs according to the hope of

eternal life. We have a right for the present, though not the pos-

session ; and there is a long train of blessings which we enjoy by virtue

of this right, as a comfortable sense of the love of God, peace in our

own conscience, an interest in the care of God's providence, the audience

of our prayers, the moderating and sanctifying of all our afflictions.

Now all these should mollify and soften the heart, and melt it into love

to God and man. Shall God be so good to us, and we so evil ? Surely

such a lively sense of God's love and grace should highly and potently

promote goodness in the world.

(2.) The vision and fruition of God in the heavenly glory, that is.

the great good offered to us, when our nature shall be perfected, and

by its most perfect acts be employed about the most perfect objects,,

and God shall be all in all, giving out the fullest communications of

his grace, and that for ever. The soul shall be perfect without spot or

blemish, and this vile body made like Christ's glorious body, and we-

shall for ever remain in the sight and love of God ; and what is sweeter

than his presence ? Ps. xvi. 11, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy, and

at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.' And this without fear

of change : 1 Thes. iv. 17, ' And so shall we ever be with the Lord.'

If anything be good, this is good, to live for ever in the sight of God,.

and to love him, and be beloved of him. Now should not all this

make us good ? and should we not train up ourselves in a way of

loving and rejoicing in God now, that in our very work we may have

a foretaste of our reward and end ? The object of our love and service

is good, and what floweth from him but goodness ? and what do we

expect from him but such goodness as our hearts cannot sufficiently

conceive of?

Secondly, Upon what grounds we may expect the Spirit to co-operate

lierewith.

1. Because God worketli congruously, as with respect to the subject

upon which he worketh, so with respect to the object by which he

wurketh. The subject is the heart of man, and therefore he 'draweth

us with the cords of a man,' Hosea xi. 4. The object is the gospel, a

good word, or the good knowledge of God, and therefore a suitable

means to work goodness in us. There we have good precepts and good

promises, and an account of God's wonderful goodness and love in

Christ ; and ' therefore the fruit of his Spirit is in all goodness.' As

the seal is graven, so the wax receivetli tlie stamp. The seal is the

word, the wax is our heart, and the hand that applieth it is the Spirit

of God ; he is the principal cause, and maketh the gospel effectual to

produce in us a frame of heart answerable to the scheme and structure

of the word. In short, the good Spirit, by the good word, maketh us

good, and so all suiteth.

2. Tlio Spirit produceth this effect as a witness of the truth of the

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<i;ospel, which beinfi; ;i supernatural doctrine, needed to be attested

from heaven, that the truth of it might be known by tlic mighly ])ower

of God which dotli accompany it, working in our hearts effects suitable

to the tenor of the word. Whatever doctrine can change the soul of

man, and convert it to God, is of God, and owned by God. When

such a holy doctrine sanctifietli us, we see the truth of it : John xvii.

17, ' Sanctify tliem through thy truth ; tliy word is truth.' When

t^uch deliverance is published, it maketh us free indeed : John viii. 32,

' And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'

When such a heavenly doctrine breedeth in us a heavenly mind :

1 Cor. ii. 12, ' For we have not received the spirit of the world, but the

Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely

given to us of God.' When such a spiritual doctrine bringeth in more

of the Spirit : 2 Cor. iii. 8, \* How shall not the ministration of the

Spirit be rather glorious ? ' Such a wise doctrine will fill us with

wisdom ; such a doctrine of grace and goodness breedeth all goodness

in us, and so we have God's attestation to his truth.

3. That thereby God may signify his peculiar and elective love

to his people. When he worketh all goodness in their hearts by

liis Spirit, they come to discern that he loveth tliem by a special love.

Love or hatred cannot be known by anything that is before us, any

outward dispensation whatsoever, Eccles. ix. 1 ; but when by the good

Spirit of the Lord we are made like God and like Christ, and have the

prints of the good word upon us, then we know his love to us : 1

John iv. 13, ' Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us,

because he hath given us of his Spirit.' And what spirit is that but

a Spirit of love and goodness ? for 'God is love,' ver. 16. Then we

transcribe our pattern, and are brought into a, conformity to God.

4. God maketh an offer of his grace to invite us to seriousness in

uttending on this g()S})el. He excludeth none in the offer, and there-

fore we must not exclude ourselves. None miss it but those that

neglect and forfeit it through their carelessness, and disobedience, and

ingratitude. If you would observe the seasons of his sanctifying

motions, it would be much better with you : Prov. i. 23, ' Turn ye at

ray reproof ; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make

known my words unto you.'

Use 1. Is information.

1. It informeth us how false the prejudices of the world are, who

think the life of godliness a severe rigid thing, as if men did put off

nil good nature as soon as they enter u})on the practice of it. No ;

' The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness.' There cannot be a more

delightful spectacle, unless it be to a man blinded with malice and

prejudice and brutish lusts, than to see such a good man as is described

in the word of God ; for he is one that seeketh to do good to all, and

Ivurt to none; looks for no great matters for himself in the world,

bustles not for honour and greatness, but gives place, or at least due

respect to all ; he condescends to the meanest, envies none, revenges

himself on none, but is courteous to all, beneficial to all according to

his ability and opportunity. As to God, his business is to love him

and live to him ; he counteth it his happiness to live with liim, and is

ourefid to keep up a due remembrance of him by daily invocation and

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worship ; always rejoicing in Chriist Jesus, and liveth in obedience to

the motions of the sanctifying Spirit, so that his life is not tainted with

the blot of any heinous sin. He is still encouraging himself with the

promises of another world, levelling and directing all his actions

thither. This is the true good man ; and can spite and infidelity

object anything against it ? You will say, There are few sucli in the

world. Ans. The more the pity, when so many helps and means to

effect it. It is the fault of the men, not of the rule. But many such

there are ; yea, all the children of God are such in some measure,

Tiie world seeth it and hateth them, because their holy and heavenly

life uj)braideth their flesh-pleasing and carnal course.

2. It informeth us that the children of light should be full of good-

ness, or else they do not improve their advantages. We have a good

word to direct us, after we had lost the knowledge of God, and of the

world to come, and the way thither ; tliat all this should be revealed to

us by Christ clearly and plainly. And not only so, but we have a good

Spirit to imprint this knowledge upon our hearts, and to give us a

heavenly mind and life. Now what remaineth but that we should be

good also? for what should a bad people do with a good religion?

This good word, that assureth us of God's readiness to do mankind the

greatest good ; this good Spirit, whose great office it is to regenerate

and make us good. But alas ! many are more forward to talk of the

word than live by it, and not so careful to walk in the Spirit as to

boast of it.

3. That all the goodness that is in us is the fruit of the Spirit ; he

infuseth the graces, he exciteth the acts ; therefore the glory of all

that we have and do must be transferred to God. God hath a greater

share in all the good that we do than we ourselves. We may say of

our best actions, as Augustin of liis illegitimate child, ' I had nothing

in him but my sin ;' nothing is ours but the defect, the good is God's.

Again, on Ps. cxxxvii. he saith, 02nis tuum vide in me, Domine ! non

meum, &c. — Eegard, Lord, in me, not my works, but thine own : if

thou regardest my works, thou damnest me ; if thine own, thou

crovvnest me : since whatsoever good I have, I have it from thee, it is

therefore rather thine than mine. Thus humbly and thankfully should

we be affected. God is good of himself, good in himself, yea, goodness

itself; there is no good above, or besides, or beyond him ; it is all from

him, if it be good, and therefore to him be all tlie glory.

Use 2. To exhort us to increase in all goodness. (1.) Moral good-

ness, which is holiness. Now holiness is the glory of God, and there-

fore must needs be our excellency : Exod. xv. 11, 'Who is like unto

thee, Lord, among the gods ? who is like thee, glorious in holiness,

fearful in praises, doing wonders ? ' So tliat to be holy is to put on the

royal robe of the king of all the earth. Surely the more a man

partakes of the nature and image of God, the more excellent he is.

(2.) Beneficial goodness, or kindness and mercy; this is the first and

chiefest name of God. So God told Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 19, 'I will

cause all my goodness to pass before thee,' when he proclaimed his

name : Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, ' And the Lord passed by before him, and

proclaimed. The Lord, the Lord God, meiciful and gracious, long-

suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for

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thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin ; ' Ps. xxxiii. 5,

' Tlie whole earth is full of thy goodness ; ' Ps. cxlv. 9, ' The Lord is

good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.' This doth

first insinuate with us, and command our respect to him. The first

temptation that ever was, was to weaken the conceit of his goodness.

Now this is that which we are to imitate, to be good to all, and to do

as much good as possibly we can.

SERMON X.

For the fruit of the Spirit is hi aU goodness, and righteousness, and

truth.— Evn. v. 9.

DocT. 2. That one choice fruit of the Spirit wrought in the children

of light is righteousness.

To explain this point, I will show you — (1.) What is righteousness ;

(2.) That this is one of the fruits of the Spirit ; (3.) That it is a

choice fruit because of the benefits which accrue to us thereby.

I. What is righteousness ? Sometimes it is taken as largely as

holiness, for that grace which doth incline us to perform our duty to

God and man ; for there is a righteousness even in godliness, or giving

God his due honour and worship: Mat. xxii. 21, 'Render therefore

unto Caesar the things which are CcGsar's, and unto God the things

that are God's.' More strictly it is taken for that grace which doth

dispose and incline us to give every one his due, and is a branch of

that love and charity which is the sum of the whole second table : Rom.

xiii. 7, 8, ' Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute

is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom

honour. Owe no man anything but to love one another ; for he that

loveth another hath fulfilled the law.' There is a debt of justice that

we owe to ordinary men, and of subjection to those whom God hath set

over us, which must be discharged. One debt you must still owe to

all men, and that is charity, and it must be so paid as that it be always

owing. Now here the word 'righteousness' must be taken in a con-

venient latitude, mixed of both senses, — an inclination to do that which

we know to be holy and just. Now this righteousness in christians

is a fruit of the Spirit, and so a mark of their union with Christ ;

and therefore it must be advanced to a higher degree of perfection

than that justice in heathens which is the fruit only of a natural

conscience in us. It must look like a thing that cometh from a

nature renewed and healed, or a divine supernatural principle, which

doth not only alter the kind, but advance the degree of it. To

evidence which —

1. Let us see what is the office of righteousness.

2. To what an height Christianity advanceth it above all other

institutions in the world.

First, What is the office and part of justice and righteousness?

Ver. 9.] sp:rmons upon: ephesians v. 261)

1. To seek the peace and welfare of tlie several communities and

societies iti which we live, or in preferring the public good before oiu-

own. We owe a debt of love to our country. God directeth his people

to seek the good of Babylon while his providence continued them

there : Jer. xxix. 7, ' And seek the peace of the city whither I have

caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it;

for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace ; ' that is, in regard of their

own interest in the common rest and quietness during their abode

there ; otherwise we are to pi'ay for the downfall of Babylon. All

passengers are concerned in the vessel wherein they are embarked.

And if we are to seek the welfare of Babylon, much more are we to

seek the welfare of Sion, where we live in christian society: Ps. cxxii.

G, ' Pray for the peace of Jerusalem : they shall prosper that love thee.'

A christian community is represented as a body, and in a body the

members should have a care one of another, and for the whole : 1 Cor.

xii. 15, 'If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of

the body; is it therefore not of the body?' Well, then, this is the

first part and office of justice, to perform the debt we owe to our

country, for public interests must be preferred before private.

2. To give to every man his due ; to use faithful dealing in all the

duties we owe to others, or in all actions wherein we are employed and

entrusted by others. We must be just in our trading and bargaining,

according to the value of the things ; in paying our debts, and pre-

serving the rights of others, and giving due honour to the eminently

holy. Because it is endless to instance in all, therefore there is a

general rule : Mat. vii. 12, ' Therefore all things whatsoever ye would

that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them ; for this is the

law and the prophets.' The equity of the rule is built upon two

grounds — the actual equality of all men by nature, and the possible

equality of all men by condition and state of life. The actual equality

of all men by nature, for they were all made by the same God : Job

xxxi. 15, ' Did not he that made me in the womb make him ? and did

not one fashion us in the womb ? ' So Mai. ii, 10, ' Have we not all

one father ? hath not one God created us ? Why do we then deal

treacherously every man against his neighbour? ' So Neh. v. 5, 'Our

flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, and our children as their children.'

The possible equality of all men by condition and state of life : wo

may be brought into the same state. All are alike subject to corrup-

tion and calamity. To corrui)tion, therefore be not severe on the

failings of others: Gal. vi. 1, 'Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a

fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness,

considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.' To calamity : Heb.

xiii. 3, ' Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them ; and

them which sufi'er adversit}', as being yourselves also in the body.'

You may be expo.sed to like calamities.

3. Fidelity in our relations is another part of justice ; for all these

relations imply a right which is due to others. So we must be just to

superiors and inferiors. Magistrates must be just in governing: 2

Sam. xxiii. 3, ' He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear

of God.' And it is said of David, 2 Sam. viii. 15, that 'he executed

judgment and justice to all his people.' A good magistrate is w/^o?

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e/u,i|ri;n^o9, a living law. And people must be jnst in obeying ; inferiors

in pei rorming their duties to their superiors, children to tlieir parents :

Eph. vi. 1, ' Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right/

There is a right depending there. Masters to servants: Col. iv. 1,

' Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal.' Wives

to their liusbands: Col. iii. 18, 'Wives, submit yourselves to your

own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.' So proportionably to all other

relations.

Secondly, To what a height Christianity advanceth these things.

1. Because it deduceth things from a higher principle, the fixed

principle of a nature renewed by Christ. There are in it three things

— (1.) Another nature put into us, a fixed principle ; (2.) And this by

the Spirit's operation, and so it is a supernatural principle ; (3.) This

working after a kindly manner, by faith in Christ, and love to God in

Christ, and so it is a forcible principle.

[1.] It is a fixed principle : Epii, iv. 24, \* And that ye put on the

new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.'

When the heart is thus constituted and framed, that to be imjust, or

to do anything unjust, is as unsuitable to them as it is for venomons

berries to grow upon a choice vine. As it is said of such a one that he

did good quia aliter facere non poterat, because he could not do other-

wise, the same doth the new nature ; it doth more than moral habits :

1 John iii. 9, ' Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin ; for

his seed remainetli in him : and he cannot sin, because he is born of

God.' Now if the same grace that maketh ns submissive to God

maketh us also just and harmless to men, surely it is a great advantage

when righteousness is another nature to us.

[2.] It is a supernatural principle. The mere motion of our own

human spirit cannot enforce us, and incline us to righteousness so

much as the Spirit of God : ' The gentiles do by nature the things

contained in the law,' Kom. ii. 14. But here is a divine power, and

so a more perfect principle. Take the human spirit as coming from

God ut author naturce, as the author of nature : Rom. i. 19, ' Because

that which may be known of God is manifest in them ; for God hath

showed it unto them ; ' or ut author gratice, as the author of gi-ace,

as God hath renewed them, and given them a new frame : Eph. ii. 10.

' We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.'

But here is actual assistance : Ezek. xxxvi. 27, ' I will put my Spirit

into you, and cause you to walk in my statutes ; and ye shall keep my

judgments and do them.' The short is this, nature cannot do as

much as grace, nor habitual grace infused so much as grace actually

assisted by a divine and powerful assistance.

[3.] It is a forcible and kindly principle ; for it is such a principle

as worketh by the love of God, and hopes of glory ; for ' Faith worketh

by love,' Gal v, G, as the apostle expresseth it. What will not such

a principle do? faith representing what God hath done for us in

Chi-ist, and what he will further do. If we look back, what wonders

of love dotli faith represent to work us to an obedience to God's will !

If we look forward, what hopes of glory and blessedness are set before

us ! Eedemption by Christ and hopes of glory are more powerful and

forcible principles than any reasons mere bare nature can suggest. No

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wonder that they who never felt the force of faith and love to God

upon their souls do so much cry up bare formality. Take faith as it

representeth heaven to us, or our proper felicity in the vision and

fruition of God, surely that doth establish righteousness upon sure

terms, and advanceth it at a higher rate than all the arguments

taken fi'om our worldly interest and conveniences: Acts xxiv. 14-16,

' Believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets : and

have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there

shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And

herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence

towards God and towards men.' Take the other principle, love to

God. Indeed the inmiediate principle of justice is love to man, for

all the second table is comprised in this, to ' love thy neighbour as

thyself;' but love to man is but a stream from a higher fountain,

which is love to God: 1 John iv. 21, 'And this commandment we

have from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also.' Our

love to our brother must be both excited and measured by our love to

God. We must love all mankind, and all his creatures which bear his

imag'e ; his natural image in all men, his spiritual image in his saints.

2. Because it measureth and directeth things by a more perfect rule

than the law of nature. Our rule is God's word, which is a more pure

and perfect rule than so much of the law as remaineth written upon

man's heart after the fall. As natural conscience worketh more coldly

than a principle of grace or faith working by love, so it is a more

imperfect rule and direction to us, and we have a larger understanding

of our duty by what God hath revealed in his word than otherwise we

could have. We are told, Prov. xv. 21, 'That a man of under-

standing walketh uprightly.' To be thorough in our duty there

needeth to be a large, deep, and solid judgment, sufficiently informed

out of the word of God. But what instruction doth the word of God

give in this point? To tell you that were to transcribe the whole

bible, so far as it concerneth this duty of man to man. But in the

general —

[1.] It requireth to be just in all things ; to keep a good conscience

in the smallest matter ; not only in our public and most momentous

actions, but justice is to be observed in lesser things as well as in

greater; for where heaven and hell are concerned, nothing is little:

Luke xvi. 10, ' He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also

in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.'

Many will be righteous in some things, but in others dispense with

themselves; but the good christian is careful to avoid all evil.

[2,] It requireth us to be just at all times, always exercising right-

eousness as God givetli opportunity and occasion : Ps. cvi. 3, ' Blessed

are they which keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all

times.' Not for a fit or pang, but ever ; when it is cross to our inter-

ests as well as when it befriendeth them. A christian is to be just to

friends and enemies. Many will be just to their friends, but there is

nothing so disingenuous, bad, and cruel, but they think they may say

it and do it to their enemies; but we must deprive none of their right.

[3.] To be not only just, but strictly just in our dealings: Deut.

xvi. 20, ' That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou

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jmaycst live, and iaherit the laud whicli the Lord thy God giveth thee.'

It is ill the margin, and so in the Hebrew, Justice, justice shalt thuu

follow ; th.it is, exact justice : it should be done in such eminency,

that it may appear that God's people are notoriously much better than

otlier men are. If you be but as they, you harden the cainal world,

and they think there is no great matter in religion : 1 Thes. v. 21,

\* Abstain from all appearance of evil ; ' at least when the honour of

religion lieth at stake. I shall not be shy in giving you an eminent

example of justice, which Austin thought fit twice to commemorate in

his sermons. ' I shall tell you,' saith he, ' what was done by a very poor

man at the time when I lived at Milan ; the man that I tell you of

was so poor, that he was under an usher of a grammai-school, but a

sincere and real christian. This very poor man, who had hardly

wherewith to sustain his life, found a purse of two hundred crowns;

but being mindful of that justice which God requireth of his people, he

set up in some public place a bill, giving notice of what he had found,

that if any man had lost such a sum, he should come to such a place,

to such a man, and receive it again. He that had lost the money

heareth of the bill, cometh to the man, and giving sure tokens that it

was his, he fully returned what he had found, without any defalcation

or diminution. The other rejoicing that he had heard of his money

iigain, and willing to make some requital, giveth him the tenth jtart,

twenty of these crowns ; but he would not take it ; he offereth him ten,

but he refuseth ; at length desireth him that at least he would accept of

but five, still the man that found the purse refuseth it. The other

seeing the honesty of the man, throweth him the purse, saying, I have

lost nothing, if you will take nothing. my biethren,' saith Austin,

\* what a strife was here between an honest finder and a thankful rewarder !

The world was the theatre of this conflict, the spectator God. The

finder at length being overcome by importunity, taketh what was offered,

but presently gave it all to the poor, not reserving one crown for his

own use. Consider, my brethren, such a glorious example, and con-

sider what God's law can do upon the heart of the obedient : Justice,

justice shalt thou follow.' Thus far he.

[4.] It requireth us to be just, whatever temptation we have to the

contrary.

(1.) Of riches and worldly ends, which easily blind the mind, and

will tempt us to authorise our usurpations of another's right with fair

pretences. But, 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10, ' They that will be rich fall into

temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts,

which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money

is the root of all evil.' Indulge it, and it will soon make a breach upon

your duty ; but when the lust of wealth is mortified, temptations have

the less power over you. A man that is governed and influenced by

carnal interest can never have this habit and disposition of righteous-

ness, to carry it so equitably and fairly in all his dealings ; for he that

mindeth nothing but his own interest will soon believe that whatever is

j)rofitable is lawful ; might and force will be right to him. Therefore

you are never safe till you have learned to prefer your duty before

your interest.

(2.) Of friends, kindred, and relations. We are often tempted to be

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unjust for their sakes, when it may be we are a little shy in our own

cnse ; for there conscience would boggle at it as too gross, but friend-

ship puts an honest pretence upon it. I mast love my friend, but

^Lsqlte ad aras ; where religion forbids rae, I must not keep friendship

with men to break amity with God. He is our chief friend, and other

obligations cease when his law interposeth by way of bar and restraint.

Your friends may be dear to you, but truth and righteousness must be

dearer : 2 Sam. xiii. 3, ' But Amnon had a friend, whose name was

Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother ; and Jonadab was a

subtile man.' It was an abuse of friendship when Jonadab would

countenance Amnon in his sin, and so his friend proved his greatest

foe by his pernicious counsel ; though he was a friend to his person or

sin, yet a foe to his soul. True friendship is grounded in God and

virtue ; to do for our friend, where his law is in no danger to be broken,

is true friendship : Prov. xxvii. 6, ' Faithful are the wounds of a friend ,

but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.' To reprove them, and cross

them in their sins, is to promote their salvation. So it holdeth good

as to our party. It is gross partiality to aggravate the faults of others,

and spare them because they are of our combination and society ; because

then for interest you lose conscience, when we think all is right and

well done by those whom we best like, and all wrong that is never so

well done by adversaries. Or else we shall soon fall into gross

unrighteousness ; as Barnabas was led away by Peter's dissimulation.

No ; when Peter walked not uprightly, Paul withstood him to the face,

Gal. ii. 12, 13. Otherwise we have a stone and a stone, a weight and

a weight.

(3.) We must not be drawn to do an unrighteous deed by fear or

flattery. Sometimes fear is an evil counsellor, and we run into a snare

if we be not fortified against it: Prov. xxix. 25, 'The fear of man

bringeth a snare, but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.'

Tear must be checked by a sure trust. God can bring us off from an

inconvenience better than any injustice of ours. So by flattery many

are enticed into evil, which otherwise they could not bring their hearts

to commit : Prov. xxvi. 28, ' A flattering mouth worketh ruin ; ' Prov.

xxix. 5, ' A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his

feet;' that by worldly allurements or fair pretences and crafty insinu-

ations draweth others into sin.

(4.) Do nothing unjust even for religion's sake. When men are

secure of their end, they care not what means they use. Alas ! we

should not step out of God's way for the greatest good in the world.

A good end will not warrant an ill action. God needeth not our

iniquity to uphold his interest. Christ hath other ways to get up

than upon the devil's shoulders. Nothing dishonoureth God more

than when men deceive, lie, break oaths, rebel against lawful authority,

or use any sinful means to secure and promote religion. It is flat un-

belief, and making more haste than good speed, to ease ourselves of our

burdens and discontents by any sinful shifts : Job xiii. 7, ' Will ye

speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him ? ' God needeth

not my lie for his glory: Piom. iii. 7, 'For if the truth of God hath

more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also

judged a sinner ? ' He will have no honour tendered to him but by

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lawful and approved means. It argueth our impatiency and ill tlioiiglits

of God wlien we seek, like Jacob, to get the blessing by a wile.

(5.) Not by opportunity. Be not tempted to be unrighteous or

unjust when put into places of power and trust; such have an oppor-

tunity of being unrighteous. Many are innocent because tliey have no

opportunity to be otherwise. It is said, John xii. 6, that ' Judas was a

thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.' If we will find

the sin, God m;iy righteously find the occasion. And when corrupt

affections and suitable temptations and objects meet, it is dangerous to

the soul. Well, then, the scripture showeth that we must not depart

from our rule and resolution of righteous and just dealing upon any

temptation whatsoever. Many resolve to be just, but when the tempta-

tion Cometh, their resolution is shaken. Oh, remember, the greatest

gain will prove a loss and a hard bargain in the issue : Mat. xvi, 26^

' What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his

own soul ? ' He that seeketh to pleasure others, or help himself by

unjust means, doth but consult shame to himself and his friends.

3. Because it referreth them to a more noble end, which is the glory

of God: 1 Cor. x. 31, 'Wiiether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatso-

ever ye do, do all to the glory of God; ' Phil. i. 11, ' Being filled with

the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the gloiy

and praise of God.^ Now he that propoundeth to himself such an end

is more exact and thorough in the use of means than another can be

that only mindeth his own intei'est ; for the baser the end is, the more

base are a man's actions ; but the nobler end he hath, he liveth at a

higher rate than others do. That which is done for God must be done

in a godlike manner, or as will become the excellencies of God.

II. That this is one of the fruits of the Spirit. It must needs be so,

because it suiteth with his office and personal operations. The Spirit

is to be our guide, sanctifier, and comforter. As our guide, he doth

direct and enlighten our minds ; as our sanctifiei-, he doth change our

hearts ; and as our comforter, he doth pacify, and clear, and quiet our

consciences. Now this fruit of righteousness is couducible to all these

ends, or agreeable with these offices,

1. As our guide, he doth enlighten our minds with saving knowledge ;

and no knowledge is saving but what endeth in righteousness ; as here:

'You are light in the Lord; walk as children of the light; for the

fruit of the S})irit is in all goodness and righteousness ; ' Jer. xxii. 1 6,

'He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with

him: was not this to know me, saith the Lord?' We have no true

knowledge of God, either of his nature or of the will of God, till this

knowledge influence the duties of our callings and relations ; for God

is no further savingly known than he is obeyed, and that in all things

which belong to our duty.

2. As our sanctifier, he doth change our hearts ; and the true fruits

of repentance and change of heart are the works of righteousness :

Isa. i. 16, 17, ' Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your

doings from before mine eyes ; cease to do evil, learn to do well ; seek

judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the

widow.' This is particularly insisted on as the proper fruit of their

change. So Dan. iv. 27, ' Break off thy sins by righteousness, and

thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor.' Kepentance is a

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breaking off our former course of sin. And to a king that was an open

persecutor Daniel preacheth righteousness and mercy. They that con-

tinue in their former unjust courses never yet repented. So Zech.

viii. 16, 17, 'These are the things which ye shall do, Speak ye every

man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and

peace in your gates: and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts

against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things

that I hate, saith the Lord.' God would have their i-epentance thus

expressed. Thus in the general ; but more particularly, the fruit and

woi-k of the Spirit tendeth to this end, to make us like God, and amiable

to God, to fit us for communion with God, and to gloiify God in the

eyes of the world ; and much of this is done by rigliteousness ; cer-

tainly nothing is done without it.

[1.] By it we are made like God, and do resemble his divine perfec-

tions : Ps. cxlv. 17, ' The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy

in all his works.' There is a perfect holiness in his nature, and a con-

decency in all his actions ; and when our natures are sanctified, and

all our actions are righteous and holy, we are framed after this pattern :

E|)li. iv, 24, ' And that ye put on the new man, which after God is

created in righteousness and true holiness.'

[2.] The work of the S[)irit is to make us acceptable and pleasing

unto God. Now the just and righteous man is an object of his com-

})lacency : Prov. xv. 9, ' The way of the wicked is abomination unto

the Lord ; but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.' The

Lord loveth all his creatures with a general love, but with a special

love he loveth those that bear his image. He doth not love any be-

cause they are rich and mighty, fair and beautiful, valiant and strong,

but as holy and righteous. So it is said, Prov. xxi. 3, ' To do justice

and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.' God hath

required both, and men should make conscience of both ; yet the one

is to be preferred before the other, though the one be a duty of the

first table, the other of the second ; because moral and substantial

duties are better than ceremonial. Internal duties are to be ])referred

before external, and duties evident by natural light before things of

positive institution ; as appearetli by this, that God doth accept of

moral duties without ceremonial observances : ' In every nation, he

that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him,'

Acts X. 35. But God never accepteth of ceremonial observances with-

out moral duties ; he still rejectelh their offerings when they neglected

justice : Micah vi. 7, 8, 'Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of

rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil ? Sliall I give my first-

born for my tran.sgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul ?

He hath showed thee, man, wliat is good : and what doth the Lord

]-equire of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly

with thy God ?' Again, he dis})enseth with ceremonials and externals

of religion when they come in competition with moral duties, even of

the second table ; as David's eating the show-bread when an hungered,

Mat. xii. 3, 4. But he never dispenseth with moral duties. Well, then,

how right and punctual soever we be in other things, unless we show

mercy, and do justice, we are not accepted with God, though we are

zealous for or against ceremonies, or ai'e of the strictest party in re-

ligion. Indeed, we cannot say they are better than faith, and love, and

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the. fear of God, and hope in his grace ; for these are the substantial

duties of the first table. And compare substantials with substanlials,

first-table duties are more weighty ; but compare internals of the second

with externals of the first, moral duties of the second with the cere-

monies of the first, duties natural and evident with the merely positive

and instituted, these are more weighty. To conclude, let me add that

of the psalmist : Ps. xi. 7, ' The righteous Lord loveth righteousness;

his countenance doth behold the upright.'

[3.] Righteousness fitteth for communion with God. True it is

the righteous have an easy access to God, and are sure of audience :

Ps. xvii. 15, ' As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness.'

Saul will not see my face, but this comforteth me, that I can behold

thy face. Lord, thou wilt look upon me, be gracious to me, and hear

my prayer, because I desire to come before thee in righteousness.

God will not hear the prayers of the unjust, nor accept their offerings,

'till judgment run down as a river, and righteousness as a mighty

stream,' Amos v. 23, 24 ; and rejecteth the Jewish fast, Isa. Iviii.,

because they did not loose the bands of wickedness, and undo the

heavy burden, and let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke.

[4.] The work of the Spirit is to enable us to glorify God in the

eyes of the world, which is veiy much done by righteousness ; for this

is very lovely and venerable in the eyes of the worst sort of men. A

christian, if he had no other engagement upon him, yet, for the honour

of God and the credit of religion, he should do those things which

are lovely and comely in themselves, and so esteemed by the world.

Natural conscience reverenceth righteousness : Mark vi. 20, ' Herod

feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and observed

him.' When you give every one their due, you bring more honour to

God and credit to religion ; you can better hold up the credit of it

against contradiction. Justice is so lovely a thing, partly as it is a

stricture of the image of God ; it is said, Prov. xii. 26, ' The righteous

is more excellent than his neighbour ; ' for all excellency and perfection

is determined by conformity to God. And partly because the welfare

of human society is promoted by it ; for ' these things are good and [)ro-

fitable to men,' Titus iii. 8. They are such good things as the world

is most capable to know and own. There are some things which none

but christians themselves approve, as the positive rites of religion, or

the peculiar mysteries thereof. These the carnal world are no capable

judges of. Acts xviii. 13-15, ' This fellow persuadeth men to worship

God contrary to law. And when Paul was about to open his mouth,

Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong, or wicked lewd-

ness, 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.' But there are other things which

the world approveth ; there are certain common principles wherein we

agree. Nature approveth goodness, justice, and truth, as corrupt as it

is, though not faith and sacraments. The unbelieving world reveren-

ceth these things as good, and of a divine original.

3. The third office of the Spirit is to be a comforter. Now riglit-

eousness affordeth peace of conscience, and quietness and holy secu-

rity : 2 Cor. i. 12, 'For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our con-

sciences, that in simplicity and godly sincerity we have had our con-

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versation in the world ; ' Ps. xcvii. 11, ' Light is sown for the righteous,

and gladness for the upright in heart ; ' Prov. xxix. 6, ' The righteous

doth sing and rejoice;' that is, whatever befalleth him, good or evil,

much or little, in life or death. And he hath comfort in his portion,

because what he hath he hath by the fair leave and allowance of God's

providence ; if it be little, that little is better than more gotten by fraud

and injustice: Prov. xvi. 8, 'Better is a little with righteousness than

great revenues without right ; ' Ps. xxxvii. 16, ' A little that a righteous

man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.' Suppose their

condition be evil, yet still they have ground of comfort ; if scorned or

neglected, yet he hath the comfort of his innocent dealing to bear him

out ; as Samuel when he and his house were laid aside : 1 Sam. xii. 3,

\* Behold, here I am ; witness against me before the Lord, and before

his anointed ; whose ox have I taken ? or whose ass have I taken ? or

■whom have I defrauded ? whom have I oppressed ? or of whose hand

have I received bribes to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will re-

store it you.' If opposed or maligned, as Moses: Num. xvi. 15, 'And

Moses was very wroth, and said unto the Lord, Kespect not thou

their offering; I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt

one of them.' If oppressed: Ps. cxix. 121, 'I have done judgment

and justice ; leave me not to my oppressors.' Suppose death cometh :

' The righteous hath hope in his death,' Prov. xiv. 32 ; Isa. xxxviii. 3,

' And he said, Eemember, Lord, I beseech tliee, how I have walked

before thee, in truth, and with a perfect heart.' When he is going

the way of all the earth, this will be a comfort to him, that he hath

done no wrong, that he hath served God faithfully, and lived with men

without guile and deceit. Oh, for the comforts of a dying hour ! The

crooked, the subtle, the deceitful have them not, but those that walk

with a simple plain-hearted honesty.

III. It is a choice fruit of the Spirit.

1. Because it conduceth so much to the good of human society. A

christian is a member of a double community, of the church and of the

world ; the one in order to eternal life, the other in order to the present

life : in the latter he is considered as a man, in the former as a chris-

tian. Now the righteous are pillars of human societies, that keep up a

spirit of truth and justice in the world, without which it would be but

as a den of thieves, or filled with liars, deceivers, robbers, enemies.

Remota justitia, saith Austin, quidfiunt regna nisi magna latrocinia f

The world cannot subsist without justice. ' The king's throne is estab-

lished by righteousness,' Prov. xvi. 12. The honour and rei)utation of

any nation is kept up : Prov. xiv. 34, ' Righteousness exalteth a nation.'

Never did the peo])leof the Jews, nor any other nation whose history is

come to our ears, flourish so much as when they weie careful and exact

in maintaining righteousness. And as to persons, all commerce between

man and man is kept up by it. Surely it is God, and not the devil,

that governeth the world, and distributeth the rewards and blessings

of this life ; therefore the way to do well in the world is not lying,

cozening, and dissembling, but a strict obedience to God's lioly will.

2. Because of the many promises of God, both as to tiie world to

come and the present life. As to the world to come, the question is

put, Ps. XV. 1 (and it were well if we would ])ut it oftener), ' Lord, who

shall abide in thy tabernacle ? who shall dwell in thy holy hill.^' And

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it is answered, ver. 2, \* He that walketh uprightly, and woilceth

righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart/ Others are

exchided : 1 Cor. vi, 9, ' Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not

inherit the kingdom of God?' So for this world there are many

promises. Take a taste : Prov. x. 2, ' Treasures of wickedness profit

not ; but righteousness delivereth from death.' How soon can God

blow upon and blast an ill-gotten estate ! Job xx. 12-15, ' Though

wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue ;

though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his

mouth ; yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within

him. He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up

again: God shall cast them out of his belly; ' and ver. 26, 'A fire not

blown shall consume him ; ' Job v. 3, ' I have seen the foolish taking

root ; but suddenly I cursed his habitation.'

Use 1. (1.) To show what a friend religion is to human societies,

that placeth so much in righteousness. It prevenleth all that is false,

bad, unjust or cruel, and teacheth us to be tender, not only over other

men's persons and estates, but names. Grace doth not abolish so much

of nature as is good, but refine and sublimate it, by causing us to act

from higher principles to higher ends, and maketh these duties doubly

dear to us, in the flesh and in the Lord.

(2.) It showeth where the safety of christians lieth, in their right-

eousness. God is their protector: 1 Peter iii, 13, 'Who is he that

will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?' And there

is a strong conviction in the consciences of wicked men : 1 Sam. xxiv.

17, ' And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I ; for thou

liast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.' Moral

duties are not small things, when the glory of God, the safety of his

people, and comfort of our sincerity lieth in them.

tlse 2. To press you to get this fruit of the Spirit.

1. Propound to do nothing but what is agreeable to righteousness

and honesty : Prov. xii. 5, ' The thoughts of the righteous are right, but

the counsels of the wicked are deceit,'

2. Be always exercising righteousness: Ps. cvi. 3, ' Blessed are they

that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.'

3. Teach it to your children : Gen. xviii. 19, ' I know Abraham, that

be will command his children, and his household after him ; and they

shall keep the way of the Lord, to do judgment and justice.'

[See more of this in Sermon on Ps. cxix. 121.]

SERMON XL

Goodness, righteousness, and truth. — Eph. v. 9.

DoCT. 3. That to make a christian complete in his carriage towards

men, to goodness and righteousness there must be added truth.

Let me inquire here— (1.) What is truth; (2.) That it must be

made conscience of by the children of light ; (3.) Why truth must be

added to goodness and ri<rliteousness.

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I. What is meant by truth ? Ans. Sincerity or uprightness in all

our speeches and dealings with men. But because integrity of life, and

uprightness in our commerce and dealings with others, is a great branch

of righteousness, therefore here we must consider it as an opposite to

falsehood or a lie in speech ; yet not excluding either godly sincerity,

which is the root of it : ' Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts,'

Ps. li. 6 ; or internal integrity and righteousness : Jer. v. 1, ' Run ye to

and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and

seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any

that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth ; ' where truth is put

for integrity of life. But here we take it chiefly for simplicity of

speech, without lying and dissimulation ; as also it is taken, Ps. xv. 2,

\*He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh

the truth in his heart ; ' that is, maketh conscience of what he speaketh,

ruling his tongue so as it may go with his heart. To understand this

sort of truth, we must consider what a lie is. Men are said to lie when

they do wittingly or willingly, and with a purpose to deceive by speech,

signify to others that which is false. The matter of a lie is falsehood,

the formality of it is an intention to deceive ; the outward sign is

speech. Gestures are a sign by which we discover our mind, but an

imperfect sign ; the special instrument of human commerce is speech.

Now there is a twofold lying — a lying to God, and a lying to men.

1. A lying to God is the worst sort of lying, because it argueth not

only falsity and evil hypocrisy, but misbelief or ill thoughts of God, as

if he did not know the heart and try the reins, and is contented to be

mocked with a false appearance. We lie to God when we put him off

with a false appearance and show of what is not in the heart, as if he

could be deceived with outsides and vain pretences : Hosea xi. 12,

'Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with

deceit ; ' meaning their false and deceitful pretences of repentance,

because they relented a little, and did some outward acts that might be

a sign and show of repentance, especially in a time of trouble : Ps.

Ixxviii. 3G, ' Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and

they lied unto him with their tongues.' Their hearts were not sincerely

set against sin, whatever pangs of devotion they had for the present:

Ezek. xxiv. 12, ' She hath wearied herself with lies, and her great scum

went not forth out of her.' When the pot was over the fire, the scum

came a-top, and seemed ready to be cast out, but it was swallowed up

again ; for all their pretences of repentance, they were not cleansed

from their open and notorious sins. To this purpose also is another

similitude: Hosea vii. 16, 'They return, but not to the Most High ;

they are like a deceitful bow.' They did not sincerely intend what they

})romised ; as a man that shooteth, but doth not level right, or take care

to direct the arrow to the mark. So they cast out promises to get rid

of trouble, but do not seriously set their hearts to accomplish them ;

their repentance was but as a show, they aimed at nothing in it but to

deceive God.

2. As to men ; and so there are several sorts of lies. We may dis-

tinguish them thus — either from the matter, or the end, or the

formality used in lying,

(1.) From the matter, and so a lie is twofold — assertory or

promissory.

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[1.] An assertory lie is when a man, in a matter that is past or

present, reporteth that as false which he knoweth to be true, and that

as true which he knoweth to be false. This is called in scripture

speaking with a double heart: Ps. xii. 2, ' They speak vanity every ono

with his neighbour, with flattering lips and with a double heart do

they speak ; ' or with a heart and a heart, as if he had one heart to con-

ceive of the matter as it is, and another heart to furnish the tongue.

Instances of this falsehood in our assertions, or untrue relating of

things done, are frequent ; as Ananias, who brought part of the money

for which he sold his possession, instead of the whole: Acts v. 3, 'Why

bath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back

part of the price of the land ? ' It was a lie, and a lie to the Holy

Ghost, as being pretended to be done by his motion and inspiration,

or because of his presidency in church affairs, where the Holy Ghost

doth all.

[2.] A promissory lie is when we promise for the time to come what

"we never intend to perform ; and this is the worse, because it doth not

only pervert the end of speech, which is truth, but we also defeat

another of that right which we seemed to give him in the thing

promised, which is a further degree of injustice, as being not only

against veracity, but righteousness. Vain and empty promises ai-e a

great evil, when we make show of kindness to others without any intent

to do them good : Prov. xix. 22, ' The desire of a man is his kindness ;

and a poor man is better than a liar.' The meaning is, that which is

desired of a man is his favour in such or such a business, wherein he

hath power to help you. Now many great men, that covet the praise

and reputation of doing a good ofiice or kind turn, are very forward

in promises, but fail in performance ; and therefore Solomon, who had

observed the course of the world, telleth you that a poor man that

loveth you, and will do his best, is a surer friend tiian such great men

as only give you good words, or sprinkle you with a little court holy-

water, but will do nothing for you.

[2.] From the end ; and so there are three sorts of lies — mendacium

Jocosum, the sporting lie, tending to our recreation and delight; men-

dacium ojiciosum, the officious lie, tending to others' profit; and

mendacium perniciosum, the pernicious and hurtful lie, tending to our

neighbour's prejudice.

(1.) The sporting lie, when an untruth is devised for merriment.

I do not remember any instance of this in scripture, unless it may be

intended in that place, Hosea vii. 4, ' They make the king glad with

their wickedness, and the princes with their lies.' They stick not at

any sin, so they may make the princes merry. But this I am suie of,

that it is a sin to speak an untruth, and we must not make a jest of

sin : Prov. xxvi. 19, ' So is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and

saitli, Am not I in sport? ' No ; if a christian will be merry, he hath

other diversions : James v. 13, ' If any be merry, let him sing psalms ; '

Eph. V. 4, 'Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which

are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks.' Let him not speak

things against the sense of his own mind, especially by false represen-

tations traduce the godly, and make religion ridiculous, and say, I am

in sport. Idle words are to be accounted for : Mat. xii. 36, ' I say unto

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you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account

thereof at the day of judgment/ Let him use harmless recreations^

without accusing his brother falsely, or shamming him with devised lies.

Now to this sporting lie a fable or parable is not to be reduced, because

it is an artificial way of representing truth ; as when Jotham bringeth

in the trees conferring and consulting about their hing, Judges ix. 8.

Nor yet such sharp and piercing ironies as we find used by holy mea

in the scripture; as when Elijah saith, 1 Kings xviii. 27, 'He is a god;

either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey ; or perad-

venture he sleepeth, and must be awaked ; ' for this is a notable way to-

make truth strike upon the heart with the more force.

(2.) The officious lie, for the help and relief of ourselves or others.

Instances we have of tliis in the scripture. Thus Rebecca teacheth

Jacob to lie, that he might gain the blessing, Gen. xxvii, ; and th&

Egyptian midwives saved the male children of the Israelites by feigning

they were delivered before they came to them, Exod. i. 17, 18 ; unless

it may be extenuated, that so it was sometimes, and they might send

to them to use the help of other women. Though it be so, they feared

God, and were rewarded by God. Non remunerata est fallacia, sed

henevoleniia — Not their lie, but their mercy was rewarded : their

mercy was commended, but their infirmity pardoned. So Rahab saved

the spies by telling the men of her city that they were gone, when she-

had hidden them under the stalks of flax, Josh. ii. 5-7. Thus Michal,

to save David, feigned that he was sick, 1 Sam. xiv. 14 ; and David

advised Jonathan to an officious lie for his safety, 1 Sara. xx. 6 ; and

Hushai by temporising with Absalom, preserved David, 2 Sam. xvi.

17-19 ; and to divide his counsels, pretendeth hearty affection to him.

But we are to live by rule, not by examples ; and a good cause must

be followed by lawful means ; and courage and constancy will do more

in these cases than dissimulation, and tend more to the glory of God,

and the preservation of ourselves and others.

(3.) There is a pernicious lie, to the hurt and prejudice of others.

Of this nature was that first lie by which all mankind was ruined :

Gen. iii. 4, 5, ' And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not

surely die ; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then

your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and

evil.' And Jacob's children's lie concerning Joseph : Gen. xxxvii. 31,

32, ' This we have found ; know now whether it be thy son's coat, yea

or no.' And that of the Jewish elders concerning Christ, who said

that his disciples stole him away by night. Mat. xxviii. 12-14. All

lying is forbidden, but more especially this sort. I say, all these sorts

are lies, for the scripture condemneth all without distinction : Eph. iv.

25, ' Wherefore put away all lying.' And all liars are shut out of the

new Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 8. And again, Rev. xxii. 15, \* Whosoever

loveth and maketh a lie' is cast into hell. They all violate the natural

order which God hath appointed between the heart and the tongue,

and the law which he hath given to preserve faith in the world. The

sporting lie is unnecessary, for we have other honest recreations where-

with to divert our minds. And though officious lies are not to the

hurt but good of others, yet they are to the hurt and prejudice of

the truth. A man is not to lie for God, and therefore not for another

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man ; he hindereth a p^reater good, which is the truth of commerce

between mankind, and lie hurteth his own soul. Sin depriveth us of

•a fl^reater <>;ood. And Augustin telleth us of one Firnms who was

Jirmus nomine and firmior voluntate, who being interrogated by the

persecutors about such a person or persons as he knew concealed,

resi^ndit mentiri nee posse nee liominem prodere, and suffered many

toiinents, till he obtained a pardon both for himself and them. But

■of all lies, the pernicious lie is most pernicious. To deceive others

with an untruth, or to lie to their wrong, is both horrible falsehood

and injustice.

[3 ] A lie from the formality used in making it may be distinguished

thus —

(I.) A lie committed in ordinary commerce, when we speak of things

or ])ersons otherwise than we know to be true. This is a lie ; for our

woids ought always to be agreeable to our minds. Thus Job speaketh

of his friends : Job xiii. 4, ' But ye are forgers of lies.' Because they

accused him unjustly, though it were not in a juridical process. And

Christ of the Jews: John viii. 55, 'And if I should say, I know him

not, I shall be a liar like unto you ;' and Ps. cix. 2, ' For the mouth

of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me ;

they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.' Thus impudent

backi)iters will in secret vent their calumnies and slanders, and avouch

the most false things as truth ; and so a good man is secretly hurt and

wounded many times, and his reputation and service prejudiced when

he knoweth it not.

(2.) A lie committed in courts of judicature; as Exod. xxiii. 1,

\* Thou shalt not raise a false report ; put not thine hand with the

wicked to be an unrighteous witness.' So ver. 7, ' Keep thee far from

a false matter ; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not ; for I

will not justify the wicked.' Now this is the most heinous sort of lying,

because it perverteth God's ordinance, appointed for the finding out of

right and wrong, truth and falsehood, and turns a tribunal of justice

into a record of iniquity : Ps. xciv. 10, ' He that chastiseth the heathen,

shall not he correct ? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he

know ? ' Partly because witnesses are sworn ; and perjury, a lie con-

firmed by an oath, is no small ciime : ' God will not hold him guiltless

that taketh his name in vain,' Exod. xx. 7. Partly because they are

bound to witness the truth, and the whole truth, concerning the fact

in hand, which in ordinary commerce we are not bound to do. Indeed

in ordinaiy speech our purpose should be to inform our neighbour, not

to deceive him ; but we are not bound to inform him in all things, or

to make known all that is true in every matter of fact, but when we

are called thereto by justice and charity. I must sj)eak falsehood at

no time, but I am not bound at every time to speak the whole truth ;

but in matters of testimony, I must speak all that belongeth to that

fact in question, without fiaud or collusion. Therefore this is the most

criminal sort of lying. Partly because my neighbour is greatly wronged

by it ; he is wionged by privy detraction, but more evidently wronged

■by a false testimony in judgment ; not only wronged in his reputation,

but in his life or estate ; not only before a few, but in the face of his

country, before all who shall have notice of it; and wronged in a

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«olemn way, not by whispers, but by a sentence given by God's deputies

•and officers in the throne of judgment or seat of justice.

II. Why must it be made conscience of by the children of light, or

those who are ' light iti the Lord' ?

I answer — For these reasons —

1. Because it is a sin most contrary to the nature of God, who is

truth itself; it is not only contrary to his will but to his nature : Titus

i. 2, \* In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised

before the world began.' He can do all things, but he cannot lie.

What a case had the world been in if God could lie, or were not of

undoubted truth ! for then we could be sure of nothing ; no sure direc-

tion by his word, nor comfort by his promises. Therefore lying is a

sin that maketh us unlike God. God cannot lie, nor command us to lie.

He can command us to take the life of tmother, for he commanded

Abraham to offer Isaac ; the life of all creatures are at his dispose.

He can command us to take the goods of another, as when the Israelites

spoiled the Egyptians of their jewels ; for he is the sovereign Lord of

all, and can transfer right and property as he pleaseth from man to

man : but God cannot lie, nor give command for any to lie, because it

is contrary to his nature. And there is an impossibility in the case :

Heb. vi. 18, ' That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible

for God to lie ; ' as it is impossible for God to cease to be God, or to act

contrary to his nature. Therefore there cannot be a greater deformity

or unlikeness to God than to be given to lying.

2. Because when God was incarnate, and came not only to represent

the goodness of the divine nature, but also the holiness of it as a pattern

for our imitation, Jesus Christ, this God incarnate, was eminent for

this part of holiness, for sincerity and truth : 1 Peter ii. 22, ' Who did

no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.' This was Christ's

character, and therefore it shonld be ours ; for this is true religion, to

imitate what we worship. You know Christ's commendation of

Nathanael : John i. 47, ' Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is

no guile.' Why an Israelite indeed ? Because he was like old Israel ;

for it is said of Jacob, who is also called Israel, that he was ' a plain

man, and dwelt in tents,' Gen. xxv. 27. We may say of a plain-hearted

christian, how weak soever he be otherwise. Behold a christian indeed,

because he is like Christ. Therefore it is prophesied that in the days

of the gospel : Zeph. iii. 13, ' The remnant of Israel shall do no iniquity,

nor speak lies ; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their month.'

They shall be all like Christ. This prophecy intimateth both duty

and event ; it showeth not only what christians should be, but shall

be, if they be true christians. Well, then, this is the essential com-

mendation of a true christian. Some of God's saints may be famous

for several graces, but all for truth ; Moses for meekness, Phineas for

zeal, Abraham for faith, David for devotion ; but eveiy one that is born

of God, and accepted of God upon the account of Christ, for sincerity

and truth. It is made the qualification of the pardoned to have no

guile : Ps. xxxii. 2, ' Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth

not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.'

3. Notliing maketh us more like tlie devil, who is a liar from the

beginning, and the father of lies : John viii. 44, ' Ye are of your father

the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do ; he was a murderer

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from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no

truth in him : when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own ; for he is

a har, and the father of it' All sins call him father, but chiefly a lie ;

for he brought sin into the world by the way of lying at the first. And

therefore to be given to lying argueth too much prevalency of the

satanical nature. The disposition to lie is the iiuiige of the devil, the

act is the work of the devil : Acts v. 3, ' Why hath Satan filled thy heart

to lie to the Holy Ghost ? ' and should the children of light be like

the father of lies?

4. It is a sin most contrary to the new nature wrought in the saints,

and seemeth to offer more violence to it than other sins. The new

nature may be considered doubly, either as to mortification or vivifica-

tion ; the sins we put off, or the graces it produceth : both from the

one and the other consideration the scripture reasoneth against lying.

From the ' corrupt nature' which is put off : Col. iii. 9, ' Lie not one to

another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds ; ' that is,

never suggest or say any false thing to the injury of another, since this

is a principal part of that corrupt nature which we have put off, and

course of life which ye have all renounced. Naturally we are all full of

guile and falsehood ; now as a battered vessel must be new cast before

it be brought into any frame, so till the heart be renewed we aro

crooked, perverse, deceitful. Now what the new nature renounceth

and destroyeth must not be cherished again. Sometimes from tho

' new nature' which is put on ; as Eph. iv. 24, 25, ' And that ye put

on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true

holiness : wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with

his neighbour ; for we are members one of another.' Therefore this

is a very odious and unseemly sin in a christian, and inconsistent with

the grace which he hath received, or contraiy to that sincerity and

true holiness which is the fruit of regeneration. Therefore God pre-

sumeth that his people will hate and abhor this sin : Isa. Ixiii. 8, ' For

he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie.' He

expecteth that his children will not deal falsely, nor circumvent and

deceive others, since he hath framed them for this very thing, cured

and set straight the crooked spirit in them, and disposed and fitted

them to deal sincerely, or to do all things as in his sight, according to

his will, and for his glory.

5. It is a sin most contrary to human society. Man is by nature

t,oiov ttoXltckov, a creature fitted for society. Now all society is

founded in truth ; take away truth and you destroy all human

converse, and there could be no living, nor trading, nor dwelling

together ; for if there be no truth, we are unfit to be trusted, and so iti

overthroweth all the commerce of the world. If it weie lawful to vend

counterfeit money without any restraint, how suspicious would men be,

and cast away true gold and silver as suspecting all ? Now money,

which is the material instrument of commerce, is not so necessary as

truth and fidelity, which is the root and foundation of it. Therefore

God, as for other reasons, so for the good of mankind, hath condemned

all lying, that mutual commerce may not be destroyed. Much more

doth this hold good where the community is not only human, but

christian, and so we nil belong to the same mystical body ; so the apostle

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Tirgeth it : Epli. iv. 25, ' Speak every one truth with his neighbour, for

■we are members one of another/ Members should seek one another's

welfare as much as they do their own : and it is monstrous for one

member to deceive and defraud another ; therefore the Lord com-

mandeth truth, and tbe Holy Spirit worketh this truth in us, that we

may be heartily and really serviceable and faithful one to another, as

members of the same body,

6. Lying is a sin very hateful to God, and against which he hath

expressed much of his displeasure. Partly by express declaration of

his mind. A lying tongue is reckoned among those six things which

God hateth : Prov. vi. 17, ' A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands

that shed innocent blood.' Nay, that it may not be forgotten or lost in

the crowd, it is again mentioned in ver. 19, ' A false witness that

speaketh lies, and him that soweth discord among brethren ; ' so again,

Prov, xii. 21, 22, ' There shall no evil happen to the just ; but the

wicked shall be filled with mischief : lying lips are an abomination to

the Lord ; but they that deal truly are his delight.' Now certainly we

should hate what God hateth, and love what God loveth ; for to nill

and will the same things is true amity and agreement. Partly by his

threatenings of destruction, both in this life and in the life to come:

Ps. V, 6, ' Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing ; ' Prov, xix. 5,

' He that speaketh lies shall not escape ; ' first or last God will cut

them off as unfit for human converse. The first remarkable instance

of God's vengeance in the new testament was for a lie : Acts v. 5, \* And

Ananias hearing these words, fell down, and gave up the ghost ; and

great fear came on all them that heard these things.' And in the life

to come : Rev. xxi. 8, ' All liars shall have their part in the lake that

burnetii with fire and brimstone.' Now, when God is so express in

denouncing his judgments against such kind of sinners, all that have a

tender heart will tremble.

7. It is a sin shameful and odious in the eyes of men. The more

common honesty any man hath, the further he is from it, especially the

more he hath of the spirit of grace : Prov. xiii. 5, ' A righteous man

hateth lying ; but a wicked man is loatlisome, and cometh to shame.'

All men hate a liar, because they suspect him ; this is that they gain

by lying, that they are the less credited, and not believed, even when

they speak truth. Therefore it concerneth God's children to keep up

the full value of their testimony, and to carry it so that all their words

may be received with respect and reverence. Christ used such plain-

ness in his converse as a man, that his word was enough : John xiv.

12,, ' If it were not so, I would liave told you.' The Persians had such a

respect for truth, that he that was three times convicted of a lie was

never more to treat or speak in public affairs. Indeed men most guilty

of it cannot endure to be char\*red with it. Zedekiah smote Micaiah

on the cheek when he told him of his lying spirit, 1 Kings xxii. 23, 24.

Those that do not abstain from it as sinful count a lie shameful.

Though they have no conscience to make a lie before God, yet they

count it a disgrace to take the lie from men, because thereby they are

judged unfit for human society, or useless, if not dangerous to others.

III. Why this must be added to goodness and righteousness.

1. Because they cannot be preserved without it. Not goodness, for

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it will only be a counterfeit show, that endetli in empty words, and

promises or pretences of kindness when there is liatred in the heart :

' Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in trnth,'^

1 John iii. 18 ; and again, E,om. xii. 9, 'Let love be without dissimu-

lation ; abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.' Many

pretend in their professions, speeches, and promises, a great deal of

goodness, but in their hearts intend it not, but seek to get loose upon all

occasions. Men live by interest more than by conscience ; so righteous-

ness cannot be preserved except there be truth; they are seeking-

some fair pretence for an unjust and wrongful course. When once the

heart is hardened in lying, it is fit for all manner of injustice; for a liar

will stick at nothing, and most of our injurious practices are covered by

a lie : Prov. xii. 17, ' He that speaketh truth showeth forth righteous-

ness ; but a false witness, deceit.' They that make no conscience of

lying will stick at no manner of unrighteousness ; but when their

interest leadeth them, will swallow perjury as well as lying, or purloin

and overreach others when they have an opportunity. There is no liold

of them ; for when there is such a gap opened in the conscience, what

sin will be kept out ? If the laws restrain them from violence, they

will do injury to others by deceit, which is so natural to them. And

so the security of the world is not sufficiently provided for till truth be-

joined to the other graces.

2. The life of goodness and righteousness lieth in truth, and so they

cannot be thoroughly exercised unless truth be added. Sincerity runs

through all the graces. As to the upper part of religion, truth en-

liveneth all our worship. Where God is sincerely loved and worshipped,

he is more thoroughly served and obeyed : Isa. xxxviii. 3, ' Eememher

now, Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and

with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight;'

1 Chron. xxviii. 9, ' And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God

of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing

mind.' Sincerity doth its best. So in the lower hemisphere of duty,

truth maketh us more exactly righteous and industriously good. It

maketh us more exactly righteous. There are many cases arise about

what is just and equal, and surely it is very profitable to have a deep,

solid, and large understanding, and where we are at a loss ourselves, to

consult with others ; but the best lesolver of hard questions, next to-

the Holy Ghost, is in our own bosoms. Sincerity will sooner inter{)ret

our duty ; it is fleshly wisdom which breedeth all or most of our per-

plexities. A sincerely righteous man hath that within him that

inclines him to righteous things : Prov. xii. 5, ' The thoughts of the-

righteous are right ;' Ps. xxxvil. 31, ' The law of God is in his heart ;

none of his steps shall slide.' So it maketh us industriously good. A

man truly good is much directed by the inclination of his own heart :

Isa. xxxii. 8, ' But the liberal man deviseth liberal things, and by

liberal things he shall stand.' They are always seeking out occasions

of doing good : Heb. vi. 10. ' Ye have ministered to the saints, and do

minister.' And he speaketh there of a labour of love. There needeth

not much ado with the sincere, for their hearts are inclined to these

things.

Use 1. To reprove many, because they make so little conscience of

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truth. Lying is a more general and common sin than we imagine.

Those expressions intimate it : Rom. iii. 4, ' Let God be true, but every

man a liar.' The phrase intimateth, that though there be none in God,

yet there is much falseness and unfaithfulness in men ; and it is said,

Ps. Iviii. 3, ' The wicked are estianged from the womb ; they go astray

as soon as they are born, speaking lies.' Falsehood and lies are kindly

sins to a natural heart, they break out early ; before they go, they went

astray ; the seed of these sins is in them, as if they began to lie as soon

as they came out of their mother's womb. And as it is an early sin, so

it is universal : Ps. xii. 1, 2, ' The faithful fail from among the children

of men, they speak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering-

lips and with a double heart do they s])eak.' This is the general dis-

position of mankind. The most sacred bonds will not bind or hold

them to any truth and righteousness ; and a man knoweth scarce who

to believe, the simplicity of commerce being almost lost in the world.

Use 2. It showeth how much they give suspicion that they are not

children of light who have not this truth wrought in them. Some

good men may lie, as the scriptures show, but they are not given to lying.

The very act is a foul sin ; but every lie doth not argue a graceless

estate. It is a sin more contrary to sincerity than other sins, yet some

few acts are not altogether destructive of it. David prayeth, ' Remove

from me the way of lying,' Ps. cxix. 29 ; that slioweth he was too

prone to it, he had been too faulty in that kind. How many acts show

the habit is very hard to determine ; and in so weighty a case as the

assurance of salvation, we should not leave the matter suspicious and

questionable. He that will sin as often as may stand with saving grace

shall never have assurance of his sincerity till he break this course and

way of lying by repentance ; and for the present there is a bar against

his actual entrance into heaven, or a present unfitness, till his recon-

ciliation be made with God.

Use 3. See that ye be found in this grace also, as well as in goodness

and righteousness. God is truth, and requireth truth, and delighteth

in truth: Ps. li. 6, ' Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts.' It is

your strength, as a girdle to your loins : Eph. vi. 14, ' Having your loins

girt about with trutii.' It is your comfort, downright honesty breedeth

rejoicing : 2 Cor. i. 12, ' For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our

conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly

wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the

world.' Therefore we should make great conscience of truth, putting

away all lying.

The means are these —

1. Get your hearts healed and renewed by the Spirit. Till we have

a right spirit, we may speak truth out of interest, or for other reasons ;

but we are always in danger of being crooked and deceitful, for the old

heart is inclined to lying and deceit. It is called the ' old man, which

is corrupt according to his deceitful lusts,' Eph. iv. 22. There are

swarms of lusts will put us upon it, malice, envy, pride, vainglory,

worldly affections.

2. Let us hate it as a horrid sin ; do not think it a venial matter:

Ps. cxix. 163, ' I hate and abhor lying, but thy law do I love.' A

sliffht hatred is not sufficient to guard us against it.

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3. Kemember 3'our spiritual conflict. You never give your enemy

so great an advantage as by falseliood and guile of spirit. Satan's

weapons against you are wiles and darts : ' wiles/ Eph. vi. 11, and ' fiery

darts,' ver. 16. Against bis darts or blaspbemous tbougbts you oppose

faitb, and against bis wiles your strengtb lietb in downrigbt bonesty.

Righteousness is your breastplate, and trutb your girdle, ver. 14. This

will guard you against bis temptations, and give you strengtb and

courage in tbe day of sore trial ; it is strengtb against bim both as a

tempter and an accuser.

4. Heedfulness, or a constant watch over j^our tongue: Ps, xxxix.

1, ' I said, I will take beed to my ways, tbat I sin not witb my tongue.

I will keep my moutb witb a bridle, wbile tbe wicked is before me ; '

Ps. cxli. 3, \* Set a watcb, Lord, before my moutb ; keep tbe door of

my lips.' And tbis watcb is quickened by tbe fear of God, in whose

sight and hearing we always are.

5. Avoid tbe causes of lying. I shall mention some of them —

[1.] Pride and self-esteem. We all affect to seem better than we

are, and what we want in real worth we make up by lying and foolish

boasting. The ' lying tongue,' and ' tbe tongue that speaketb proud

things,' are joined together, Ps. xii. 3.

[2.] Flattery, or a desire to ingratiate ourselves with great ones : Ps.

xii. 2, ' With flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.'

A self-seeker is apt to flatter and fawn upon all that is rich and great

and mighty, and to smooth them up with falsehoods and applauses.

Flattering and tale-bearing is many men's trade.

[3.] Fear of men and distrust of God. This puts many upon their

shifts to avoid their displeasure : Deut. xxxiii. 29, ' Thine enemies

shall be found liars unto thee ; ' that is, feignedly submit themselves

to thee.

[4.] Covetousness : Prov. xxi. 6, ' The getting of treasures by a lying

tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.'

[5.] Doing that which we are ashamed to own ; as naughty children

and servants commit faults, and then cover them with a lie. Now it is

dangerous to stand in need of a lie to help us out ; the devil bath a

tie upon you.

SERMON XII.

Proving ivhat is acceptable to the Lord. — Eph. v. 10.

The apostle goeth on farther to declare what is required of them tbat

walk as children of the light. Our duty consists of two parts — eschew-

ing evil and doing good. How to do good is shown in this verse ;

what eschewing evil is required of us, the next verse showeth.

In the words observe —

1. The act, ZoKL^dt,ovTe^, ' Proving.'

2. Tbe object, to evapearov tw Kvplw, 'What is acceptable (or well-

pleasing) to the Lord Christ'

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I. The act, ' proviug.' The word siguifieth so to prove as to approve

and practise.

1. Sometimes it signifieth bare searching or examining : 1 Thes. v.

21, ' Prove all things,' So it noteth an accurate and continual study

and endeavour to know God's will, by reading and meditating : Ps. i.

2, ' And in that law doth he meditate day and night.' By hearing and

trying, as the Bereans are commended, Acts xvii. 11, 'In that they

received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scrip-

tures daily, whether those things were so.' By praying and earnest

seeking : Prov. ii. 3, 4, ' Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest

up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and

searchest for her as for hid treasure.' This, and the use of all other

holy means, is the searching and examining commended to us.

2. Proving is put for approving : Rom. ii. 18, ' And knowest his will,

and approvest the things that are more excellent.' We must not

examine only, but approve what is good and true.

3. Taking upon ourselves an obligation to practise it: Rom. xii. 2,

' And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the

renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and accep-

table and perfect will of God.' The meaning is, that you may under-

stand and perform your duty : Phil. i. 10, ' That ye may approve things

that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the

day of Christ.' Approve by adopting into your manners and practices :

it is SoKLfid^eTe, the same word. Therefore, besides proving and approv-

ing, there must be performing, at least an endeavour ; otherwise it is

a ridiculous thing, and that which will never stand us in any stead,

to examine what is pleasing to God, and practise the contrary.

II. The object, that which is pleasing or ' acceptable to the Lord.'

There is a difference between things.

1. Some things utterly displease God, as sin: 2 Sam. xi. 27, 'But

the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.'

2. Some things are not displeasing unto God, as all natural and in-

different actions, which are not forbidden, but allowed by him : Eccles.

ix. 7, ' Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a

merry heart ; for God now accepteth thy works.'

3. Other things are commanded by him by a positive law, but have

no natural goodness in themselves, setting aside God's command.

Now these things are pleasing to God, as man performeth his required

duty ; but not so pleasing as the weighty things of the law, which

have a moral good in them, if God had given no express command in

the case. So it is said, Rom. xiv. 17, 18, ' For the kingdom of God is

not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy

Ghost ; for he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to

God and approved of men.' Mercifulness, peaceableness, delight to

do good one to another, these are acts of obedience to Christ, and for

his sake will be accepted with God, and are of good report with men.

So morals must be preferred before rituals, and the great evangelical

duties before moral ; as love to God and faith in Christ before acts of

goodness and righteousness to men ; \* For without fliitli it is impos-

sible to please God,' Heb. xi. 6. So Acts x. 35, \* But in every nation

he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted of him.'

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4. There are some things which do most please God, as things

eminently good are acceptable to him in the highest degree ; as, for

instance, faith in Christ is ])leasing to God, but a strong faith is more

acceptable than a weak, which needeth props and crutches : John xx.

29, ' Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou

hast believed ; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have

believed ; ' that is more pleasing and acceptable to God. So love to

God is also an acceptable thing, but a fervent love doth more please

him: John xiv. 21, 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth

them, he it is that loveth me ; and he that loveth me shall be loved of

my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself to him ; ' Ps.

cxlvii. 11, ' The Lord taketh i)leasure in them that fear him, in those

that hope in his mercy/ So for obedience to God : 1 Thes. iv. 1,

' Furthermore then, Ave beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the

Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and

to please God, so ye would abound more and more.' So for duties to

men ; the apostle had mentioned ' goodness, righteousness, and truth,'

now ' proving what is acceptable to God ; ' that is, what is the eminent

discovery of any of these graces, that you may excel in all goodness,

righteousness, and truth. A renewed man should practise all christian

graces and virtues in the highest degree, that he may be more pleasing

unto God, that he may be eminent in the faith and love of Christ, and

goodness and righteousness to men. Therefore we should not barely

inquire what is our duty, but what is well-pleasing and most accept-

able to God.

Dock That proving what is acceptable to God is one great duty

which belongeth to the children of light.

I shall explain this point by these considerations —

First, Our great end and scope should be to please God, and be

accepted with him. The apostle speaketh in his own name, and in the

name of all that are like-minded with himself : 2 Cor. v. 9, ' Wherefore

we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.'

That is a christian's scope and work, and this he carrieth on living or

dying. In the body it is his business to please God, out of the body it

is his happiness to be accepted with him. While he is in the body,

he would be found still in a course of pleasing God ; and when he

goeth out of the body, he would be found in a state of well-pleasedness

and acceptation ; one cannot be without the other. ■ And it must needs

be so —

1. With respect to God, whose favour ife our happiness, whose wrath

is our misery, upon whom we depend for life and being and all things.

Dependence begets observance. Men take themselves to be obliged to

I)lease those on whom they have their whole dependence, and are very care-

ful not to offend them, if possible; and if they be offended, to be speedily

reconciled to them. As the men of Tyre, Acts xii. 20, when Herod was

highly displeased with them, ' They came with one accord to him, and

having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace,

because their country was nourished by the king's country.' The mat-

ter stands thus between us and God, his displeasure is our destruction :

1 Cor. x. 5, ' And with many of them Gfod was not well pleased, for

they were overthrown in the wilderness.' His being pleased is our

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liappiness, both here and hereafter. Here we need him, his presence

with us, to direct us in our doubts, to relieve us in our straits, to supply

us in our wants, to comfort us in all our troubles, and to strengthen

us against our weaknesses. Now they that would have the comfort of

God's presence and company in all conditions, and have so much to do

with God in the world, they ought to set themselves to please God, and

observe his will in all things according to his word : John viii. 29, ' And

he that hath sent me is with me : the Father hath not left me alone,

for I do always the things that please him ; ' 1 John iii. 22, ' And

whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments,

and do those things which are pleasing in his sight.' And hereafter

our happiness lietli in our presence with God ; and indeed the one can-

not be without the other. None can live with God hereafter but those

that take care to please God before they go hence: Heb. xi. 5, 'By

faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not

found, because God had translated him ; for before his translation he

had this testimony, that he pleased God.'

2. With respect to man, who may be considered either as to his first

creation or renovation by Christ. The first creation infers an obliga-

tion, our renovation by Christ an inclination to do things grata Deo,

acceptable and well-pleasing to God.

[1.] As we are creatures. We were made and sent into the world

for this end, that we might approve ourselves by a constant course of

obedience to the God that made us, and finally be accepted with him,

and received into his glory. The wise God made nothing in vain ; and

surely he made not man to fill up the number of things, as stones ; nor

to increase in growth and stature, as plants ; nor to eat and drink, and

serve appetites, as beasts ; but he made us to serve and please and glorify

him : Prov. xvi. 4, ' The Lord hath made all things for himself.' All

creatures were made to glorify him in their several capacities : Rom.

xi. 36, ' For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things ; to

whom be glory for ever. Amen.^

[2.] As we are new creatures we own the old obligation ; for we enter

into covenant with God to become his servants ; and faithful servants

have this only aim, to please their master. Therefore all our aim must

be, that we may be acceptable unto the Lord ; for by entering into

covenant we ' choose the things that please him,' Isa.lvi. 4. This is the

fixed determination of our souls. We enter into covenant with God

that we may become his and do his will. So that we do not only own

the obligation, but by the grace of renovation we receive both direction

and inclination to do what is pleading to God. Direction, this is the

effect of the renovation of our minds : Rom. xii. 2, ' But be ye trans-

formed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that

good and acceptable and perfect will of God.' A man in his pure

naturals is neither able savingly to understand or do the will of God,

but by grace he is fitted for both. Take grace as light, and it fits us

to receive God's counsel and direction ; and therefore the apostle saith

here, ' Ye are light in the Lord ; walk as children of the light, proving

what is acceptable to the Lord.' Take grace as strength, and it en-

ableth and inclineth us to do what is pleasing in his sight : Heb. xii. 28,

' Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with rever-

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ence and godly fear.' For it inclineth us to make his glory our scope,

and his will our rule ; for the tendency of the new creature is to live

to God.

3. With respect to the thing itself. The seeking to please God and

be accepted with hira is so necessary and ])rofitable to us that —

[1.] We cannot be sincere unless this be our aim and scope. One

main difference between the sincere and hypocrite is in the end and scope.

The one seeketh the approbation of men, the other the approbation of

God ; the one is fleshly wisdom, the other is godly simplicity and sin-

cerity : 2 Cor. i. 12, ' For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our con-

science, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom,

but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.'

Godly sincerity is making God our witness, approver, and judge. He

is sincere whose religion beginneth and endetli in God, acts in truth

from God, and purely for God.

[2.] This maketh us serious and watchful, and to keep close to our

duty ; for the aptitude and fitness of the means is judged of and mea-

sured by the end. When we have fixed our end and scope to please

God, we will address ourselves to such means as are fitted to that end,

and make straight towards it without any wandering. If it be our great

end to be accepted with God, and please God, we will take the more

care of our actions, that they be agreeable to his will. Whereas other-

wise we live at peradventure, neither taking care that we may not

offend : Ps. xxxix. 1, 'I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin

not with my tongue ; I kept my mouth with a bridle while the wicked

is before me.' Nor humbling ourselves when we have offended : Jer.

viii. 6, ' No man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have

I done ? ' So that the exercise both of watchfulness and repentance

dependeth on frequent reflections upon our end,

[3.] This will solace and comfort us under the difficulties of obed-

ience. As (1.) When it is troublesome to confine our desires and

actions within the compass of our rule ; but when we consider we are

not to please the flesh, but to please God, it will help us to mortify the

deeds of the body, and to live in a constant course of self-denying

obedience. Otherwise, Eom. viii. 8, \* They that are in the flesh cannot

please God.' They have another master, the corrupt nature within

them, the desires of which they seek to gratify ; they are debtors to

another lord, ver. 12. So (2.) In reproaches. Men are displeased with

a faithful thorough obedience to God, which not only the carnal world,

but the spiritual part of the world, so far as it is carnal, disliketh.

Therefore when we are censured and traduced, 1 Cor. iv. 13, ' Being

defamed, we entreat : we are made as the filth of the world, and the

off-scouring of all things unto this day.' If God will count me faithful,

it is no matter what the world thinketh of me. So (3.) In an afflicted

estate. The desire and aim to please God maketh us indifferent to all

conditions : Phil. i. 20, ' So Christ shall be magnified in my body,

whether it be by life or by death.' As a traveller taketli the way as

he findeth it, foul or fair, so it conduceth to the end of his journey. So

that it is absolutely necessary to fix this as our end and scope.

Secondly, We please God by doing what he hath required of us in

his word. There are certain things evident by the light of nature

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which belong to our duty ; these must not be overlooked : Micah vi.

8, ' He hath sliowed thee, man, what is good ; and what doth the

Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk

humbly with thy God ? ' The things there mentioned are evident by

the light of nature. That we should carry ourselves justly towards

men, and with reverence and obedience to the divine majesty, is evident

by the light of nature, as well as sci-ipture. But the revelation that

he hath made of our duty to us by the word is more clear, full, and

certain.

1. It is more clear : Ps. cxix. 105, ' Thy word is a lamp to my feet,

and a liglit to my path.' The use of a lamp is by night, and the light

of the sun shineth by day. Whether it be by day or night with us,

we clearly understand our duty by the word of God ; in all conditions

we may know there how to behave ourselves. Once more, the word

' path' noteth our general choice and course of life; the word 'feet'

our particular actions. Now whether the matter that we would be

informed of concernetli our choice of the way that leadeth to true

happiness, or else the direction of any particular action of ours, still

the word directeth a humble and well-disposed mind. So that here

our duty is clearly stated ; and if a man standeth in awe of the word,

and be not divided between conscience on the one side, and lusts and

interests on the other, he cannot easily remain in doubtfulness, or

miscarry.

2. It is more full; for the book of nature is blurred by man's

apostasy from God, and degeneration from his primitive excellency ;

and our chief good and last end being altered by sin, we strangely mis-

take things, and weighing them in the balance of the flesh, which we

seek to please, we put light for darkness and evil for good : Isa. v. 20,

' Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil ; that put darkness

for light, and light for darkness ; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet

for bitter ; ' and so miserably grope in the dark, and cannot see clearly

our way to true happiness. And besides, man's condition is such, that

he needeth a supernatural remedy by a redeemer, which, depending

on the mere grace of God, cannot be found out by bare natural light;

for natural light can only judge of things necessary, and not of such

things as depend upon the arbitrary will and love of God, as our redemp-

tion doth : John iii. 16, ' God so loved the world that he gave his only-

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but

have everlasting life.' Besides, nature is dark in things proper to its

cognisance. The great lines of our duty are fair and legible, the out-

ward work is written upon our hearts : Eom. ii. 15, ' Which show the

work of the law written in their hearts.' Abstinence from gross sins,

performance of external duties, some notices of good and evil, are escaped

out of the ruins of tlie fall, and serve in part to convince of sin and

mind us of our duty ; but that full, entire, spiritual obedience which

is due to God is not known by nature. Therefore, besides the candle

of the Lord within us, which is reason, God hath set up a lamp in his

sanctuary, which is the scripture, to direct us in the way to heaven ;

and this is clear and full, and compriseth all that is necessary to our

duty and happiness.

3. It is more certain, as having a greater stamp and impress of God

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iipoa it. Everythinp: that liatli passed God's hand discovereth its

author. Tlie light of nature showeth itself to be of God, much more the

light of scripture, wherein he hath discovered more of his wisdom, good-

ness and power, as being sucli a revelation of the mind of God as is

fit for God to give and us to receive, suited to the nature of God, to

preserve a due honour, esteem and reverence of his blessed msijesty, and

exactly calculated for our necessities, to teach us the way of recovering

out of sin, and obtaining our true and proper happiness, and coming

attested to us with such evidence from heaven as we cannot rationally

withstand : 2 Peter i. 19, " We have also a more sure word of prophecy,

whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a

dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.'

It is surer than the light of nature, as not liable to such debate and

uncertainty, which must be cleared before man's duty can be stated to

him ; and more sure than miracles, oracles, visions, as being put into

writing ; and a faithful record, as the constant measure, standard, and

rule of faith and manners for the use of God's people in all ages. Now

it is good to see how David compareth those two revelations of the

mind of God, Ps. xix., where he first adniireth the brightness of the sun,

and then the purity of the law ; the joining of both which meditations

showeth that the world can be as ill without the word of God as with-

out the light of the sun. What would this inferior world be without

the light of the sun, but a great cave and obscure dungeon, where men

would creej) up and down like worms out of their holes ? And besides,

the comparing of both together showeth that there are two books

wherein we shall do well to study, and both made by God himself, and

both manifesting and discovering God to the world — the book of nature

and the book of scripture. You cannot look upon the book of the

creatures, but in every page and line you will find this truth presented

to yonr eyes, that there is an infinite eternal power that made all things,

and is to be owned, reverenced, worshipped, and obeyed by us ; this is

enough to leave the world without excuse. But in the book of the

word you may see more of God and the way to enjoy him. This doth

more powerfully convince man of his misery, and clearly show him his

remedy. The use which the psalmist makes of these books is notable;

of the first, to admire the glory of God by the beauty of the heavens ;

of the second, to humble and awe man by the purity and strictness of

the law, as all religion lieth in the knowledge of God and ourselves.

This latter book being more perfect, should be our daily study, to pre-

vent error and mistake, and that we may get the true knowledge of

God's will ; for many do many things out of zeal and religion which

God abhorreth : John xvi. 2, ' The time cometh that whosoever killeth

you will think that he doth God service.' And others obtrude many

things on the faith of believers without warrant : Isa. viii. 20, ' To the

law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it

is because there is no light in them.' Examine all tilings by the rule

of God's word, what is conformable to his will, what not, without suffer-

ing yourselves to be deceived by false opinions or persuasions. And

besides, in our practice we may know what is acceptable, either as to

our speeches or actions. As to our speeches : Prov, x. 32, ' The lips

of the righteous know what is acceptable ; but the mouth of the wicked

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speaketh f lovrardness ; ' that is, they know what is acceptable to Grod ;

they are instructed out of his word how to order their speech for profit,

that it may be good, and minister grace to the hearers ; others easily

bewray the corruption of their hearts by their tongues. So for all our

actions towards God and men. For worship, God accepteth that which

he hath required ; other things are vain oblations : Isa. i. 12, 13,

' When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your

hand, to tread my courts ? Bring no more vain oblations ; incense is

an abomination unto me ; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of

assemblies I cannot away witli ; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.'

And for our conversation with men, how to show forth righteousness,

goodness and truth, we may know what is the will of God in his word ;

this rule will teach us : Gal. vi. 16, ' As many as walk according to

this rule,' <fec. Onr rule is not left indifferent for us to choose, nor

arbitrary for us to impose, but it is fixed in the word of God revealed in

the scripture.

Thirdly, If we would know God's mind revealed in his word, we

must use search and trial. Jo/ct/xa^oi/re?, ' proving,' noteth great

diligence and care that we may know the mind of God ; for it greatly

importeth us, and we are often pressed to it : 1 Thes. v. 21 , ' Prove all

things, hold fast that which is good.' If we see but a piece of money

that hath the king's image stamped upon it, we bring it to the touch-

stone to see if it be right : do so with doctrines and practices, bring

them to the law and to the testimony, see how they agree with God's

word : 1 John iv. 1, ' Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the

spirits whether they are of God ; because many false prophets are gone

out into the world.' Every man that teacheth, some S})irit or other

cometh upon him ; therefore try what kind of spirit it is, whether it

be a formal worldly spirit, as some fashion their religion according to

the world, or a heavenly spirit, which is of God ; whether it be a spirit

of bitterness against the saints, or a spirit of love, meekness, and

gospel sincerity. This is the course we must take if we would know

the mind of God in doubtful matters. We must seriously weigh all

things in the balance of the sanctuary, read, hear, confer, pray, meditate,

use all holy means to know God's will.

I will — (1.) Prove this is a christian's duty ; (2.) State it.

1. That it is every christian's duty, in reference to his own warrant

and settlement of conscience, to use a judgment of discretion, and not

to depend upon the judgment of others; yea, not to satisfy himself

barely with the public judgment of the church, but to try things, that

he may know that he is in God's way, and wherein he shall be approved

and accepted of him.

[1.] Certainly every one that feareth God should be acquainted with

his word, and have his senses exercised therein, that by long conversa-

tion in holy things he may come to have a discerning faculty. The

apostle speaketh of some, Heb. v. 14, ' Tliat have their senses exercised

to discern both good and evil ; ' which are gotten by long use. There-

fore much study, meditation, and attention is necessary to find out the

true sense and meaning of God's word, that we may discern between

good and evil. And still this habit is more to be increased in us.

We are told in the book of Job, chap, xxxiv. 3, ' Tlie ear trieth words,

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as the mouth tasteth meat.' But it had need be a judicious ear that

shall as readily distinguish doctrines as the mouth doth meats, as they

are hurtful and noxious to us. Now christians being to have this ear

of discretion, to try and judge of what is spoken to them, they should

be much acquainted with the word of God, to get this habit of spiritual

prudence : Prov. xiv. 15, ' The simple believeth every word ; but a

prudent man looketh well to his going,' Christians should be men of

experience and knowledge, free from the itch of fancies and novelties,,

and free from the distempers of passions, prejudices, and interests, or

whatsoever may corrupt their taste. On the other side, God complaineth

that his people were strangers to his law : Hosea viii. 12, ' I have

written unto them the great things of my law, but they were counted

as a strange thing.' We should not be strangers to the scriptures ;

everyone (especially in a disputing age, wherein sects abound), accord-

ing to his measure, should be satisfied of the truth which he professeth,

that he be not deceived, and carried away with every foolish insinua-

tion, and so embrace Leah for Kachel, Babel for Sion, and every fond

suggestion for the truths of God.

[2.] Because we are not to take up opinions by chance, but by choice :

Jer. vi. 16, ' Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, ask

for the good old paths, Where is the good way ? and walk therein, and

ye shall find rest to your souls.' Men in a tempest are sometimes cast

upon a place of safety, rather than make thither out of intention and

foresight ; therefore a man needeth to search and try things ; the more

he receiveth truth upon evidence, the more firm is his assent, and the

more steady and constant is his practice ; for then he hath (2 Peter iii.

17) 'a steadfastness of his own ;\* he doth not stand by the steadfastness of

others, or the common consent ; he hath proper reasons within himself

to sway his assent, or command his practice; therefore a christian is to

prove and try all things.

[3.] The judgment of others will be no plea for us in the last day, if

we be wrong ; for we are to follow the dictates of our own consciences.

I say not that we are to follow our own private fancies, but conscience

enlightened by the word. So ' the spiritual man jutlgeth all things,'

1 Cor. ii. 15 ; that is, for his own satisfaction, otherwise it will not

excuse us that we depended on the judgment of others : \* If the blind lead

the blind, both fall into the ditch,' Mat. xv. 14. Not only one, but

both ; not only the blind leader and guide, but those that are led by

them into a wrong way ; it endeth at last in perdition.

2. I will state it, since many abuse this principle of trying all things,

and upon the pretence of it give over themselves to a vertiginous spirit,

wandering in a maze of errors, till at length they come not only to

despise their guides, and all the helps which God hath offered in the

church, but to cast off all fear of God, and sense of religion itself.

Therefore I shall state it.

[1.] We should be so far confirmed in principles and supreme truths,

that we should be more ready to maintain than examine them and

commit them to the uncertainty of dispute. In things clear and

evident, it is a madness to he still doubting and making inquiries:

Deut. xii. 30, 'And that thou inquire not after their gods.' It is

dangerous to loosen foundation-stones.

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[2.] We must not be so still trying and proving as to hold nothing

certain in religion. This is to be 'ever learning, and never able ta

come to the knowledge of the truth,' 2 Tim. iii. 7, and to turn the

sureness of the christian faith into a mere scepticism, and distract our

minds still with new inquiries.

[3.] Not to try so as lo cast ourselves on a temptation. Men take-

occasion hence to run through all sects and opinions in religion. Why ?

They say they must try all things ; that is, as they interpret it, run into-

the mouth of danger, and think no harm will come of it. No ; the

meaning is, in these things which by the providence of God are pro-

pounded to you for truths, and come to you in the way of an ordinance :

Acts xvii. 11, ' These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in

that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched

the scriptures daily whether those things were so.' Or if cast by

necessary ordinary conversation on differing parties ; or when doubts-

and scruples arise in our minds. Smothering of doubts breedeth

atheism and hardness of heart. Or as to the present truth : 2 Peter

i. 12, ' Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remem-

brance of those things, though ye know them, and be established in.

the present truth.' So that a man is not to seek snares, and cast

himself upon temptations, but when God in his providence puts him in

such places and times where satisfaction is necessary, he must exercise

himself in the word of God, that he may distinguish between good and

evil,

[4.] Some things are controversial in religion, and above the size and

capacity of some men's gifts. Now for them to inquire too curiously,

or to define rashly in such cases, is against the apostle's rule : Kom.

xii. 3, ' For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that

is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to

think ; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man-

the measure of faith.' These presume above their measure, and are

like little children, that attempt to run before they can go ; and there-

fore they should content themselves with such truths as concern

christians in their own vocation. God's gifts are divers, as their call-

ings are in their nature and quality different. The weak in the faith

must be received and owned as christians, but not to doubtful disputa-

tions : Rom. xiv. 1, \* Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not

to doubtful disputations.'

[5.] When we are to prove all things, the meaning is not that we-

should study controversies, and be able to answer all the cavils of the

adversary. That is a special gift required of the minister ; he must be

able, Titus i. 9, ' To hold fast the faithful word as he hath been taught,

that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the

gainsayers.' But every man is bound to search, so as to be resolved as

to his own choice and practice. And though every christian cannot

answer all things that are objected against the truth, yet he is to be

\* fully persuaded in his own mind,' Rom. xiv. 5, and so far to look intO'

things as may make for the settling of his conscience, that he may

neither do things necessary to practice rashly, and without deliberation:

Prov. xix. 2, 'That the soul be without knowledge is not good ; and he

that hasteneth with his feet sinneth ; ' nor after deliberation doubtingly:

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Eom. xiv. 23, ' He that doubtetli is damned if lie oat, because lie eatetli

not of faith ; for whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.'

[G.] We are not so to search as to depend upon our private judg-

ment, or slight the helps which God hath left in the church for the

establishing of the truth, even pastors and teachers. Them hath God

left in the church, ' that we may not be carried about with every wind

of doctrine,' Eph. iv. 11, 14. Men are not to despise the judgment of

their teachers in matters of faith, nor rest upon it as infallible. He

that hath a bad sight should not throw away his spectacles. Where

helps are instituted, and have a special calling, and a special promise

of a blessing, they should not be despised. In all necessary things,

' Christ's sheep hear his voice,' John x. 3. But in lower matters, they

may be shrewdly mistaken, and work great trouble to the church.

Avoid these rocks, and the duty is clear, and of great importance. By

searching and proving the truth loseth nothing, as gold doth not by

being brought to the touchstone ; but you gain much settlement, feel

more power and comfort in what you know.

Fourthly, We must search and try, that we may walk as children

of the light. The night was made for rest ; the light is not given us for

rest and idleness, but for work. The apostle prayeth for the Colos-

sians, that they ' might be filled with the knowledge of God's will, in

all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that they might walk worthy

of the Lord unto all pleasing,' Col. i. 9, 10. That is the end of knovv-

ledge : Isa. ii. 3, ' He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his

paths ; ' for the end of learning is practice.

1. The more we fix this end, the sooner shall we get knowledge,

and the more will it be increased to us. John vii. 17, he that will do

the will of God shall know what doctrine is of God. A humble holy

lieart, resolved to practise whatsoever shall be the will of God, will not

be long left in doubt ; the more you make conscience of knowing

truths, you shall know more.

2. As we shall know sooner, so we shall know better; we shall

approve the truth in our consciences, and find the comfort of what

we know in our own souls, if we pursue the practice of it : Phil. i. 9,

10, ' And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more

in knowl(3dge and iu all judgment,' aladrjacL, in all sense, 'that ye

may approve the things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and

without offence till the day of Christ.' We know our duty by the

word, but we find the goodness of it by practice and experience.

3. We are not else good faithful servants to God: Luke xii. 47, 'And

that servant which knoweth his lord's will, and prepared not himself,

neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.'

On the other side, John xiv. 21, 'He that hath my commandments,

and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me

shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself

to him.' First have, and then keep. Therefore we must search out

what is pleasing to God, that we may do it. Knowledge is not to be

sought that we may be puffed up with it, and rest in mere knowing,

and so please ourselves with idle and useless speculations, but to govern

and order our practice.

Use 1. Is for information.

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1. That the judgment of discretion must be allowed to all christians.

In controversies about religion it is usually asked, Who shall be

judge ? The church hath a public judgment what doctrines are to be

publicly recommended ; but every man liath judicium discretionis, a

judgment of discretion for himself. God hath given every man a taste

for his body, to discern what is wholesome and to discern what is

noxious, and so also for his soul and conscience.

2. That the new creature hath great advantages above others of

knowing the truth. The Holy Si)irit dwelleth in them : 1 John ii. 20,

'Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.'

They are light in the Lord ; they may go to God for direction with

more boldness : Ps. cxliii. 10, ' Teach me to do thy will, for thou art

my God ; thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness.'

They have a promise : Ps. xxv. 14, ' The secret of the Lord is with

them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant;' Hosea xiv.

9, 'For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in

them ; but the transgressors shall fall therein.' The sanctifying Spirit

, is given to sanctify us, to give us the saving knowledge of God by the

word. They know the truths contained there clearly and effectually,

which others know superficially.

3. That it is not easy to acquit ourselves as children of the light ;

much study and search into the scriptures is required of us : Ps. i. 2,

' But his delight is in the law of the Lord ; and in that law doth

he meditate day and night. And much heedful ness, that we walk

accordingly ; much watchfulness over our hearts : Pro v. iv. 23, ' Keep

thy heart with all diligence ; ' and our ways, ver. 26, ' Ponder the

path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.'

Use 2. Is for reproof to several sorts.

1. Some that take no care to know their duty. This is great neg-

ligence, or downright hypocrisy : 2 Peter iii. 5, \* But this they are

willingly ignorant of ; ' which in a matter of such importance is

damnable : Heb. ii. 3, ' How shall they escape which neglect so great

salvation ? ' They will not inquire, because they have a mind to hate,

or no mind to embrace.

2. Some that walk at peradventure, and live rashly, as governed by

passion, lust, and appetite, rather than any sure and steady direction :

Ps. cxix. 133, ' Order my steps in thy word, and let not iniquity have

dominion over me.' These cannot escape reigning sins.

3. Some are out in the end, either please the flesh or the lusts of

man. The rule is not, what will please the flesh, but to do the will of

God : 1 Peter iv. 2, ' That he no longer should live the rest of his

time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.' Not

what is acceptable to men, but what is pleasing to God : Gal. i. 10,

\* For if I yet please men, I should not be the servant of Christ.'

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SERMON XIIL

And have no fellowsldp lolth the unfruitful ivorJcs of darkness, hut

rather reprove them. — Eph. v. 11.

There are two parts of the spiritual life — things to be clone, and things

to be avoided ; in both the children of light must show their fidelity to

God, in doing good and avoiding evih Of the first we have spoken

already in ver. 10, and have showed that it is not enough to do a few

good things, to which all consent, but we must diligently search and

find out what is acceptable and well-pleasing to God. I now come

to the second branch of our duty, avoiding evil, ' And have no fellow-

ship with tlie unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.'

Wherein take notice —

1. Of the object, or what is forbidden, ' The unfruitful works of

darkness.'

2. Our duty and carriage about it, in two things —

[1.] 'Have no fellowship with tliem,' have nothing to do with them.

[2.] ' But rather reprove them ; ' that is, by all means show that you

utterly dislike that course of life.

Doct. That the children of light should live in a perfect abhor-

rence of, and stand at a great distance from, the unfruitful works of

darkness.

1. I shall explain.

2. Prove this point.

I. For the explication ; and there — (1.) The object ; (2.) The acts

of duty about it.

First, For the object. We have a general and unlimited expression,

' The unfruitful works of darkness.' But what they are we may col-

lect from the context, ' Uncleanness, fornication, evil concupiscence,'

&c. ; and Rom. xiii. 12, 13, the apostle reckoneth up other things: 'Let

us cast off the works of darkness, &c., and let us walk honestly as in the

day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wanton-

ness, not in strife and envying.' These and suchlike heathen practices

are such as the apostle intendeth.

Now in this expression you may take notice of tw^o things — (1.)

They are called ' works of darkness ; ' (2.) They are said to be

' unfruitful.'

1. They are called ' works of darkness ' for these reasons —

[1.] Because they are done by men in their carnal estate, w'ho are

destitute of the Spirit of God, and all saving knowledge of his will.

The corrupt estate of nature is called darkness, as the renewed estate is

called light : 1 Peter ii. 9, ' He hath called us out of darkness into his

marvellous light.' And chiefly because the one live in ignorance, and

the other estate beginneth with the illumination of the Holy Spirit ;

and therefore these sins are called ' works of darkness,' because igno-

rance is the mother of them. Did men know the amiable nature ot

God, the purity of his holy law, the matchless love of Christ, the true

worth of souls, the blessedness of eternal life, and the danger of perish-

ing for ever, it would spoil the devil's works, and he could not have

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such a hand over them as usually he hath : ' As obedient children, not

fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance,'

1 Peter i. 14. Ignorance is the mother of profaneness ; they neither

know the terror nor the sweetness of the Lord, and tlieretbre wallow in

■their impurities. Light is an awing thing ; when once men come to

the knowledge of the truth, they are ashamed of what they prac-

tised before. But how hard a matter is it to make men understand or

i-egard anything while ignorant, and destitute of saving knowledge !

[2.] Because they are suggested by the temptations of the devil, who

is the prince of darkness, and the ruler of the darkness of this world ;

and therefore called 'his lusts,' John viii. 44 ; 'his works,' 1 John iii.

8. He enticed the world of mankind from God, and still detaineth

them by their slavery to their lusts. Did men know whose work they

are a-doing they would sooner desist. The devil is the great architect

of all wickedness, and the first mover of it ; though carnal men do not

what they do in love to him, but their own flesh, yet it is he sets them

a- work, and cheateth them into rebellion against God, and abuse th

the ignorance and error of their minds to draw them to these sins.

[3.] Because they cannot endure the light, but seek the veil and

covert of secrecy. There is a threefold light —

(1.) Natural. They rebel against this light : Job xxiv. 13, ' They

are of those that rebel against the light ; they know not the ways thereof,

nor abide in the paths thereof ; ' and ver. 17, ' For the morning is to

them even as the shadow of death ; if one know them , they are in the

terror of the shadow of death.' He meaneth by light there the light of

the sun or of the day ; and he instanceth in two sorts of sinners, the

robber and murderer, who do their pranks mostly in the night ; and

the adulterer, who waiteth for the twilight ; and he saitli to both of

them, 'the morning is to them as the shadow of death.' Their actions

are so shameful and infamous that they dare not be seen in them. And

the apostle telleth us, 1 Thes. v. 7, that ' they who are drunken are

-drunken in the night.' The greatest lovers and approvers of sin are

ashamed to do it openly. There is not only a fear of danger, but a

shame of doing actions so unworthy a man publicly. Till the consci-

ence of right and wrong, honesty and dishonesty, be wholly extinct in

their hearts, there is a natural bashfulness which maketli them shun

the light of the day. They are conscious to themselves that sin is an

abominable thing, and punishable in all civil societies. Though their

endeavour to commit it secretly showeth their atheism, in that they

seek to hide it from the eye of the world, and regard not the eye of God

that is upon them, yet their affecting the veil of darkness and secrecy

showeth this, that they have an apprehension that sin is evil.

(2.) Light spiritual, the light of God's word : John iii. 20, ' For

every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light,

lest his deeds should be reproved.' The gospel hath not only a refresh-

ing light to comfort the penitent, but a reproving and discovering

light to trouble the sinner ; and therefore before men feel it they fear

it, and are loath to have their guilt revived. An unsound heart shuns

all means of searching and knowing itself, which shows that those prac-

tices wherein they allow themselves are deeds of darkness, stolen waters,

and bread eaten in secret.

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(3.) There is another light, and that may be called practical, or the

light of a holy conversation: Mat. v. 16, 'Let your light so shine

before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your father

which is in heaven.' The truly godly are an awe to the wicked ; for in

lioly and diligent believers religion is exemplified. A christian is or

should be a living image of God, and so a powerful conviction of the

ungodly ; and the more men know them, the gi-eater excellency will

they see, and the greater efficacy of conviction will they feel, and their

own practices are more shamed and disgraced. Now these sins cannot

endure this light that shinetli into the consciences of them that commit

them, out of the conversations of the godly ; therefore they either stand

aloof out of prejudice, and condemn them by hearsay and general

rumour, or seek to obscure this liglit by contumelies and slanders : 1

Peter iv. 4, ' Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them

into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.' For men speak to

disgrace that excellency which they will not imitate ; they spend their

time in satisfying their lusts, and are troubled that others will not do

the like, but seek after another society.

[4.] Because these men are condemned to everlasting darkness ; for

if they live and die in these sins without repentance, they are unavoid-

ably cast into utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Therefore, as the way of the godly is compared to a growing light, so

the way of the wicked to an increasing darkness : Prov. iv. 18, 19, ' The

i^ath of the just is as the shining light, that shinetli more and more

unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness, they know

not at what they stumble.' The morning light is always growing until

it Cometh to the mid-day and noon, when the sun is in its greatest

strength and brightness, and the day in its perfection : so the right-

eous increase in grace more and more, and go from strength to strength,

till they come to their perfect estate. Now on the contrary, ' the way

of the wicked is as darkness.' As the evening twilight increaseth to

midnight or the thickest darkness, so they go on from sin to sin till

they have plunged themselves into everlasting destruction ; for con-

traries must be explained in the same manner.

2. These are said to be unfruitful by a /x€[coaL<;, that is, damnable ;

as Heb. xiii. 17, ' That is unprofitable for you.' The meaning is,

hurtful and pernicious ; however, the expression is emphatical. These

works produce not only no good fruit, but certainly bring forth evil

fruit, and prove bitterness in the end. So the apostle saith, Eom. vi.

21, 'What fruit had you then in those things whereof ye are now

ashamed ? for the end of those things is death.' There is no solid

fruit and benefit to be gotten by sin ; it bringeth nothing but disgrace,

shame, loss of time, strength and estate, and hereafter eternal death :

Gal. vi. 8, ' For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap cor-

ruption.' Which is to be heeded by us, that we may not be inveigled

by its pleasant and deceitful bails. Sin promiseth much, but per-

formeth nothing, and therefore is often called deceitful ; as Eph. iv, 22,

' Deceitful lusts ; ' Heb. iii. 13, ' The deceitfulness of sin,' Sin smileth

upon the soul with enticing blandishments. Satan told our first

parents, ' Ye shall be as gods,' Gen. iii. 5 ; and still we promise our-

selves something from sin, some contentment, some profit ; for no man

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would be wicked gratis, merely for his mind's sake, or without an aim

at some further end. Mere evil, as evil, cannot be the object of choice ;

there is some fruit or benefit expected in all that we do, but sin will

never make good its word to us.

[1.] It doth not answer expectation ; the sinner looketh for more

contentment and satisfaction than he doth enjoy : Eccles. v. 16, ' And

what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind ? ' It is a fruitless

enterprise ; so that very experience is enough to confute it ; and that

is one reason why objects of sin are loathed when we have our fill of

them : 2 Sam. xiii. 15, ' And Amnon hated her exceedingly, so that

the hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater than the love where-

with he loved her.' Men's eyes are opened, and when the lust is

satisfied, it beginneth to be contemned ; they see what horror of con-

science they have brought upon themselves. Keason taketh the throne

again when lust is satisfied, and scourgeth the soul with bitter remorse ;

the fruit is shameful.

[2.] It is not valuable ; the profit will not counterbalance the loss,

nor the pleasure the pain : Mat. xvi. 2G, ' What is a man profited if he

shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? ' Men hazard their

souls, and it may be gain a little wealth ; that is the worst bargain a

man can make. Besides, this cometh with a curse, that within a little

while eateth it out : Prov. x. 2, '^ Treasures of wickedness profit nothing,'

So it is in the eye of faitli at least a fruitless enterprise to seek to

grow rich by sin. Compare the pleasure and pain ; the pleasure is

a short contentment, that is gone as soon as it cometh, and when it is

gone it is a thing of nothing, but the pain is eternal. But to speak of

what is of present feeling ; it raiseth a tempest and storm in the con-

science, which is not easily allayed : Hosea viii. 7, ' For they have

sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind.' The pleasure and

fancy in sin is lost as soon as enjoyed, but the sting is not so soon

gone. The crop doth answer the seed, and usually with increase. They

that sow the wind can expect to reap nothing but the wind ; yet they

reap the whirlwind. A man that feels the gripes of a surfeit buyeth

his pleasant meat at a dear rate ; and what a sorry purchase doth he

make that losetli his time and strength, and after all this expense gets

nothing but horror of conscience and trouble of mind ! Certainly men

would not lie so long in sin if they would recollect themselves and

consider, "What have I gotten since I was the devil's bond-slave, but a

blind mind, a troubled conscience, and a hard heart, and it may be

shame and disgrace in the world ? what a folly is it to pursue that

which will bring me no profit ! One beginneth to be awakened when

once he cometh to say, Job xxxiii. 27, ' I have sinned, and perverted

that which is right, and it profiteth me not.' Whatsoever sin pro-

miseth or sinners fancy, sin at length will be found to be an unprofitable

course, yea, utterly destructive. What do men get by drinking,

gaming, chambering and wantonness ? what by all the lusts of youth,

and the bold attempts of riper years, but an ill name and a worse con-

science, a diseased body, and many times an entangled and maimed

estate ; a doubtful heart, and at length the mist of darkness is reserved

for them for ever ? Oh, that we could oftener put this question, Eccles.

ii. 2, \* What doeth it ? ' what shall I gain by these vain delights and

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sinful practices ? Wo are often quarrelling with God ; what profit is it

to serve the Almighty ? Mai. iii. 14, ' Ye have said, It is vain to serve

dod ; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances?' Job

xxi. 15, ' What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what

profit should we have if we pray unto him ? ' surely it would make us

stop in a way of sin if we did ask, What profit ? If it be delightful

to the sensual part, in the end it biteth like a serpent : Rom. ii. 9,

^ Tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doeth evil.' As Elisha

dealt with the Syrian army, he blinded them all the way, till he had

brought them into the midst of Samaria, 2 Kings vi. 20, then he opened

their eyes that they might see their danger ; so Satan blindeth sinners

till they come to destruction, and then conscience filleth them with

horror and despairing fears, and the enchantment is dissolved, and they

awake in flames and horror.

Secondly, The acts of our duty about it; and they are two — (1.)

That we must have no fellowship with them ; (2.) But reprove them

rather.

1. That we must have no fellowship with them in evil. To under-

stand that, we must consider how many ways we have fellowship with

them.

[1.] If we do the same things that others do. He that committeth

sin alone, and without example, is a sinner ; but he that committeth

sin after the example of others hath fellowship with the unfruitful

works of darkness, joineth with others to promote the devil's kingdom

in the world ; therefore have no fellowship, give not a bad example to

others, and follow it not if given by others ; for by giving and taking

evil example, there is a fellowship between sinners, and they drive on a

common trade, whether they lay their heads together about it, yea or

no ; therefore we are not to have fellowship in sin, in whole or in part,

in a greater or in a lesser measure. No ; we are to turn from all sin

with detestation : Isa. xxx. 22, ' Get ye hence ; ' Hosea xiv. 8, ' What

have I any more to do with idols ? ' Yea, we must avoid the very

\* appearance of evil,' 1 Thes. v. 22 ; for no sin, or anything like it, will

become the children of light. Well, then, this is the principal sense ;

do not the same things ; whosoever hath a hand in the sin will have a

share in the punishment.

• [2.] If we be accessory to the sins of others, which we may be many

ways. I touched upon it, ver. 7 ; but we must not be so, for every

agent is known to Grod, and cannot escape his discovery and punish-

ment ; not the secret contrivers and counsellors, as Jonadab to Amnon,

Achitophel to Absalom, Jezebel to Ahab ; not the actors and execu-

tioners, as the elders of Israel, and by their procurement the sons of

Belial employed by Jezebel in the murder of Nabotli ; not the abettors

and assistants, as Joab and Abiathar in Adonijah's treason ; for God

can search into the deepest secrets, and hath knowledge both of the

offenders, and the quality and measure of their oftence, and will render

to every one accordingly. Therefore for a warning, let us see how we

may have any fellowship in these things, which are so hateful to God,

and do so ill become our renewed estate.

(1.) If we counsel, persuade, allure, or entice others to sin. These

are Satan's decoys, who being ensnared themselves, draw others into th?

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net. Thus those that provoke others to drunkenness by inviting them

to drink more than they would, or the necessities of nature call for, or

by healthing engage them to it ; besides, that the first occasion of it

was a heathen drink-offering, which therefore the christians refused

with the danger of their lives, as several have proved : hihamus pro salute

imperatoris. The casuists condemn it, as it is provocatio ad aquales

calices. And we read in the book of Esther, chap. i. 8, ' And the

drinking was according to law, none did compel ; ' that is, that none

should drink more or oftener than it pleased himself. So when men

stir up lust in others by lascivious speeches, or persuade others to trans-

gress, or blow the coal in strife or contention, or allure them to any evil :

Prov. i. 10, ' My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.' This

was the devil's sin to tempt our first parents. Gen, iii. ; and all tempters

play the devil's part.

(2.) By commanding that which is evil. This is the sin of those

that have power over others ; as David commanded Joab to set Uriah

in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire from him, that he may

be smitten and die, 2 Sam. xi. 15 ; and Joab obeyed this wicked direc-

tion, and so became guilty of innocent blood. So if parents or masters

command their children or servants to do anything that is evil.

(3.) By consenting, though we be not the principal actors ; as Ahab :

1 Kings xxi. 19, 'Hast thou killed, and taken possession ?' Ahab is

said to kill, though Jezebel laid the plot, and others executed it ; yet

Ahab consented, and took the benefit of it. Therefore ' Hast thou

killed ? '

(4.) By abetting, aiding, and assisting in the conveyance of the sin ;

as Jonadab assisted Amnon in getting an occasion to satisfy his lust on

his sister Tamar, 2 Sam. xiii. 5. If you teach men the way, or contrive

liow to bring about their sin, you are accessory, and come into a fellow-

ship of the guilt.

(5.) By applauding, approving, or praising the sin, which is the guise

of flatterers : Kom. i. 32, ' They not only do the same, but have pleasure

in them that do it ; ' when men approve, applaud, and take delight

in them that commit enormous practices. Yea, the prophet inveigheth

against them ' that put evil for good, and good for evil ; and darkness

for light, and light for darkness,' Isa. v. 20 ; and this not so much out

of error of mind, as flattery and deceit, which addetli a farther degree

of wilfulness and perverseness to the sin. And to this head may be

referred those that extenuate and lessen an evil to the hardening of

others, that call drunkenness good-fellowship or taking a cheerful cup,

gluttony good housekeeping, voluptuousness recreation or necessary

refreshing, worldliness good husbandry, and revenge and duelling main-

taining their honour ; they honest the name of lust with love, or some

other plausible terra. Thus do we beguile and cheat our own souls

and the souls of others by notions that countenance sin, and in effect it

is but making traps for souls.

(6.) By carelessness to prevent the sin. Whether it arise out of the

mere sloth of the flesh, as many have no great love to their own or

others' souls, and merely for their own ease and quiet suffer them to go

on in their soul-destroying wickedness ; or whether it be for want of

hatred of sin, as if it were not so dangerous ; or neglect of the duties

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of our office, as if you hold your peace and connive at them where God

calletli you to speak against them, or neglect your duty as ministers

and magistrates : 1 Sam. iii. 13, ' I will judge his house for ever, for

the iniquity which he knoweth ; because his sons made themselves vile,

and he restrained them not.' So that a culpable omission may make

us accessory to their sin.

2. The other duty is, ' But rather reprove them.' Now reprove we

may by deed or word. The former is of chief respect in this place, for

he speaketh of infidels, with whom they had not so much familiarity

as to reprove them in word ; and following their evil example, being

the sin condemned, the opposite duty or reproof must be by contrary

manners and conversation,

[1.] By deed, or the example of a holy life; as 'Noah condemned

the world,' Heb. xi. 7. He might condemn them as a preacher of

righteousness by his doctrine, but chiefly by preparing an ark with so

much cost and diligence, and to show how necessary it was to use some

iheans for their safety. So are we to condemn the lazy and unbelieving

world by our diligence and seriousness in the heavenly life, and by our

sobriety and watchfulness to reprove their indulgence to fleshly lusts

and unclean practices by our christian walking.

[2.] By word, when it may be done with profit ; as the apostle saith

of the infidel, when he cometh into christian assemblies, ' he is con-

demned of all, and judged of all,' 1 Cor. xiv. 24; namely, as he

heareth doctrines there contrary to his practice. But in ordinary con-

verse we are to reprove these things also, and convince those that fall

into them of the great evil they lie in : Lev. xix. 17, ' Thou shalt

not hate thy brother in thy heart, thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy

neighbour, and not sufi'er sin upon him ; ' or, as it is in some transla-

tions, ' not bear sin for him.' Here are two arguments — First, You

hate your brother, you have not that love to him, if you let his soul

perish for want of your admonition. Secondly, You bear sin for him,

contract guilt upon yourself, when by your means he might be

reclaimed.

11. The reasons of the point.

1. Because there should be a broad and sensible difference between

the children of light and the children of darkness. Certainly God's

aim was to distinguish and set apart a peculiar people from the riff-

raff' of mankind, and that not only by his decree and purpose within

himself, but by some sensible and manifest difference, that should be

visible and conspicuous to the world ; and this not only by his own

dispensations of favour and respect to the one, and not unto the other :

Ps. iv. 3, ' But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly

for himself ; ' but by their carriage and conversation : 1 John iii. 10,

\* In this the children of God and the children of the devil are mani-

fest;' 1 John V. 19, 'But we are of God, and the whole world lieth

in wickedness.' God would have us to show to whom we do belong ;

and therefore it doth not become the children of God to border too

near upon the wicked. If the difference be not sensibly kept up, they

dishonour their Father, and so the two seeds are not manifested ; but

it is a nice and difficult case to distinguish them, and you perplex the

cause, and make it doubtful whom we shall reckon to the one or the

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other sort. Surely it is a grief to the Holy Spirit that you are so like

the devil and his children, and yet profess a nearness to God. Christ

hath done his part to difference you from the world, and you will

not declare the difference, and make it manifest. You harden the

world, and they will think that to distinguish between the seeds is

factious singularity, not regular zeal ; and hold up their ways with the

greater pretence, as justified by you. If you be proud, covetous,

envious, voluptuous, backbiting, wanton, where is the difference? When

God hath made a difference, you unmake it again, and confound all

by walking according to the course of the world; it is a confusion

of what God hath separated. God made the difference when none was,

by the power of his grace, and you must keep up the difference.

2. This difference is discovered by those actions that are proper to

either state ; for actions are agreeable to their principle, and in actions

must this difference be expressed, or how is it visible? Both show

forth the influence of an unseen power, both the children of God and

the children of the devil, the children of light and the children of

darkness. The powers are unseen, both God and Satan ; and the

principles are unseen, unless they discover themselves in operations

suitable : Kom. viii. 5, ' For they that are after the flesh do mind the

things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the

Spirit.' The devil driveth on his instruments furiously to act wicked-

ness, and God would not have us flatter ourselves with an imaginary

respect to him, but hath put the trial of our love upon some visible

demonstration : 1 John v. 3, ' For this is the love of God, that we keep

his commandments ; and his commandments are not grievous.' Our

Saviour says, John xiv. 21, 'He that hath my commandments, and

keepeth them, he it is that loveth me ; and he that loveth me shall be

loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself to him.\*

And therefore the children of light must live in a perfect abhorrence

of, and keep at a distance from, the works of darkness. Every root

beareth proper fruit ; we do not expect grapes from thorns, nor figs

from thistles ; but from a good tree we expect good fruit. A good tree

cannot bear ill fruit, as a kindly and ordinary production : Mat. vii.

16-18, 'Ye shall know them by their fruit. Do men gather grapes

of thorns, or figs of thistles ? even so every good tree briugeth forth

good fruit, and a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree

cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good

fruit.' It is there spoken of the fruits of doctrine, but it is true also of

the frui<ts of grace in the hearts of believers ; for grace is nothing but

Christ's heavenly doctrine imprinted on our hearts and minds, and there

it bringeth forth fruit like itself.

3. This distinction is to be kept up on the part of the godly, and so

conspicuously held forth, that they may either convince or convert the

wicked. God intended that the conversations of his people should be a

living instruction ; as in many places : Mat. v. 16, ' Let your light so

shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your

Father which is in heaven ; ' that is, holiness must so shine forth that

the world may be convinced or converted to God. God is glorified by

either, chiefly in their conversion ; or if not so, in their conviction : their

condemnation is justified, and it maketh the justice of his punishment

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more clear and evident : Phil. ii. 15, 16, ' That ye may be blameless

and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked

and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as liglits in the world,

holding forth the word of life.' All Grod's chiklren are lights. God is

the Father of liglits ; Christ is the great light that came into the world;

ministers are lights by office, as tliey dispense God's word publicly.

All christians are lights by their general calling, and they are to hold

forth the word of life too ; that is, in their profession and practice they

must discover the way to life revealed in the gospel. Some will fall in

love with it, which is matter of joy to us ; others will be reproved and

convinced by it, which is matter of glory to God, not only in their final

doom, but as their mouths are stopped, and they cannot easily bespatter

religion, when they see the splendour and lovely beauty of it in your

conversations. Well, then, if we have such a charge upon us, and it

be such a blessed work to bring about the salvation of others, we ought

to keep at a great distance from the works of darkness ; for if our deeds

be like theirs, how do we convert or convince them ? Those that do

not desire to do good to others are not children of light, and they that

blemish their conversations with the pollutions of the world do not

behave themselves as children of light. When the sun and moon are

eclipsed, and lose their light, it sets the world on wondering ; and it is

observed of all when godly men miscarry. See another place, 1 Peter

ii. 12, ' Having your conversations honest among the gentiles, that

whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may, by your good

works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.'

4. The children of God are fitted and prepared for this, to abstain

from sin. If wicked men be afraid or ashamed to do these things in

the light of the sun, and they cannot easily overcome the wrestlings of

conscience, how can the children of God do these things, who have the

light of grace ? If conscience give back when we are tempted to foul

sins, how much more will the new nature give back with great abhor-

rence ? 1 John iii. 9, ' Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit

sin ; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is

born of God.' He cannot bring his heart to it. That may be justly

expected from men, which their principles sufficiently prompt them

unto. It is true there is such a weakness in God's children that they

need to be exhorted, and yet such an aversion from sin that it may be

justly expected they should have no fellowship with the works of dark-

ness. There is flesh in us as well as Spirit, and christians may act from

either principle ; but the Spirit is in predominancy, or else we are not

true christians. Therefore it may reasonably be expected that the

motions and operations of the flesh should be overruled and suppressed.

There is indeed too much advantage for Satan to work upon by our

carnality and averseness from God, our nearness to this world, and

strangeness to the world to come ; but being enlightened and sanctified

by the Holy Spirit, there is more to check these temptations.

5. The ioconveniencies are great that will follow if God's children

should have any fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness ; our

pretended communion with God will be interrupted : 1 John i. 6, 7,

' If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we

lie and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the

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light, we have fellowship one with another.' The name of God is dis-

honoured, 2 Sam. xii. 14 ; the world is hardened and justified, Ezek.

xvi. 52; religion is slandered. The wicked labour to cover this light

with clouds of disgrace and detraction : 1 Peter ii. 12, ' That whereas

they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works,

which they shall behold, glorify God.' They will be glad to find an

occasion from your miscarriage. Your own peace is lost : Ps. li. 8-12,

' Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast

broken may rejoice. Kestore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and

uphold me with thy free Spirit.'

Use. Is to press the two duties in the text.

1. ' Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness ; ' that

is, do not join or partake in the sins of the carnal world, though they

seem to be authorised by vulgar and common practice. To this end

remember —

[1.] You must not do as others do, but do as God requireth. You

must live by rule, not by example. Doth the law of God, by which

you must be judged, allow of any sin ? They are children of darkness

and disobedience that ' walk according to the course of this world,'

Eph. ii. 2. The Israel of God are tliose that walk according to rule :

Gal. vi. 16, ' As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them,

and mercy, and on the whole Israel of God.'

[2.] Love God, and love his law, and love his people, and the infec-

tion is prevented. Love God : Ps. xcvii. 10, ' Ye that love the Lord,

hate evil,' Love his law : Ps. cxix. 165, ' Great peace have they that

love thy law, and nothing shall ofFend them.' Love his people : 1 John

ii. 10, ' He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is

none occasion of stumbling in him ; ' that is, so far as you love him as

a brother, as one that is obedient to God ; otherwise the sins of a

godly man may be a strong temptation to us. Therefore your love to

his people must come from the two former, from a sincere love to God

and his law, and then it is a help to you.

[3.] We must eschew all unnecessary and voluntary friendship and

familiarity with wicked men : Ps. xxvi. 4, ' I have not sat with vain

persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers ;' Prov. xii. 11, ' He that

followeth vain persons is void of understanding,' There are two reasons

of this caution. First, To prevent infection, lest you be drawn to walk

in their ways; he that walketh in the sun is insensibly tanned: Prov.

xxii. 24, 25, ' Make no friendship with an angry man ; and with a

furious man thou shalt not go ; lest thou learn his ways, and get a

snare to thy soul.' Agrippa by converse with Caligula the heathen

emperor learned his manners ; and as Caligula affected divine honour,

so tlid Agrippa, for which God smote him that he died, as Josephus

tells us. Therefore we should be as little as we can in scandalous and

tempting company ; if you presume to touch pitch, you cannot escape

defilement. Secondly, The other reason is, that they may not be hard-

ened in an evil course, and kept from being ashamed : 2 Thes. iii. 14,

'And have no company with him, that he may be nshamed.'

[4.] Your hap})iness lieth in communion with God, and communion

with God we cannot have if we have fellowship with the unfruitful

works of darkness : 1 John i. 6, 7, ' If we say that we have fellowship

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with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if

we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with

another.' God hath not promised communion to such as walk in dark-

ness, for light and darkness have no communion one with another : 2

Cor. vi. 14, ' For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteous-

ness ? and what communion hath light with darkness ? '

2. ' But rather reprove them,' by deed and word.

[1.] By deed, spoken of before ; as David convinced Saul : 1 Sam.

xxiv. 17, ' And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I ; for

thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil ; '

and ' The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour,' Prov. xii.

26. You have a spirit and an excellency which they have not, though

the seduced world will not easily own it.

[2.] By word. It is a duty the world cannot bear, but we must

perform it : Prov. xv. 12, ' A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him ;

neither will he go unto the wise.' But every scorn and reproach must

not deter us. Indeed, when it doth exclude some better benefit, and

provoke to persecute, we may forbear : Mat. vii. 6, \* Give not that

which is holy to dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they

trample them under their feet, and turn again, and rend you ; ' but do

it to your relations.

SEEMON XIV.

For it is a shame even to speak of those things ivhich are done of

them in secret. — Eph. v. 12.

These words are rendered as a reason why they should ' have no fellow-

sliip with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.'

By ' works of darkness ' he meaneth sins committed in paganism and

their unconverted estate. The heathens did many things which for

their filthiness were unworthy of christian ears ; and that may be the

reason why he himself doth not particularly and expressly mention

these sins.

The practices of the unconverted heathen are set forth by a double

brand — (1.) They are done of them in secret ; (2.) It is a shame to

speak of them, there is such a turpitude and filthiness in them.

So that in these words niiiy be observed — (1.) Something concerning

the sense and apprehension that men have of sin; (2.) Something

concerning secret sins.

For the first I shall observe —

Doct. That all sense of right and wrong, good and evil, is not wholly

extinguished in the heart of man ; for here the unbelieving gentiles,

though they did abominable things, yet they did them in secret, which

showeth some relics of natural conscience and shame in them.

1. Naturally we apprehend a difference between virtue and vice, good

and evil; for we ap[)reliend the one as culpable and evil, and the other

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as honest and commendable. This conceit cometh not from custom

and positive law, for then it could not be so universal ; but from the

nature of the things themselves, or the law of nature written upon our

liearts : Rom. ii. 14, 15, ' These having not the law, are a law unto

themselves ; which show the work of the law written in their hearts.'

For what is universally received in all the world hath a foundation in

nature. If there be no difference in the things themselves, it is no more

to kill a man than to kill a fly, or to rob in the woods than to hunt a hare

in the fields, for a man to lie with his father's wife than to make use

of lawful marriage, to obey his sense than his reason, or to be ruled by

his appetite than by his conscience. But these notions are horrid and

uncouth to any that knoweth himself to be a man. Besides, plain ex-

perience showeth that we are all possessed with a desire of being, if not

really, yet seemingly honest. The most wicked are offended if they be

taken for such as they really are ; all desire to cloak their wickedness

with an appearance of probity and honesty. If this desire were not

natural, it could not be so universal. This then plainly showeth we

are sensible that honour is due to virtue, and blame to sin and vice;

and therefore, though we are very partial in our own cause, yet we are

conscious to ourselves that such filthiness as we affect and delight to

live in is culpable and punishable in all civil societies; therefore we

seek to hide our practices from the world as much as we can.

2. This apprehension is most sensibly betrayed by our affections of

shame and fear. Omne malum aut timore aut pudore perf audit —

Fear and shame followeth upon the doing of evil. We read that Adam

and Eve, as soon as they sinned, they were both ashamed. Gen. iii. 7,

and afraid, ver. 10. Indeed, you may reduce it to one affection, which

is fear, for shame is a sort of fear. Fear, properly so taken, is a fear of

torment ; and shame is a fear of disgrace. The one respects punish-

ment, and the other reproof.

For plainness' sake we will handle them distinctly.

[1.] For shame, which ariseth from the consciousness of a fault, and

is a fear of blame. This showeth tliat nature hath blasted evil with

some marks of her improbation and abhorrence. Certainly if we had

no conscience of good and evil, we would as boldly avow our evil as

our good ; and if there were not some other reason that forbids it, we

would rather endeavour to make vice creditable than virtue ; for

virtue cannot be exercised without difficulty, by reason of the conflicts

we have with our sensual appetites and desires, which carry us out

strongly to those delights and pleasures which vice yieldeth us. Yet

virtue, though it be against corrupt nature, or the inclination of the

flesh, hath such a power over our minds and consciences, that they give

it this testimony, that sin breedeth shame and bashful inconfidence,

which dampeth our mirth and cheerfulness, and goodness and honesty

giveth serenity and peace, for 'the righteous is as bold as a lion.' The

liypocrisy of the world attests the excellency of chastity, sobriety, and

honesty ; for how unclean, intemperate, and fraudulent soever men be,

they are ashamed to be seen in their own colours ; and so the wicked

condemn themselves in those things which they allow and practise.

Though the relics of natural conscience be not sufficient effectually to

restrain men from evil, yet they make them ashamed of it ; and though

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they be not of such force as to rule our affections, yet this force and

power they have upon our minds, that the vicious person is condemned

in himself, and exposed to the contempt of others, if he cannot hide and

conceal his disorders.

[2.] For fear. The apostle telleth us, Eom. i. 32, that men know

BiKaico/jia Tov Geov, 'the judgment of God,' and that 'they that do

such things are worthy of death.' Men are sensible of good and evil,

and the punishment God will execute upon evil. Experience showelh

the terrors which all men feel when they have committed some wicked-

ness. There is something within that frightens us more with appre-

hension of vengeance than the penalties constituted by human laws ;

for even mighty men and great potentates in the world have felt these

terrors ; as Caligula and others, who could easily promise themselves

exemption from man's punishment, and need not fear the severity of

human laws. And where sins were committed in secret, yet they were

in great fear : Ps. xiv. 5 ; Ps. liii. 5, ' They were in great fear where

no fear was ; ' that is, no outward cause of fear. The apostle telleth

us we are subject to this fear all our lives, Heb. ii. 14 ; but we feel it

most at death, when most serious : 1 Cor. xv. 56, ' The sting of death

is sin.' Nature is not fond of these fears, but seeketh to repel them ;

for no man findeth any pleasure in being tormented by them. Yet

they stick close by us, as a natural sentiment of the evil that is in sin.

Men may dissemble them, but they cannot totally suppress them ; they

may divert them with vain pleasures, with business or company, for a

while, but they return with more importunity and violence.

3. This apprehension produceth different effects in the godly and

wicked. We have an instance in the text. In the unconverted it pro-

duceth hypocrisy, in the converted shyness and abhorrence of sin. In

the unconverted pagan Ephesians it produced hypocrisy ; they did seek

to hide what they would not avoid. Though the things were abomin-

able, and had the marks of nature's dislike and improbation upon them,

yet they committed them in secret ; as many a man's heart reproachelh

him, yet he goeth on still in his sins, and if he may commit theni

secretly, without being seen by others, they think themselves safe and

secure, and for the present out of gunshot. But here is another sort

of men intimated in the text ; the apostle, and those like-minded with

himself, all children of light, that abhor these deeds of darkness, are

ashamed to mention what others are not ashamed to practise. Un-

believers have but a spark of conscience left, they know their practices

are abominal)le, but they do them in secret. These are so far froui

committing these things, that they count it a shame to speak of them,

or to hear them spoken of by others, it cannot be done without bhish-

ing. Children of light ' must avoid all appearance of evil,' 1 Thes. v.

22, and therefore will not mention these sins, though with a holy and

honest purpose, to show their greater detestation, and lest they should

awaken a gust in themselves and others, and revive some lusts.

Certainly christians should show a modesty in their speech, and filthy

things are better suppressed than mentioned. They that delight to

speak filthily will do filthily. Briefly, the sense of the turpitude or

evil of sin is in unbelievers but weak ; it cannot restrain the practice,

only it removeth it out of the sight of men ; but in believers strong; it

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dotli not only restrain the practice, but even bridleth tlieir speech con-

cerning other men's sins.

Use 1. To show us the evil of sin. Two things in the text discover

that—

1. It is a deed of darkness. It is done in secret, it dareth not

appear in the light ; the very heathen confined it to privacy, and their

closest recesses. The apostle telleth us, ' Tiiey that are drunken are

drunken in the night,' 1 Thes. v. 7. They chose darkness and secrecy

to cover their enormities. And our Lord telleth us, John iii. 10,

\* Every one that doeth evil hateth the light.' It is meant of the light

of knowledge; but withal the light of sense is the ground of the

metaphor. See Job xxiv. 14, 15, ' The murderer, rising with the light,

killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief. The eye-

also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see

me.' Some principles of common honesty God hath left in corrupt

nature, to restrain our headstrong inclination to evil, but it showeth

also the nature of sin.

2. The other brand in the text is, it is shameful to speak of it, much

more shameful to act it. If the mention of sin be so shameful a thing

that it will scarce suit with the modesty of christian ears, what is it to

wallow in this filthiness ?

Use 2. It showeth how impudent and desperate in sin they are, and

how much they have outgrown the heart of a man, and lost all feelings

of conscience, that \* declare their sins as Sodom, and hide them not/

Isa. iii. 9 ; that have gotten a brazen forehead, and are impudent in

sinning ; as Absalom, that lay with his father's concubines on the top

of the house, in the face of all Israel, 2 Sam. xvi. 22. That sin, for

the matter, being incest, was very filthy, but not so great as for the

impudence of the manner. The modesty of sinning gentiles shall rise

in judgment, and condemn this shameless generation of christian

sinners, who blush not to do deeds of darkness in the sight of the sun.

The Lord complaineth, Zeph. iii. 5, ' They knew no shame ; ' and again,

Jer. viii. 12, ' Were they ashamed when they committed abomination?'

They were not ashamed, neither could they blush,' These commit

those sins openly which common honesty and the instinct of natural

bashfulness would seek to cover. Men grow not to this impudence

at first, but by several degrees they lose the apprehension of the evil

of sin.

1. Satan suggesteth to us some sin, to which he findeth us by nature

prone, and which he seeketh plausibly to insinuate as profitable and

pleasant : James i. 14, ' Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away

of his own lust, and enticed ; ' 2 Peter ii. 20, ' If after they have escaped

the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and

Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome,

the latter end is worse with them than the beginning ; ' being entangled,

are overcome.

2. This suggestion, if it be not presently resisted, breedeth in our

minds a certain delectation. It is sweet in his mouth, and he hideth

it under his tongue.

3. Delight moveth the lust or concupiscence, and draweth out and

engageth our consent : Josh. vii. 21, \* When I saw among the spoils a

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goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a

wedge of gold, then I coveted them, and took them.' The lust is

stirred.

4. This impelleth and urgeth the will to action : James i. 15, \* And

lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin.'

5. The act being finished, unless the sinner be corrected by God,

•or awakened by his Spirit, breedeth security : ' Sin when it is finished

bringeth forth death,' James i. 15. If the sinner be corrected by God's

providence, or convinced of it by his Spirit, the man is in a fair way of

being recovered ; but if not, the reverence of God is lessened, men think

there is no danger: Ps. x. 11, 'He said in his heart, God hath for-

gotten ; he hideth his face, he will never see it,' So ver. 13, ' The

wicked contemn God ; he hath said in his heart, God will not require it'

6. Security inviteth us to continue in the sin, as also to make no

conscience of other sins : Deut. xxix. 19, 20, 'And it come to pass,

when he heareth the words of this curse, that he blesseth himself in

his heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination

of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst ; the Lord will not spare him,

but the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that

man.' A perverse will givetli way to lustings, and lustings make way

for a custom, and a custom brings on a necessity.

7. This continuance and living in sin taketh away the sight and

odiousness of it, and produceth hardness of heart and blindness of

mind : Heb. iii. 13, ' Lest the heart be hardened through the deceit-

fulness of sin.'

8. This induration and excecation, this blindness and hardness of

heart, is at first partial, concerning this or that sin ; but at length

general, concerning all sin ; and this begetteth that horrid impudence

that men are past all shame. When by the terrible judgment of God

they are let alone after their first transgression, they repeat their sins,

and still the delusions of the flesh increase upon them. Therefore it

is good to stop betimes, lest with swine we begin to take pleasure to

wallow in this mire and filth.

Doct. 2. That it is the folly and madness of sinners, that know the

filthiness of sin, to commit it secretly, and think themselves secure if

they may escape the eye of man.

I shall prove it —

First, From the evil of secret sins ; although to be a bold and open

sinner is in some respects more heinous than to be a secret and private

sinner, because of the dishonour to God, the scandal of others, and

impudence in the sinner himself. Dishonour to God : 2 Sam. xii. 14,

\* Thou hast given occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme.' The

scandal of others. When a fire is kindled by our negligence, if it be

kept at home and within doors, the loss is only our own ; but if the

:sparks fly abroad, and consume the dwellings of others, our private

fault becometh a public loss and detriment. So Mat. xviii. 7, ' Woe

■unto the world because of offences.' So the impudence of the sinner

himself : Jer. iii. 3, ' Thou hast a whore's forehead ; thou refusest to

be ashamed.' A common strumpet, that hath wholly forfeited her

•credit, is ashamed of nothing!

Yet in other respects secret sins have the aggravations which other

«ins have not.

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1. Because they are more against knowledge and conviction. Men

are conscious to themselves that they do evil, and therefore seek a veil

and covering. They would sin, but they would not have the world

know of it. Now to sin with a consciousness that we do sin is a

dreadful evil ; for that is a sin that hath presumption in it, and pre-

sumption leaves no small guilt : Ps. xix. 13, ' Keep back thy servant

also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me ;

then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great trans-

gression.' Every sin, the more we understand the law, and know our

duty, the more it hath of a culpable transgression ; for this is know-

ingly and seeingly to run against God. Those that live in secret

wickedness, envy, pride, sensuality, and would fain keep it close, they

smother checks of conscience, and plainly rebel against the light, and

so are self-condemned in those practices which they secretly allow and

•commit.

2. This secret sinning, and with security, hath atheism annexed to it.

Atheism is either a denial of God or a contempt of God.

[1.] A denial of God, which directly, deliberately, and formally

cannot be done by any reasonable creature ; but by denying his provi-

dence, we do in effect deny his being. This kind of atheism striketh

at the root of all piety and obedience: Ps. Ixxiii. 11, 'How doth God

know ? and is there knowledge in the Most High ? ' Ps. xciv, 7, ' They

say. The Lord shall not see, nor doth the God of Jacob regard it ; '

•Job xxii. 13, ' And thou sayest, How doth God know ? can he judge

through the dark cloud ? ' Those that live in secret sin, they do in

-effect deny that God doth exercise a providence and government in

the world, that he doth not mind the affairs of men, or regard what is

•done by them ; for all their care is to hide themselves from men, which

is in effect to deny that God is God. Their security and hypocrisy

«peaketh it : Zeph. i. 12, ' I will punish the men that are settled on

their lees, that say in their heart. The Lord will not do good, neither

will he do evil.' Men do not believe a particular inspection, because

they cannot conceive how it should be, considering the distance be-

tween him and us.

[2.] A contempt of God. If they do not deny his being and

providence, yet they slight his judgment ; for this doing evil in secret

puts far more respect upon men than upon God, whilst through the

prevalency of palliated atheism they only fear men, seek to hide their

«ins from men, but little reckon of the all-seeing eye of God, are careless

of that : Jer. ii. 26, ' The thief is ashamed when he is found ; ' that

is, surprised by man in his theft. Now, you are atheistical hypo-

crites when you look so much to men and so little to God. If man be

once feared more than God, you will not care how much you dis-

please God, so you do not offend man ; and so you are stabbing your

obedience to the very heart. But how preposterous is this ! Can man

damn thee ? Can man fill thy conscience with terrors ? Can man

bid thee to depart into everlasting burnings ? Why then art thou

afi-aid of man, and not of God ? Thou canst be envious in secret,

declaim against God's children in secret, neglect duties in secret, be

sensual in secret. wicked wretch ! art thou afraid man should

know it, and not afraid God should know it ? What ! afraid of the

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eye of man, and not afraid of the great God? Thoii wouldst not

have a child see thee to do what God seetli thee do. This is a plain-

setting man ahove God. They seek no more than to be hid from the-

sight of the world.

3. The more secret any wickedness is, the more studious and pre-

meditated ; the more of deliberation there is in a sin, the greater is the

sin. As David plotted first to bring about and then to hide his

uncleanness from the world, 2 Sara. xi. 8 ; he sendeth for Uriah from

the army, maketh him drunk, plotteth his murder. These sins are

committed with craft and subtlety. So Job xxiv. 15, 'The eye of

the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, and saith. No eye shall see me ;

and disguiseth his face.' They commit sin with resolution and fore-

thought, and are plotting how to go about it without discovery, and so

are industrious to espy their advantages. So Josh. vii. 11, ' They have-

stolen, and dissembled also, and even put it among their own stuff ; '

Acts V. 9, ' How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit

of God ? ' In secret sins there is much premeditation, craft, and

dissimulation used.

4. Many times it involveth us the more in sin ; and so by seeking^

to cover one sin, we run into many. As Adam, to hide his sin, casts

an imputation upon God obliquely : Gen. iii. 12, ' The woman which

thou gavest me, she gave me of the tree.' When Sarah had secretly

laughed at God's promise of giving a child, she presently covereth it

with a gross lie. Gen. xviii. 15. When David had committed adultery

with Uriah's wife, he laboureth to cloak it over with a fouler sin, the con-

triving of her husband's death. Any sin committed weakens the heart,

and leaveth it the more unable to withstand a second assault; as a castle

is more easily taken when a breach is once made. And sins are

usually fastened one to another, like the links of a chain, so that one

draweth on all the rest ; and God is provoked to withdraw his restrain-

ing grace, and permit men to fill up the measure of their iniquities.

It is a fearful thing when sin hath got a tie upon a man, as it hath

when we have secretly done some evil from which we cannot acquit our-

selves but with some loss or shame ; then we usually heap up sin upon

sin to preserve our credit. There is no remedy ; they are got into

the devil's snare, and one sin must help them out of the other.

Eudosia, wife to Theodosius junior, having received of the emperor her

husband an apple of incredible bigness and beauty, gave it to one

Paulinus a learned man, whom she esteemed for his parts. He not

knowing from whom the empress had it, presents it as rare and

extraordinary to the emperor, who sending for his wife, asketh her

what was become of the apple ; she, fearing her husband's displeasure,

answered she had eaten it ; afterward she sweareth it, and confirmetli

it with oaths and imprecations. Upon this the jealous husband

killeth Paulinus, and hateth his faithful wife. If she had told the-

truth at first, she had not fallen into the sin of perjury ; but giving

way to a little, she is drawn into a greater sin ; her innocent friend

loseth his life, she her husband's favour ever afterward.

5. Secret sins indulged often bring great mischiefs and inconveni-

ences upon the actors of them. I shall instance only in those two men-

tioned in Job, chap. xxiv. 14, 15. The murderer and the adulterer.

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[1.] For murder secretly plotted, it afterward cometh to light

«trangel3\ For the psalmist telleth us, ' God maketh inquisition for

blood,' Ps. ix. 12. It is never carried so secretly but it cometh to

light, and involveth the actors in a thousand miseries. Murders lie

not long unreveoged, especially the slaughters of God's servants. But

instances are so frequent, I should never make an end if I should men-

tion them. God will hear the cry of blood. Cain gets Abel secretly

into the field, and killeth him; but God saith, 'Thy brother's blood

orieth to me,' Gen. iv. 10.

[2.] For adultery. Unlawful lusts usually end very tragically, as

we may see in the examples of the first world, Sodom, Sichem, Israel

with the Moabitish women in the desert, the war between Israel and

Benjamin for violating the Levite's concubine ; Samson ; David, the

sword departed not from his house ; not to mention common stories.

Whoredom is not a light sin, as carnal men take it to be ; sad judg-

ments attend it, be it committed never so secretly. This is the first

argument.

Secondly, It is folly and madness, because God loveth to discover it.

Our Lord telleth us, Luke xii. 2, that ' there is nothing covered that

shall not be revealed ; nor hid that shall not be known,' either here or

hereafter.

1. Here God discovereth secret sins, and bringeth them to light, as

he found out Achan in his sacrilege. So we are bidden to remember

Lot's wife, Luke xvii. 32. Her sin was a sin committed by stealth ;

«he would steal a glance, and look back to Sodom : Gen. xix. 26, ' She

looked back from behind him, and she was turned into a pillar of salt.'

Therefore let no man sin secretly. God can find us out in our secret

sins. As we should make conscience of not siiming openly, so of not

sinning by stealth, though the sin be acted in never so hidden and close

a manner. So Num. xxxii. 23, ' Be sure that your sin will find you

out' If they hide it from the eye of the world, they think they shall

never hear of their sin more : Isa. xxix. 15, ' They say, Who seetli us,

and who knoweth us ? ' God seeth and knovveth all our secret counsels

and designs; and in time they are discovered, to our shame and confu-

sion. Gehazi was found out : 2 Kings v, 26, ' Went not my spirit with

thee ? ' meaning his prophetic spirit. Ananias and Sapphira were found

out by the spirit of discovery that was in the apostles, Acts v. God

delighteth to discover impenitent and false-dealing hypocrites, that carry

their wickedness secretly : Prov. xxvi. 26, ' Whose hatred is covered

by deceit, his wickedness shall be discovered before the congregation.'

The Lord loveth to take off their disguise.

2. At the great day of account, and last judgment : Ps. I. 21, ' I will

set thy sins in order before thee ; ' and 1 Cor. iv. 5, ' He will bring to

light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels

of the heart ; ' that is, every man's intentions and purposes. Then

all will be laid open before men and angels.

Use 1. It teacheth us to make conscience of secret sins, whether

they be sins of omission or sins of commission, or of a mixed nature,

when a thing is done which for the matter is good, but a defect in the

manner or end.

1. Sins of omission. Such was that Num. xxxii. 23, a shrinking

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from their duty, or not taking lot and sliare with the rest of God's;

people. Many please themselves with the ])resumption of a good state

before God if they do no hurt, and break not out into outrageous

wickedness. Oli, but yet your condition may be dangerous if you live

in the omission of any necevssary known duty. You are not troubled

about it lor the present, yet in time it will make sad work in your

souls : James iv. 17, ' To him that knows to do good and doetli it not,

to him it is sin.' Men have, it may be, long lived in a course of neglect-

ing communion with God, and conscience hath been silent, but then it

rageth. Mat. vi. 6, your Father seetli what you do, or not do, in

secret, and accordingly will reward or punish you.

2. Sins of commission. Let us ' renounce the hidden things of dis-

honesty/ 2 Cor. iv. 2. Let no man think all is well because what

he doth is concealed from men ; or allow himself in any secret known

sin. No ; when you have tiie advantage of secrecy, you should keep

up a constant reverence of God and his all-seeing eye : Gen. xxxix. 9,

\* How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God ? ' Many

times secrecy and solitariness are most obnoxious to the foulest tempta-

tions ; but God is there, and that should be enough to us. The young

man in the Proverbs was enticed, because it was in the twilight, in the

evening, in the black and dark niglit, Prov. vii. 9, 10. Therefore such

occasions should be avoided ; or if we be cast upon them, let us be the

more careful and watchful.

3. Of a mixed nature,when there is not an omission of the duty, but

of the sincerity. This may be seen in prayer : Kom. viii. 27, 'He that

searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the spirit.' In cove-

nanting with God : Deut. v. 29, ' Oh, that there were such a heart in,

them, that they would fear me ! ' In our whole obedience : Prov. xvi.

2, ' All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes ; but the Lord

weigheth the spirits ; ' Phil. ii. 12, ' Work out your salvation with

fear and trembling.' We should consider with what heart we come

into God's presence.

Use 2. Exhortation, to press you to three duties —

1. Take more care to get your sins pardoned than hidden : Prov.

xxviii. 13, ' He that hideth his sin shall not prosper ; but he that

confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy.' We seek to hide

our sins from the world, from ourselves, and from God.

2. Study more to approve yourselves to God than to be concealed

from men. Godly simplicity and sincerity will be our comfort : 2 Cor.

i. 12, ' Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in

simplicity and godly sincerity we have had our conversation in the

world ; ' Eom. ii. 29, ' He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumci-

sion is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise

is not of men, but of God.'

3. Humble yourselves, not only for open, but secret sins : Ps. xix.

12, ' Cleanse thou me from secret faults.' Hezekiah ' humbled himself

for the pride of his heart,' 2 Chi'on. xxxii. 26 ; David for unworthy

thoughts of providence. Secret filthiness is odious to God.

Helps. 1. A due sense of God's attributes ; as —

[1.] His omniscience : Ps. cxxxix. 2, ' He knoweth our thoughts afar

ofi".' The perfection of his nature slioweth it. If he did not know all

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things, he were not God ; something would be done in the world

exempted from his providence. But it is not so : 1 Chron. xxviii. 9^

' The Lord searcheth all hearts.'

[2.] His omnipresence. God is in all things, and through all things,

and above all things: Eph. iv. 6, ' Wlio is above all, and through all^

and in you all ; ' Acts xvii. 28, ' In him we live, and move, and hava

our being.'

[3.] He is our judge. How shall God judge what he knoweth not?

2. The various ways he hath to discover secret sins.

[1.] The ministry of angels : Eccles. v. 6, ' Neither say thou before

the angel. It was an error; ' 1 Tim. v. 21, ' I charge thee before God,

and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe

these things ; ' 1 Cor. xi. 10, ' For this cause ought the woman to have

power on her head, because of the angels.'

[2.] Sharp afflictions : Gen. xlii. 21, ' And they said one to another,

We are verily guilty concerning our brother ; ' 1 Kings viii. 47, ' If

they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried

captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of

them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned.'

[3.] Breaking out of sin : Ps. xxxvi. 2, ' Till his iniquity be found

hateful ; ' 2 Tim. iii. 9, ' Their folly shall be manifest unto all men.'

[4] Sometimes terrors of conscience : Mat. xxvii. 4, ' I have sinned,

in that I have betrayed innocent blood.' We vomit up our own shame.

SERMON XY.

But all things that are reproved are made manifest hy the light ; for

ivhatsoever doth make manifest is light. — Eph. v. 13.

In this verse the apostle opposeth the light of Christianity to those

deeds of darkness which were committed among the heathen. 'AvTCKec-

fieva 7rapaW7]\ov/ji€va fidXcara (patvovraL — Opposites do illustrate

one another. How secretly soever the things were done by them, yet

the light that shineth from the word of God and the lives of christians

doth condemn them, and dart conviction into the consciences of them

that commit them, and also discover to others that God's people are in

a better way. Christianity discovereth heathen practices not only to

be mean and low, but filthy and base ; as light is the direct means

to discover what the darkness hath hid : ' But all things that are

reproved,' &c.

In the text we have —

1. An assertion, ' But all things that are reproved are made manifest

by the light.'

2. The proof of it, ' For whatsoever doth make manifest is light.'

1. An assertion or proposition, where two things are to be con-

sidered —

[1.] Something supposed ; that the doctrine of Christianity is the

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true light or test by wliicli things are to he judged. The way of

heathenism being compared with it, showeth this is light : Ps. cxix.

105, ' Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.' So

Prov. vi. 23, \* For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light,

and reproofs of instruction are the way of life ; ' Prov. xv. 31, ' The

«ar that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.' All these

places show that God's word is the true light. Now God's word may

be considered either as known and believed, or as obeyed and practised ;

consider it either way, it is still light. As known and believed, it is a

light to direct our own way and steps, our general choice or particular

actions ; as obeyed and ])ractised, it doth direct others, as it shineth

forth fi'om us to them ; as God's word is a light, so holiness is the

shining forth of this light.

[2.] That which is asserted is, that all things which are reproved

and disallowed are made manifest by the light;' verum est index sui

at obliqui. The light discovereth itself, and all things that differ from

it ; that which discovereth truth doth also discover error and falsehood ;

that which manifests what is right doth also manifest what is wrong.

A holy doctrine doth discover truth and error, and a holy life doth

■discover good and evil, right and wrong. The word is a directive light

to show us our duty, and a corrective and convincive light to awaken

a due sense of sin. There is a twofold property of light ; it may be

considered either as lux exhilarans, as comfortable : Eccles. xi. 7,

'Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing is it for the eyes to behold

the sun;' or as lux redarguens, as a reproving light. So the gospel

hath not only a refreshing light to comfort [jcnitent believers, but a

rejn-oving and discovering light to awaken the secure and careless :

John iii. 20, ' He that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the

light, lest his deeds should be reproved.' Tlie light of the gospel

cheereth as it discovereth the grace of God, or reproveth as it dis-

covereth the sins of the world.

2. The proof is taken from the common nature of all light, natural

and sensible, or spiritual and intellectual: 'Whatever doth make mani-

fest is light.' Natural light maketh manifest things proper to it ; so

-doth spiritual light things that belong to its sphere, things morally

good or evil.

Doct. That the light of Christianity, shining fortli in the word of

<jrod and the lives and actions of christians, is a great means of reprov-

ing and convincing the world.

In this point —

1. I suppose that christians have a heavenly light communicated to

them ; for the apostle speaketh to such as ' were sometimes darlcness,

but now are light in the Lord,' ver. 8 ; and elsewhere Christ's

disciples are said to be 'the light of tlie world;' Mat. v. 14, 'Ye are

the light of the world ; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.' The

disciples then spoken to are not considered under the notion of apostles

and ministers ; for the disciples Christ speaketh unto are the same to

whom other parts of the sermon are directed and referred, and they

contain general duties, which are the common concernment of all

christians ; and as yet none of Christ's disciples were invested with a

peculiar office or ministry ; afterwards some of them were empowered

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and sent abroad with a special commission to preach. Therefore all

christians are said to be ' the salt of the earth,\* and ' the light of the

world ; ' not only ' light in the Lord,' but \* the light of the world.'

Jesus Christ is originally so : John viii. 12, ' I am the light of the

world ; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness.' But minis-

tei-ially and subserviently all christians are so. Light is to shine to

others, not to itself. A christian hath not his knowledge for himself

alone, nor his grace for himself only ; he is to reprove, and direct, and

guide others in the way of life : Phil. ii. 15, ' That ye maybe blameless

and harmless as the sons of God, v/ithout rebuke, in the midst of a

crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the

world.' The stars are the shining part of the heavens, so they are the

luminous part of the world, both for brightness of knowledge and

purity of conversation. There is a night of ignorance and sin upon

others, but they are to guide and direct others into the way of life by

their wisdom and holiness : 1 Thes. v. 5, ' Ye are all the children of

light, and the children of the day ; we are not of the night, nor of dark-

ness ; ' that is, such to whom God hath granted the means of knowledge

and sanctification, and made them effectual to these ends, that they

may be both illuminated and sanctified.

2. I suppose that they are true to their profession, that they walk as

children of the light, that they behave themselves as a people into

whose hearts the gospel, which is the true light, hath shined ; for

otherwise there are not such perverters of the world as false christians,

who, professing Christianity, live wickedly, or no better than other men ;

these rob Christ of his glory, they are \* worse than infidels,' 1 Tim. v.

8, while they profess the faith, and j^et contradict the ends of it. Christ

came not only to redeem the world, but to renew the world ; but they

debauch it by their sensual lives, even they, though they profess to be

entered into the renewed estate. They usurp the name of christians,

to the apparent disgrace of Christ, and making void his office. And

when they should propagate the faith, by their ill way of living they

confute it ; and instead of confirming the weak, offend the strong ; and

besides that self-condemnation they bring upon themselves, they

harden the world, and so betray the religion they do profess. Christ

is not answerable for these, for they are his enemies, though seeming

friends, while they live contrary to his laws.

3. That this light shineth forth both in their words and deeds. Both

are of great use to convince the world, both the doctrine which they

profess, and their holy conversations, and both must go together. So

it was with Christ : John vii. 7, ' The world cannot hate you, but me

it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.'

Christ's testimony was both by life and doctrine. And of Noah it is

said, Heb. xi, 7, \* He condemned tlie world.' He was a preacher of

righteousness, and he prepared an ark at the command of God, with

vast expense and charge ; he exhorted them to repent, and his prepar-

ing an ark was a real warning to the impenitent world that a flood was

coming. So all christians shine as lights, holding forth the word of

life both in profession and practice : Phil. ii. 15, 16, ' Among whom ye

shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.' Either of

them are an accommodate or proper means to convince the world.

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[1.] The doctrine which they profess, hold fast, and adhere to.

There is a light in God's word which doth not only show the right way

to everlasting life and true happiness, but disproves any contrary course.

To come to our journey's end we need a way, and light to see it and

find it out. Our end is eternal life, and the way is stated in the

gospel, without which direction we soon wander and lose ourselves in

a maze of perplexities, not knowing whither we go, ' putting darkness for

light, and light for darkness,' Isa. v. 20. But it is not direction, but con-

viction we are now upon. This light is mighty, forcible and powerful :

Heb. iv. 12, ' The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than

any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and

spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts

and intents of the heart.' The word of God is, like himself,

living and active, piercing into the depths and secrets of men. The

priest in dissecting the sacrifices is not more accurate in separating and

observing those things which are secret and closely joined together, than

it is in discovering the thoughts and imaginations and most cunning

contrivances of the heart. If any be obnoxious to the sentence of this

word, it findeth them out, and discovereth their hypocrisy. The priest's

sharp knife cannot enter so far into the secret part of the saciifice as

this word will enter into the secrets of the heart. They searched

diligently if there were any blemish in the sacrifice. Heathens have

felt this virtue : Acts xxiv. 25, ' And as he reasoned of righteousness,

temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.' The prisoner

maketh his judge to tremble, and the judge was an infidel, none of the

tenderest-hearted ; the evidence of his reasoning he was not able ta

resist. He came out of curiosity to hear Paul, his conscience boggles

within him, and he is in an agony. Yea, natural men have such a sense

of this shining and piercing light which is in the word, that they fear

it before they feel it : John iii. 20, ' They will not come to the light,

lest their deeds should be reproved/ It is in itself a discovering light,

but evil-doers hate it, lest it should convince and discover them to

themselves, and therefore stand aloof from it, and shun all means of

knowing themselves, which showeth a secret jealousy of this searching

power which is in the word.

[2.] Holiness of life. Not only is the light of God's word considered

here, but the holy life of the christian, which is also an awful and con-

vincing thing, because it hath light in it, and shines to us. It is not

words prevail so much as deeds. Light hath its power as it is held forth

in our words, but much more as it shineth in our lives for the illumin-

ation and conviction of the world : Mat. v. 16, ' Let your light so shine

before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your

Father which is in heaven.' The most convincing splendour is in the

works of christians ; when they do not only speak, but do gi'eat things,

then the world seeth and acknowledgeth that you have a spirit and a

wisdom that they have not: Mark vi. 20, 'For Herod feared John,

knowing that he was a just man, and an holy, and observed him ; and

when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.'

4. This then is that which we are to make conscience of, that our

light may be a reproving light to the wicked and carnal world ;

and that for these reasons — (1.) Because of our many and great

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obli.o^ations ; (2.) Because of the many benefits which come thereby.

First, Because of our great obligations, both to God and man.

[1.] Our obligations to God, whose creatures we are, and whose glory

we are bound to promote. But here I shall not consider you as men,

but as renewed men ; and I will prove —

(1.) That God is glorified when the light of religion shineth forth in

a holy conversation and godliness. God the Father is glorified, for

holiness and goodness is the image and resplendency of God ; he is

discovered to the world to be what he is, a holy and good God. As we are

not to betray the honour of God wherewith we are intrusted, so we are

to do great things for him ; and a greater we cannot do than aright to

represent him to the world, and to keep up his remembrance in the

hearts of men, that from us and by us they may know what a God he

is ; for we glorify God, not by adding to him, but representing what he

is : 1 Peter i. 15, ' But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye

holy in all manner of conversation.' The world is greatly ignorant of

causes, and therefore looketh much to effects ; they observe what the

people of God are, and thereby judge of God himself. Therefore it

concerneth us greatly that we do not leaven men with ill thoughts of

God ; the more pure and holy we are, the more do we beget this

thought in the minds of others. What a holy God do they serve !

1 John i. 5, 6, ' God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we

say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie and

do not the truth ; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we

have fellowship one with another.' God is perfect purity ; if we

favour ourselves in any degi-ee of licentiousness and impiety, we

bespatter God with our lies, and put a great dishonour upon him in

the eyes of the world : ' I wrought for my name's sake, that it should

not be polluted before the heathen,' Ezek. xx. 9. But if we walk in

purity and holiness, we show that we have communion with God, who

is all pure and holy, and so beget a good character of him in the minds

of men; for by this means the light we have received from him shineth

forth to others. Christ is glorified as the head of the renewed estate,

by whose laws we live, and whose people we are. We show to the

world what is the proper influence of his doctrine : 2 Cor. iii. 3, ' For-

asmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, mani-

fested by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God.\*

Those that hold forth his doctrine in word or deed are said to glorify

him ; for this account he giveth of his disciples to his Father, John xvii.

10, ' I am glorified in them,' that is, by their faith and doctrine. God

is glorified in deed (and this is that we are upon) when the doctrine of

the gospel is imprinted on their hearts, and shineth forth in their lives ;

it sendeth us with letters of recommendation to the world. You may

know his mind, and what his gospel is, by what is stamped upon your

hearts ; and by the fashioning and moulding your lives you declare

plainly to others what a holy doctrine Christ is the author of. So the

Spirit is glorified as his operations are perfected in us : 1 Peter iv. 14,

\* If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye ; for the

Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you : on their part he is evil

spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.' The Spirit is glorified as

a sanctifier and as a comforter. As a sanctifier he mastereth those

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fleshly lusts by which the rest of the world are captivated ; and as a

comforter he supporteth us in the greatest trials and afflictions. So

that all the persons in the Trinity receive due honour from us. We

add nothing to God, but we are to tell the world what he is.

(2.) I will prove that this was God's end in enlightening us, and

calling us with a holy calling : 1 Peter ii. 9, ' But ye are a chosen

generation, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people ; that ye

should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of dark-

ness into his marvellous light.' We should illustrate and make his

glory more conspicuous, who hath wrought such a gracious and power-

ful change in us. First, we wonder at the light ourselves, and then

cause others to wonder at it. That which is God's end in bestowing

all these privileges should be our great end and the business of our

lives, namely, to show forth his perfections in the world. Our being

called out of darkness into light is a favour, an honour, and a trust.

It is a favour, considering our wretched estate ; before we were in

darkness, and saw no light, neither knew our misery nor remedy. It

is an honour, considering the grace and happiness we are called unto,

to be sons of God, and heirs of glory, translated to a state of light, life,

and liberty. And it is a trust, for this light is a talent that must be

improved for God ; every one is to be accountable for what he hath

received. Being made objects of his special grace, we are bound also

to be eminent instruments of his glory in the world, and therefore not

suffer this work to die upon our hands.

[2.] Our obligations to men ; there is a debt of duty which we owe to

them. Surely it becometh every one that is graced and favoured by

God to be a singular benefactor to the world, and being himself drawn

into the light, he should promote the kingdom of light, life, and love

to others : Luke xxii. 32, ' And when thou art converted, strengthen

thy brethren.' Besides, as creatures which are of a bastard production

never procreate and bring forth after their kind, so mongrel christians

mind not this work. But true grace filleth us with compassion and love

to souls ; and them that are possessed with it, as fire turneth all about

it into fire, so they endeavour to make others like themselves ; a good

man is a common good. Certainly it is every man's duty in some

considerable degree to do good to the world, and to be mutually and

signally active for the true and real interest thereof. Now the more

we seek to draw them out of that evil way and state they are in, the

more do we show our zeal for the public good ; and the more corrupt

the world is, the more should it stir up our pity, and the more intent

should we be, upon all occasions, to represent the evil of their ways by

a contrary conversation. Nothing but the light of holiness will invite

them to regard religion, and embrace its ways, and submit to its

power ; when it is commended in the sight of men, not only by words,

but by deeds, it is set forth with greater advantage. If we honour our

religion in words only, we are but as a sounding brass nnd tinkling

cymbal. But the light that shines forth in deeds pierceth the heart

and wounds the conscience to the quick, and the better may we expect

to reclaim them from the way of perdition wherein they walk.

Secondly, The benefits that come thereby,

[1.] If it rests only in conviction, it is a great safety to religion, a

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blessing Christ prayed for : John xvii. 21, \* That the world may believe

that thou hast sent me ; ' and ver. 23, ' That the world may know that

thou hast sent me.' The bare conviction of the world is a great

blessing : John xvi. 8, \* And when he is come, he will reprove (or con-

vince) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.' It is

promised the Spirit shall convince the world ; not convert, but convince ;

and not only the unregenerated and unconverted world, but the repro-

bate lost world, who finally persist in their impenitency and disobed-

ience. It conduceth much to the advancement of Christ's kingdom.

As, for instance, is it not a mighty advantage that the careless and

serious read the same bible, own the same baptism, and have the same

creed, though they do not both attain salvation by it ? Many speak

highly of God that do not own him and choose him for their God :

Dan. ii. 47, as the great king Nebuchadnezzar answered Daniel, ' Of

a truth it is, that your God is a God, and a Lord of kings, and a

revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret ; ' Acts v. 13,

\* And of the rest durst no man join himself to them, but the people

magnified them.' Some have an honourable esteem of the people of

God. Besides, it cleareth God's process at the last day : Mat, xxii.

12, ' How camest thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment ? and

he was speechless.' He came in thither though he had not a wedding-

garment. Again, their conviction conduceth to other men's conversion.

As the Samaritans believed when their great leader, ' to whom they

all gave heed, from the least to the greatest,' Acts viii. 10, professed the

faith and was baptized, ver. 13, though he still remained ' in the gall

of bitterness and the bond of iniquity,' ver. 23. It is no small benefit

that Christianity hath gotten such esteem as to be made the public

profession of nations. It is for the safety of the church. These con-

victions, though they do not change their enemies' hearts, yet they

break their fierceness, that they are not such bitter enemies. Pliny,

moved by the piety of christians, obtained a mitigation of persecution.

Hatred is restrained by fear. A carnal christian hateth a godly man,

and feareth him. Once more, conviction may bring on profession and a

temporary faith, and so the church hath benefit by their gifts or by their

protection. If men of power, they serve as a hedge of thorns about a

garden of roses; if men of parts, they may be of use to defend the common

Christianity, and may serve, as the Gibeonites, to be hewers of wood

and drawers of water ; or as they that built Noah's ark, who perished

themselves in the flood : as a living tree may be supported by a

dead post. The church hatli great benefit by carnal men's gifts.

[2.] This conviction and disproof of their practices often tendeth to

and endeth in conversion : 1 Cor. xiv, 24, 25, ' But if all prophesy, and

there cometh in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is con-

vinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the secrets of his

heart made manifest ; and so falling down on his face, he will worship

God, and report that God is in you of a truth.' Thus may you probably

work upon their hearts. They may come scorners and go away wor-

shippers, proclaiming that God is really among you ; and this by the

word preached and the scripture interpreted. So also by the light of

the word breaking out in your actions ; when once they come to a sight

of their sins, they may be the better induced to leave and forsake them.

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This light pierceth also into the conscience. They see their former

way of living is so vile and abhorred, and those noble and holy principles

you live by are to be embraced : 1 Peter iii. 1, ' That if any obey not

tlie vs^ord, they also may without the word be won by the conversation

of the wives ; ' that is, they may be induced to receive the gospel. The

ministry of the word is usually the ordinary and principal means of

conversion to God ; yet sometimes he blesseth the conversations of his

people ; without this the best discourses may harden men in their

prejudices, rather than reclaim them from their sinful ways. Carnal

men do accurately pry into the secret practice of those that are religious,

that they may find occasion to shake off the awe of truth ; therefore we

should be the more circumspect. They are called our observers : Ps.

xxvii. 11, ' Lead me in the way of truth, because of mine enemies ; ' in

the Hebrew, ' those that observe me.' God may make use of this con-

trary to their intention, that their very observers may be a means of

much good to their souls.

[3.] Thereby your profession is justified and vindicated. There lie

many prejudices in the heart of man against the gospel ; these are better

confuted by a real than a verbal apology, by showing the true and

genuine force of religion, and what power it hath to change the heart

and life : 1 Peter ii. 12, \* Having your conversation honest among the

gentiles ; that whereas they sjieak against you as evil-doers, they may,

by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of

visitation.' The world is apt to represent strict christians as a pack of

dissemblers, and their religion as a peevish obstinacy or fond supersti-

tion. Now your miscarritiges justify them in those misapprehensions;

but a holy conversation stoppeth their mouths, and silenceth all their

slanders. So the 15th verse, ' For so is the will of God, that with well-

doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.' A holy

christian carriage doth bind up their mouths, when never so much

enraged, as they muzzle up the mouths of wild beasts. Now then it

lietli upon your choice, whether you will convince the world or

justify the world ; as Israel is said to justify Sodom, Ezek. xvi. 52. If

you by your lives declare that you have worse, or no better principles

than the carnal world, you justify them ; but if you live at another

rate, upon higher principles and for nobler ends, you convince the

world and please God.

Use 1. Information. It informeth us of divers truths.

1. That though by the light of nature we have some sense of the

turpitude of sin, yet we have not a perfect knowledge of it ; the light

of Christianity giveth us that. Some sense they had, some knowledge

of sin, and the shame that was in it, therefore they did run into secret

with it ; yet he speaketh here of a further discovery and manifestation

of it by the light that is by the gospel : ' But all things that are reproved

are made manifest by the light.' Many things, through the benefit of

the light of nature, are written by the philosophers concerning virtues

and vices, yet there is infinitely much more manifested in the word

of God than in all their writings ; so that we need a divine revelation

even in moral duties.

[1.] Because our duty is not so clearly stated by man's reason as by

God's authority. When it is found out by nature, it is left more to the

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uncertainty of dispute. Bare nature is a hard book to study in, and

the lessons of it not easily found out. While the wise men of the world

were debating, practical godliness died on their hands, and men strove

to be witty rather than to be good.

[2.] It is so coldly delivered, and not with that life and power as

appeareth in this higher light of God's word. And that is the reason

why natural light hath been so unsuccessful in the world for the reclaim-

ing and reducing of mankind. A cold doctrine, that hath little

evidence by real holiness, will not cure a dark diseased mind and heart.

Moonlight hath no vital heat in it, therefore nothing groweth by it,

Lunce radiis non maturescit hotrus.

[3.] Because it is so defective.

(1.) Nature discovereth only some gross sins : Rom. ii. 15, ' Which

show epyov vofxov, the work of the law written in their hearts,' &c.

Heathens only condemned vices that appeared in external actions, as

if virtue were not to regulate the purposes and intentions of the heart

as well as the works of external deportment ; whereas outward actions

are good and bad so far as they take their tincture from the heart.

If some of them have thought the will and purpose to do evil faulty

and culpable, they are few, and have confined it only to settled

purposes and deliberate counsels, and so not touched our corruption

to the quick ; and this is but one of a thousand, and that by chance ;

so that nature doth but twinkle here, not break forth with a full and

powerful light.

(2.) The light of nature reacheth mostly to the lower hemisphere

of duties, those of the second table ; there it is most pregnant ; it

cannot lead us higher, and conduct us to God and heaven. When

they sat abrood upon religion, what a goodly chimera was hatched!

Eom. i. 21, 22, ' Because that when they knew God, they glorified him

not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations,

and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise,

they became fools.'

(3.) In second-table duties it is defective ; in humility and obedience.

(Ls^.) As to humility, we find little of that principle among them.

Nature loveth to pride itself in its own plumes. Self-love is the prin-

cipal pride in the soul, and vainglory the end of their religion ; to excel

others was all their aim.

(2c?.) As to obedience to magistrates and superiors, which can never

be so firmly bound upon us as by the bond of conscience ; not by the

fear of wrath and vengeance, not by the love of civil quiet and public

good. They obey best that obey not for fear of wrath, but for con-

science' sake : Eom. xiii. 5, ' Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not

only for wrath, but for conscience' sake.'

2. It informeth us that some general sense of the shamefulness of

sin will not break the power and force of it. The heathens in some

measure knew what was sin, and that it was a shameful thing, not of

any great use to them ; they committed it still, though in secret ; but

the light of Christianity doth so reprove it as to cause us to hate it ; it

doth or may give us such an awakening sight and sense of it as ta.

show what an odious thing it is. By the light of Christianity we see it

in its proper colours.

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[1.] The nature and malignity and evil of sin, what it is, not a

natural disorder, but a breach of the law ; that it is dvo/iia, 1 John

iii. 4, ' A transgression of the law,' written by the finger of God on man's

heart.

[2.] The rise and beginning of it, together with the manner of its

propagation : Kom. v. 12, \* Whereas by one man sin entered into the

world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for

that all have sinned.' Whence this apostasy of mankind cometh, that

it is the work of the devil that Christ came to destroy : 1 John iii. 8,

\* For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might

destroy the works of the devil;' without knowing which, the justice

of God's providence, and the holiness of his nature can never well be

understood.

[3.] The several kinds and branches and degrees of sin : Eom. i. 18,

\* The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness

and unrighteousness of men ; ' with its aggravations, whereby it cometh

to be exceeding sinful to us, which giveth a more intimate sense of it :

Kom. vii. 9, i\,6ov<77]<{ ivroXij'i, ' When the commandment came, sin

revived, and I died ; ' ver. 13, ' That sin by the commandment might

become exceeding sinful.'

[4.] The effects and consequences of it. Loss of God's favour : Isa.

lix. 2, ' Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and

your sins have hid his face from you.' It interrupted that near and

intimate communion we had with God ; it made us abominable in

his sight, not fit to appear before him with comfort. And eternal

wrath : Mat. xxv. 41, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,

prepared for the devil and his angels.'

[5.] Its remedy and cure : Eom. viii. 3, \* God sending his own Son

in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.\*

This work of the devil was only to be destroyed by the Son of God.

We cannot wash away the filthiness, nor expiate tlie guilt of it,, by

any sacrifice and laver that we can use ; nothing else can free us from

the wrath of God but the blood of his Son, nor cleanse our souls from

this venom and poison which is gotten, not only into the will and affec-

tions, but into the very mind and heart, but the light and power of his

Spirit.

3. It informeth us why Satan and his wicked instruments do so

hate the light, and oppose and hinder its propagation in the world,

either by the preaching of the word or the lives of christians, because

the works of darkness are manifested by the light. The devil

maligneth the success of the gospel : 2 Cor. iv. 4, ' In whom the god

of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest

the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God,

should shine upon them.' The gospel layeth open the policies and

impostures of Satan, by which he beguileth and circumvents souls.

It is an enemy to the devil's kingdom : Eph. vi. 12, ' For we wrestle

not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers,

against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual

wickedness in high places.' So for his instruments : 1 John iii. 12,

' Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And

wherefore slew he him ? Because his own works were evil, and his

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brother's righteous ; ' 1 Peter iv. 3, 4, ' For the time past of our lives

may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles, when we

walked in lascivionsness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings,

and abominable idolatries. Wherein they think it strange that ye

run not with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.'

A spiritual slumber is fallen on the carnal world, and they are loath to

be disturbed ; as Jonah, when the sun groweth hot, and beateth upon

his head, falleth a chafing. The devil is a prince of darkness, and

delighteth in darkness, and envieth to the world this blessed light and

the benefit of it.

Use 2. Is exhortation, to persuade us to get light. It is a shame

to be ignorant of our necessary duty. If a man be asked whether he-

can paint or carve? he may answer without shame, I am ignorant;

that skill is not necessary ; but if he be ignorant how to love and please

and serve God, then he is brutish, like the horse or mule, that hath na

understanding.

SERMON XVI.

Wherefore Tie saith, AivaJce tJiou thai steepest, and arise from the deadf

and Christ shall give thee light. — Eph. v. 14.

The apostle confirmeth what he had said, that Christianity is light,

by a testimony. All that are converted by God, and brought into a

state of light, the doctrine they profess is light, and they are to put to

shame the deeds of darkness by the light that shineth from them into

the consciences of others : ' Wherefore he saith. Awake thou that

sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.' Aa

if he had said, The drift of the word of God is to call us to a timely

conversion, or to awaken us from the sleep and death of sin, that he

may enlighten us with the light of the gospel, and we may walk accord-

ingly, and so have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,

but rather reprove them.

In the words we have two things — (1.) A preface ; (2.) The testi-

mony produced.

1. The preface, 'Wherefore he saith.' Who saith? God in the

scriptures. But where doth he say it, since we read not this sentence

anywhere in so many formal and direct words ?

Ans. [1.] It may be it was some sentence of Christ then in recent

memory, as that, Acts xx. 35, ' And to remember the words of our

Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

[2.] It may be this is said to be the voice of God, because it is the

drift of the whole scripture ; for all tendeth to this sum, that those

who are asleep, and dead in sin, be stirred up to repentance, and

coming to Christ by faith, that he may give them light ; that is, that

they may be enlightened by his grace, and so fitted for eternal glory :

Tilus ii. 11-13, ' The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hatli

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appeared to all men,' eire<^dvri hath broken out like light upon us,

' teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should

live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.'

[3.] There are some scriptures which are like it ; as Isa. ix. 2, ' The

people that walked in darkness have seen a great light ; they that

dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light

shined.' This is spoken of the Messiah, who cometh to enlighten the

world by the ministry of the gospel ; as it is applied, Mat. iv. 16, \* The

people which sat in darkness saw great light ; and to them that sat

in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.' Nearer yet,

Isa. xxvi. 19, ' Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body

shall they arise : awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust.' But

nearest of all, Isa. Ix. 1, ' Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the

glory of the Lord is risen upon thee ; ' which chapter speaketh of the

glorious estate of the church under the Messiah, and therefore they are

exhorted to rouse up themselves, and to mind and improve the grace

offered ; that is, those that live in these gospel times are in word and

deed to hold forth this light and doctrine of Christ to the conversion

of others.

2. In the testimony produced there are two things to be observed —

(1.) A command ; (2.) A promise.

[1.] A command, ' Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the

dead.' In which words observe — (1.) The quality of the persons to

whom the command is given; (2.) The nature of the command itself

(1.) The quality of the persons to whom the command is given.

They are described by a double character, to be those that are asleep,

and those that are dead in trespasses and sins. Sleep and death have

a great affinity and resemblance one with another ; natural sleep is an

image of death, but spiritual sleep is a true spiritual death. In our

natural sleep our faculties and their functions are suspended, but yet

they remain entire ; in spiritual sleep our faculties are corrupted and

disabled for any office of life. Zanchy saith these words are spoken to

two sorts of persons — to mere unbelievers, and to sinning believers.

The last are compared to them that sleep, the other to them that are

dead. Awakening is required from the one, and rising from the dead

as to the other. But this is more argute than solid. Both expressions

denote some persons : ' Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the

dead.' The one expression noteth their incapacity to help themselves,

the other their security and carelessness ; they do not trouble them-

selves about it.

(2.) The nature of the command, 'Awake,' and 'Arise from the

dead.' The things commanded are two — that they should 'awake,'

and ' arise from the dead ; as in natural sleep men are first awakened,

and then they rise and go about their business.

[2.] The promise, ' And Christ shall give thee light,' iTncpavcrec

aroL ; he shall shine upon thee. When the gospel was first set up,

the light did shine about them, but not presently into their hearts : John

i. 5, ' The light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it

not. This light shineth about us in the tenders of gospel grace, but it

shineth into our hearts when we are admitted into the privileges of it,

and are made partakers of this heavenly benefit. In opposition to our

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natural estate it should be (we would think), Christ shall give thee life,

but it is, Give thee light. Christ converts us by shining into our

hearts ; we are enlightened by being baptized : Heb. x. 32, ' But call

to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated,

ye endured a great fight of affliction.'

From the whole observe this doctrine —

Doct. That the great intent of Christ in the gospel is to call people

■out of their wof ul estate by sin into tlie marvellous light of his salvation.

This is the great truth here represented ; and to clear it up to you —

I. Observe how woful and dangerous the present case of carnal

tmregenerate men is. It is represented to us under the notions of

spiritual sleep and spiritual death ; which I shall speak of both gene-

rally and apart, and then conjunctly and together.

First, To speak of them generally and apart.

1. They are asleep in sin, whereas the regenerate are awakened:

1 Thes. V. 5, 6, ' Ye are all the children of light and the children of

the day : we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us

not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober.' Their sleep

noteth their ignorance and security ; they neither mind their duty nor

their danger ; never think of God's wrath approaching, nor prepare

themselves to stand before him with comfort, but go on contentedly

in their sinful estate, as if the merry world would always last. Sleep-

ing is either total or partial.

[1.] Total, in the unregenerate, who are senseless and mindless of

their condition, or regard nothing of their misery and happiness.

Their reason and natural knowledge is, as it were, laid asleep, and

mseless to them. If men did improve common principles, and act as

reasonable creatures, they could not so unreasonably allow themselves

in such a course of sin and folly as they live in. Therefore our busi-

ness is to awaken conscience, that they may show themselves men :

Isa. xlvi. 8, ' Remember this, and show yourselves men ; bring it again

to mind, ye transgressors ! ' christians ! is this a case to sleep

in, w^hen men are upon the brink of hell, and the wrath of God

hangeth like a sharp sword over their heads, ready to drop down upon

them every moment? If reason were not laid asleep, grace would

sooner do its work.

[2.] Partial, in God's people : Cant. v. 2, ' I sleep, but my heart

waketh.' There is in them a double principle — the flesh inclining to

sleep, and the spirit inclining to wake. We read in the parable, Mat.

XXV. 5, ' While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept ; '

that is, both the foolish and wise virgins. The wise have their slumber-

ing fits. The doctrines of the gospel concerning God and Christ,

heaven and hell, sin and holiness, have not always alike lively influence

upon their hearts. By the gleams of worldly prosperity faith is fallen

asleep, and ready to give place to sensuality, and they are governed

more by the desires of the flesh than by the heavenly mind. The

heart is kept strange to God and heaven, because it is altogether taken

up with carnal vanities.

But the former is now under our consideration, the sleep of the

carnal, not of the renewed. That sleep again is twofold — natural and

judicial.

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(1.) Natural, when they are careless of their souls, neglectful of

heavenly things, live without God in the world. This is natural to us

through the ignorance and injudiciousness of our minds : 1 Cor. ii. 14,

' But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for

they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they

are spiritually discerned ; ' Eph. ii. 12, ' That at that time ye were

■without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and

strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without

God in the world.'

(2.) There is a judicial hardness, when a spirit of deep sleep falleth

upon them, and they are neither awakened by the ordinances nor

providences of God : Kom. xi. 8, ' God hath given them the spirit of

slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not

hear, unto this day.' This noteth an extreme degree of security and

stupidity, when God giveth men up to their wilful obstinacy, by with-

drawing that light from them against which they have so often rebelled^

and then they are, as it were, intoxicated by some soporiferous potion

or medicine ; do what we can, we cannot awaken them. All wicked

men arrive not to this, but they are in the way to it. Here then i»

their misery upon the first account, they sleep in sin ; and a great

misery it is.

(Is^.) Because their insensibility and security make their other sins

more dangerous. If the devil can keep men asleep in their sins, he-

hath his ends upon them ; he could not make such slaves and drudges

of them to their base lusts if reason and conscience were but awake ia

them : 1 Cor. xv. 34, ' Awake to righteousness, and sin not ; for some

have not the knowledge of God.' It is all the reason men should

rouse up themselves out of that drowsy condition of sin wherein they

are got so securely and contentedly, without disturbance or remorse.

(2d) Though they sleep, their damnation sleepeth not : 2 Peter ii.

3, ' Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their

damnation slumbereth not.' Punishment may be long suspended, yet

it breaketh out at last, and surpriseth us ere we are aware. It is sad

to sleep on still till we awake in flames. Death, and judgment, and

eternity is at hand, and will you still live merrily and quietly, in a

careless and unprepared estate, as if all were well ?

(3d) The sun is up, and shines into their windows: Rom. xiii. 11,.

\* And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of

sleep ; for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed ; '

1 Thes. v. 7, ' For they that sleep, sleep in the night ; and they that

be drunken, are drunken in the night.' To sleep in our sins when we

live in the full sunshine of the gospel is more damnable : John iii. 19,

\* And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, anil

men love darkness rather than light, because tlieir deeds were evil.\*

Deeds of darkness do not become a time of light. Will you follow

Satan by daylight, and run on with open eyes to everlasting destruc~

tion ? Our sins are more excuseless and more shameless the more

wilful. Every sin is double to what it was in the times of ignorance.

Our security now cannot be maintained without atheism and great

contempt of God, who so clearly discovereth his mind to us.

2. The next notion is spiritual death ; for we are bidden to \* Arise-

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from the dead/ which showeth this sleep is deadly : Eph. ii. 1, \* And

jou hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins ; ' John

V. 25, ' The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and live.'

We are spiritually dead till Christ help us. How are we dead ? Two

ways — (1.) Dead as we are destitute of spiritual life ; (2.) Dead as we

are destitute of the favour and peace of God.

[1.] Dead as we are destitute of spiritual life. To lessen our dis-

ease is to slight our cure, which the scripture seeketh to magnify every-

where. And therefore to be destitute of the Spirit of God is as the body

when deprived of the soul. There is no principle in us to incline us

to God, or to do anything that is spiritually good, yea, much to the

contrary : Rom. viii. 7, \* The carnal mind is enmity against God, for

it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' As there

is no inclination and ability, so there is much averseness and enmity ;

^nd therefore we cannot quicken ourselves or convert ourselves. And

this incapacity and disability is increased in us by the growth of per-

verse and carnal habits : 1 Tim. v. 6, ' But she that liveth in pleasure

is dead while she liveth.' Though alive as to the body, she is dead as

to God and the heavenly life, and all the interests of it.

[2.] We are dead as we have lost the favour of God, and are

obnoxious to his wrath. The law hath sentenced us to death, and our

passing from death to life is not only put in opposition to corruption,

but is opposite to condemnation : John v. 24, ' He that heareth my

word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and

fihall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.'

And sins are called 'dead works,' as they render us liable to death,

Heb. ix. 14. They merit everlasting punishment. Now this is our

woful condition, we are destitute of life spiritual, and obnoxious to the

wrath of God, and therefore we should not allowedly continue in this

estate for a moment.

Secondly, Let us speak of these terms conjunctly ; the one helpeth

to explain the other. When we hear that man sleepeth in sin, possibly

we might be apt to be conceited that man's heart is not so corrupt as

it is, and are ready to say of it, as Christ did of the damsel whom he

raised to life, Mat, ix. 24, ' She is not dead, but sleepeth.' Therefore

we must take in the other expression to help it. We do not only sleep

in sin, but are dead in trespasses and sins. So, on the other side, when

we hear that we are in the state of the dead, we may misconceive

of God's work in conversion, and press the rigour of the notion too

far, as if he wrought upon us only as stocks and stones ; therefore we

must take in the other expression ; we sleep in sins. Life natural is

etill left us ; there is reason and conscience still to work upon, though

we are wholly disabled from doing anything pleasing to God ; that is

to say —

1. We have reason. Thou art a man, and hast reason, and there-

fore art to be dealt with by way of exhortation. God infiuenceth all

things according to their natural inclination, as he enliglitenetli the

world by the sun, burneth with fire, so he reasoneth with man. God

acts necessarily with necessary causes, and freely with free causes. He

doth not oppress the liberty of his creatures, but preserveth the nature

.and interest of his workmanship, and draweth men with the cords of a

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man, Hosea xi. 4, propoundeth reasons which we must consider, and so

betake ourselves to the heavenly life. He maketh use of the faculties

we have, and showeth us the misery of our lost estate, the possibility of

salvation by Christ, sweetly inviting^ us to accept of his grace, that he

may pardon our sins, sanctify and heal our natures, and lead us in a

way of holiness to eternal life.

2. We have conscience (which is reason applying things to our case),

and can judge of our actions morally considered with respect to reward

and punishment, and accuse or excuse as the nature of the action

deserveth : Rom. ii. 14, 15, ' For when the gentiles, which have not

the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not

the law, are a law to themselves : which show the work of the law

written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their

thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another.'

3. That we have a natural self-love and desire of happiness : Ps.

iv. 6, ' There be many that say, Who will show us any good ? ' Mat.

xiii. 45, 46, ' The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man

seeking goodly pearls ; who, when he had found one pearl of great

price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.' We would

not be miserable, nor hated of God, nor cast into eternal torments, but

would rather have eternal bliss. How can we preach to you ? What

have we to work upon but this ? So that though we are dead, so as tO'

do nothing savingly and acceptably, yet we must remember that we

are also asleep, ignorant, slight, careless, do not improve our natural

reason, conscience, and desires of happiness to any saving purpose, and

will not mind things. Both together giveth us a right apprehension of"

our woful condition by nature, that we are corrupt, and so are said to

be dead ; and senseless and secure, so we are said to be asleep, mindlesa

of our danger and remedy.

II. The manner of our recovery out of this wretched estate.

1. In the general, it is by calling of us. God's words are here put

in the form of a call or invitation, ' Awake, arise.' 1 Peter ii. 9, ' Who

hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light ; ' 2 Thes. if.

14, ' Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the

glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.' This calling is both outward and

inward ; outwardly by the gospel, and inwardly by the Spirit. The

outward calling is necessary that we might have some visible sign of

God's good-will towards us, and something from God himself to give us

a right and warrant to lay claim to those excellent privileges by which

he doth invite us to our duty, that we might not take this honour to

ourselves, and seem to usurp and intrude upon the possession of those

things which belong not to us : Heb. v. 4, ' And no man taketh this

honour unto himself but he that is called of God.' None came to the

wedding but those that were bidden, Mat. xxii., or went into the vineyard

till they were hired, Mat. xx. It is necessary also to bring home his

grace to us, and leave it upon our own choice : Acts xiii. 26, ' To you

is the word of this salvation sent ; ' that if we refuse it, the fault may

appear to be our own, and our destruction of ourselves. The inward

calling by his Spirit is necessary also to make this grace effectual,

otherwise we should remain dead and sleepy still : 2 Peter i. 3, ' Accord-

ing as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto

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life and <^odliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to

glory and virtue.' God hath called us to glory and virtue, which we

expound, to heaven and holiness. But the call remaineth ineffectual,

there being so much opposition without and within our hearts, and

slight and vain apprehensions of it. And the devil catcheth the good

seed out of our minds as soon as we begin to be serious, Mat. xiii. 19 ;

and we being enchanted with a sensual happiness, do so wilHngly yield

to his motions, that all will come to nothing unless God interpose hia

divine power to change our hearts, and bring us to life and godliness.

2. More particularly, the order of this calling is set down in the

text, in these two injunctions, 'Awake,' and 'Arise from the dead.' Wo

are reduced and brought home to God two ways — either (1.) Prepar-

atively and dispositively ; or (2.) Formally and constitutively.

[1.] The preparative and dispositive way is intimated in that word

\* Awake,' and teacheth us this great truth, that our first step to con-

version is an awakening, or a serious consideration whence we are,

whither we are a-going, or what shall become of us to all eternity,

"Wherever conversion to God is spoken of, somewhat of this is implied.

Awakening grace goeth before converting grace : Ps. xxii. 27, ' All the

ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord.' First

remember, and then turn ; as if they had forgotten themselves all the

while befoi'e, and had lived as in a dream, and utter neglect of those

common principles which discovered a God ; and do rule, or govern,

and influence all the affairs of mankind. So Ps. cxix. 59, ' I thought

on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.' Till we con-

sider what we have done, and what we should do, there can be no

expectation that we should correct our errors, and heartily return to a

holy life, or to the obedience we owe to God. So it is said of the

prodigal, Luke xv. 17, that 'he came to himself before he thought of

returning to his father. There are two parts of religion — to bring men

and themselves together, and then to bring them and Christ together ;

the one is preparative to the other ; first they come to themselves, and

then they are in a hopeful way of being brought to Christ. So Ezek.

xviii. 28, 'Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his

transgressions which he hath committed.' First he considereth, and

layeth his course of life to heart, and then turneth from it. As here

in the text ; awaking out of the sleep of sin maketh way for the intro-

duction of the light of life : 2 Tim. ii. 26, ' That they may recover

themselves out of the snare of the devil.' In the margin it is ' that

they may awake,' avavrj^jrcoaiv. The word avavi'j^eiv signifieth to awake

or be sober again after drunkenness, as the scripture expresseth it con-

cerning Nabal : 1 Sam. xxv. 37, ' It came to pass in the morning,

when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him all

these things, that his heart died within him.' So of Noah : Gen. ix. 24,

' And Noah awoke from his wine.' And so if the fumes of lust were

thoroughly dissipated and scattered, and men were come to themselves

again, much good might be done upon them. I have done with this

preparative way of recovery, when I have observed to you two things,

for it consists of two branches —

(1.) An awakening sense and sight of our misery ; such the apostle

speaketh of Kom. vii. 9, ' When the commandment came, sin revived,

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and I died.' This practical conviction maketh us see our lost estate, for

we never value Christ as a saviour till we see our own necessity of him.

A cold doctrinal knowledge of sin and misery maketh way but for a

dogmatical opinionative faith ; and the offer of grace is never seriously

regarded by any that is not made sensible of his sad and miserable case

by nature. Therefore this part of the awakening is necessary. As the

physician is welcome to the sick, and ease to the burdened, and redemp-

tion to the captive, so is the promise to them that are apprehensive of

the curse.

(2.) The next awakening concerneth our remedy, which we slight

and neglect while we are drunk with worldly felicity : Mat. xxii. 5,

' And they made light of it, and went their way, one to his farm, another

to his merchandise.' We prize not Christ and his salvation till the

Lord be pleased to open our hearts, as he did the heart of Lydia, Acts

xvi. 14. Then we begin to consider what manner of salvation is offered

to us, and how deeply we are concerned in it. And conscience begins

to scourge us with such a question as that is, Heb. ii. 3, ' How shall we

escape if we neglect so great salvation ? ' And of what punishment

shall we be thought worthy if we despise God's offer ?

[2.] Formal and constitutive, \* Arise from the dead/ Our conver-

sion is as the recalling of a dead man to life ; and therefore called

'repentance from dead works,' Heb. vi. 1. And it is represented by the

return of the prodigal, Luke xv. 32, ' For this thy brother was dead,

and is alive again.' It is as wonderful a work and as considerable a

blessing as if he had been raised from the dead. Things are said to be

dead when they are useless as to the ends for which they serve or were

created ; so we are dead in trespasses and sins, useless to God, and averse

from him ; but when we renounce and forsake all our former ways, and

devote ourselves to God, to live in his love, and do his will, then we are

alive again. The other awakening is gradus ad rem, a preparative

disposition ; this is gradus in re, a plain passing from death to life.

Man before the fall did enjoy spiritual life and communion with God,

being his creature, and fitted for commerce with him, but we lost this

life by our defection from God ; therefore now our great business is

to return to it again, by getting our hearts and lives changed. It

beginneth in the new birth, when we are first quickened to this life :

1 Peter i. 3, 'Who hath begotten us to a lively hope, by the resurrection

of Jesus Christ from the dead ; ' Titus iii. 5, ' According to his mercy

he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy

Ghost.' And the first act of it is our solemn dedication of ourselves to

God: Rom. vi. 13, ' But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are

alive from the dead ; and your members as instruments of righteousness

unto God.' And still it is carried on in holiness all our days : Luke i.

74, 75, ' That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of

the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness

and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.' So that to rise

from the dead is as much as to get your natures chani^cd and healed,

and to quit your former conversation, and the lusts tiiat caused it, tliat

for the future you may live unto God, This is that the returning

sinner must mind, that the convictions may not die upon his heart till

they produce some good effect, a settled purpose and resolution to live

the holy and heavenly life.

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III. The next tiling is, what a blessed estate Christ calleth them

into ; he doth not only rescue them out of the power of darkness, but

\* he will give them light.'

Many things are intended hereby.

1. By light is meant the lively light of the Spirit, or a clear affec-

tive knowledge both of our misery and remedy. Of our misery : Rev.

iii. 18, 'And anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see ;'

that is, see our misery and wretched condition. Our remedy : 2 Cor.

iv. C, ' For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,

hath shined into our hearts, to give the knowledge of the glory of God

in the face of Jesus Christ.' He alludeth to the creation ; as light was

the first creature — ' Let there be light, and there was light ' — so it is

in the new creation.

2. Light is put for God's favour, and the solid consolation which

iloweth from thence : Ps. iv. G, 7, 'Lord, lift thou up the light of thy

countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness into my heart, more

than in the time that their corn and wine increased ; ' Ps. Ixxxix. 15,

' They shall walk, Lord, in the light of thy countenance.' Naturally

we were children of wrath even as others, had no true peace and solid

comfort ; now to live in the favour of God, whereas before we con-

tinually feared his wrath, is certainly a very great blessing.

3. It implieth eternal glory and happiness, to which we have a right

now, and for which we are prepared and fitted by grace : Col. i. 12,

' Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be par-

takers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'

4. I shall answer some doubts ; for may it not seem to be collected

hence —

[1.] That it is in our power to obey the call of God, or to do those

things which he hath required of us in the gospel, as to repent, believe,

and walk in newness of life ?

[2.] That we prevent him ? for first we awake, and arise from the

dead, before Christ giveth us light. So much the order of the words

seems to imply, that man is first awakened, and risen, and then en-

lightened. This cannot be, for it is by the light of Christ that we are

both awakened and raised.

To the first I answer — It is not so ; it is potentia Domini, non viri-

hies mortui, by the power of God alone, by which they are awakened

and risen ; it is not in their power, but their duty. And in these ex-

hortations God showeth not what we can do, but what we ought to do.

God exhorteth for these reasons —

(1.) To demand his right. Though we have lost our power, yet

he must not lose his right. As a debt may be demanded from a

prodigal creditor who hath wasted his substance, so may our duty be

required of us, especially when it is demanded practically, to convince

us of our impotency ; that is, that upon trial we may acknowledge the

debt, confess our impotency, and beg grace.

(2.) Because God by calling conveyeth his grace : ' For he calleth

the things that are not as though they were,' Rom. iv. 17. His word

is a creating word. He cried with a loud voice to the dead man that

was ready to stink, John xi. 43, ' Lazarus, come forth ; ' so to the

man with a withered hand, Mat. xii. 13, ' Stretch forth thine hand.'

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That was the defect ; he could not stretch forth his hand ; but God

often commandeth those things which he performeth by his own grace,

and giveth us to do what he biddeth us to do ; and by these exhorta-

tions and commands his Spirit worketh that efiPectually in us which

he requireth of us.

(3.) Sinners without these exhortations would be careless, and go

on contentedly in sin, and be mindless of these things ; therefore it is

good to rouse them up, to charge them with their duty, and speedily

and earnestly to go about it, if they mean to be saved, that they may

take care of this duty as well as they can, else all these rebukes ag-

gravate their sin : Pro v. i. 25, ' They set at nought all my counsel, and

would none of my reproof.' To put it off when conscience boggleth is

aggravated wickedness : Acts xxiv. 25, ' When Paul reasoned of right-

eousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled,' and

would hear Paul at a more convenient season.

(4.) When the Lord hath begun with us, we must not remain dead,

careless, and sleepy. . What God commandeth we must set ourselves

to obey ; it is our work, though grace be from him. It is I that must

be awakened ; it is I must arise from the dead, and turn to God ; it

is I must believe and obey.

[3.] But it seemeth we prevent God.

(1.) This giving light is not an effect or consequent following after,

either in order of nature or time, but a cause ; for by and in these

things God giveth us light, or bringeth us into this lightsome condition

of Christianity.

(2.) It may be understood not of God's converting or assisting grace,

but his rewarding grace ; that is, blessing, comfort, peace, and glory,

or some further degree of knowledge and grace, whereby a christian

may glorify his profession. But often in scripture the Spirit is pro-

mised to the penitent : Prov, i. 23, ' Turn ye at my reproof: behold,

I will pour out my Spirit unto you ; ' Acts ii. 38, ' And Peter said

unto them. Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of

Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of

the Holy Ghost.' To the believer : John vii. 38, 39, ' He that believeth

on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water : but this he

spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.'

But none of this doth exclude his preventing grace, by which he

worketh all our works in us.

SERMON XVII.

Wherefore he saith, Aiualce thou that sleepcst, and arise from the dead,

and Christ shall give thee light. — Erii. v. 14.

Use. If this be the intent of Christ, it serveth for exhortation, to

awaken sinners out of the sleep of sin, that they may rise from the

dead, and obtain the light of life. Look every one to yourselves, for

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the voice of God speaketh to every one particularly: 'Awake tliou

that sleepest, and rise tliov, from the dead,' A tender waking con-

science is a great mercy, whereas a dead and stupid conscience is a

heavy judgment ; for then neither reason nor grace is of any use to

us ; we can neither do the functions of a man or a christian while we

are asleep. Because every one will shift this off from himself, and

think it concerneth not him, I shall show you how it concerneth both

the regenerate and unregenerate, and how far both the one and the

other may be said to be asleep in sin.

First, For those that are carnal, and live in a course and trade of

sin, habitual customary sinners, there is no doubt but they are asleep,

and dead in trespasses and sins ; for —

1. Their great work lietli undone, which is entering into God's

peace, and accepting the grace offered to them for the pardon of their

sins, and healing their natures : Luke x. 42, ' One thing is needful.'

And what is that one thing, but returning to God from whom we have

fallen by our folly and sin, or seeking his renewing and reconciling

grace ? this is the main thing : Mat. vi. 33, ' But first seek ye the

kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be

added unto you ; ' Phil. iii. 13, ' This one thing I do.' All men in

their wits would mind this.

2. Their greatest concernments are forgotten by them, which

is avoiding eternal death and obtaining eternal life : Prov. xv. 24,

' The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell

beneath.' Our wisdom lieth in avoiding our greatest danger, and

pursuing after our greatest happiness, and therefore to choose that sort

of living which conduceth both to the one and the other. And by

nature we are liable to eternal death, but the grace of the gospel pro-

videth for us eternal happiness. The misery is beneath, the happiness

is above ; and salvation and damnation are no trifles. Now he that

only mindeth things below, and neglecteth things above, is plainly

asleep, and doth not act as a reasonable creature.

3. The light and direction which God giveth is of no use to him.

There is a twofold light that shineth — the light of reason, and the light

of religion.

[1.] The light of reason is of no use to a man that sleepeth. Eeason

will fear and hope, but it doth not stir them. Eeason discerneth a

difference between good and evil, and our wills were given us to re-

fuse the one, and choose the other ; and fears and hopes do awake

us to this aversation or pursuit. But alas ! to one whose conscience

is benumbed, all is lost. Seeing better, they pursue that which is

worse ; they approve of things that are more excellent ; but this law

knowledge or natural knowledge is but a form : Kom. ii. 18, 20, 'And

knowest his will, and approvest the things that are excellent, being

instructed out of the law. Which hath a form of knowledge, and of

the truth in the law.' It is but /wop^wcrtc t?}? ryv(oaeco<i iv t(o vofxa ; it is

little stirring to make us mindful of our duty, and less effectual to

make us perform it. The greatest things do not affect us when we do

not think of them.

[2.] The light of religion or Christianity, which is but a form too to

them that are asleep : 2 Tim. iii. 5, ' Having a form of godliness, but

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denying the power thereof.' To sleep under the threatenings of God

nnd the dreadful curses of liis law, with so many wounds in our con-

sciences and ulcers in our souls as the word of God discovereth in us,

this is a deep sleep indeed. Our duty and danger is discovered to us

at a higher rate in religion than was evident in the light of nature,

and in a more powerful and affective way ; but these hear, and see,

and know all things as men asleep, as if it concerned them not at all.

Well, then, we should earnestly seek to rouse them up.

First, ' Awake thou that sleepest' Consider these motives —

1. Doth it become any to sleep in your case, while you know not

God to be a friend or an enemy ? yea, when you have so much reason

to think that he is an enemy to you, for you are enemies to him by

your minds in evil works: Col. i. 21, 'And you that were sometimes

alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works.' The proverb

saith, ' A man that hath an enemy must not sleep ; ' we take it for a

maxim. And have not you made God your enemy when you break

■his laws, and grieve his Spirit, and dishonour his name ? Go and be

reconciled quickly. Is the guilt of sin a slight matter, or damnation a

thing to be played with ?

2. You sleep in that ship that is swiftly carried to eternity, and

are just upon the entrance into another world: Mark xiii. 36, 'Lest

coming suddenly he find you sleeping.' Oh, if Christ should come

when you least expect him, and find you in a posture incapable of

mercy from him, unqualified to receive benefit by his coming, how

great will your confusion be ! and you cannot present his time to him,

and say, Stay till I am prepared ; that may be long ere you are so.

3. You have slept out too much precious time already : 1 Peter

iv. 3, ' The time past of our life may suffice us.\* Have we not kept

God out of his right too long, and delayed our own happiness, and left

an eternal interest upon too great uncertainties and hazards ? and will

you do so still ?

4. Thou hast been long and often called upon. If God had not

sought to awaken you, you had the better excuse : Prov. vi. 9, 10,

' How long wilt thou sleep, sluggard ? when wilt thou arise out of

sleep ? yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands

to sleep.' Sleepy sinners are not presently awakened ; we must con-

tinue calling to them. God hath not taken the first repulse, but still

continueth calling thee by his word and providence. Men should be

ashamed to lie snoring upon their beds when their master or father or

prince calleth them. God calleth you by his word ; conscience is a

little stirred, but you fall asleep again. God seeketh to awaken you

by smart providences ; then you rouse up yourselves a little, but ])re-

sently the love of sin prevaileth, and you take your rest again. You

would fain sleep a little longer in sin, are loath to renounce 3'our be-

witching lusts and betake yourselves to a heavenly life.

5. Now is your time and season : Prov. x. 5, ' He that gathereth in

summer is a wise son ; but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that

causeth shame.' To lose time is sad, but to lose the season worst of all,

and a season that bringeth profit as well as labour, as harvest doth.

Usually the time of grace is between eighteen and eight-and-twenty ;

this is matter of observation. We cannot exclude other seasons, for

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Christ may effectually call at the eleventh hour. We cannot say, The

clay of grace is past ; but while you are fresh and in your flower, it is

good to set your hearts to religion. Though the day of gospel grace

hath no shorter end than the end of our life upon earth, God knoweth

how long that life or the means of grace may be continued, either to a

nation or person ; it is quicklier past to some than others. Besides,

there are certain times when God actually moveth the hearts of the

impenitent towards conversion more than formerly he did. In short,

there is the Father's season, the day of his patience, and that is as long

as life, while his long-suffering waiteth : 1 Peter iii. 20, ' When once

the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah.' And we are

sure of no more ; the present time is the best and only certain time :

Heb. iii. 7, ' To-day, if you will hear his voice.' And there is God the

Son's time, while the offers of grace continue ; and we must not sin

away and shorten this time : Luke xix. 42, ' If thou hadst known, even,

thou, at least in this thy day, the things wliich belong unto thy peace ;

but now they are hid from thine eyes ; ' 2 Cor. vi. 2, ' I have heard

thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured

thee. Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of

salvation.' And there is God the Holy Spirit's time, when his motions

are stronger and opportunities fairer for conversion than ever after-

wards : Isa. Iv. 6, ' Seek ye the Lord while he may be found ; call ye

upon him while he is near.' God may withhold the motions of his

Spirit, and leave us to the hardness of our hearts; therefore we are

to open when he knocketh, to put in for cure when he stirreth the

waters, to let loose the sails when the wind bloweth.

6. Others care for their souls, and are hard at work for God ; their

diligence should awaken us : Acts xxvi. 7, ' Unto which promise our

twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come ; for

which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews ; ' Heb.

xi. 7, ' By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet,

moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house ; by the

which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness

which is by faith.' As the lazy and drowsy are stirred up by the early

rising and constant labour of their neighbours. Why should not our

souls be as precious to us as theirs to them ? The same common

necessity lieth upon us. Now shall not their zeal provoke us ? They

are flesh and blood as we are, and have not divested themselves of the

interest and affections of the animal life no more than we ; only they

govern them, and overrule them to a better end. Now shall not their

zeal provoke us ?

7. The devil is awake, and will you sleep ? 1 Peter v. 8, ' Be sober,

be vigilant ; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh

about, seeking whom he may devour.' He is rocking your cradles,

stilling your consciences by diversions or vain delights, prejudicing us

against a holy ministry that would do us good, instilling into us by his

instruments false and base opinions against holiness and strictness of

life, to lull us asleep in security. Now, should we that know our

danger take up every false allegation against our duty ?

8. If nature were well awake, it would disprove your courses as much

as religion. Now when duty is unquestionable, and nature doth even

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show to us that it is a shame to indulge such lusts and practices, that

should much move us ; otherwise we neither behave ourselves as men

or christians. The thing should be doubly dear to us ; that is, dear to

us, ' both in the flesh and in the Lord,' Philem. 16. When nature

and grace concur, either to commend or condemn a way, we sin greatly

if we regard not these motions.

Secondly, ' Arise from the dead ; ' that is, be converted to God ; for

the voice of Ciirist doth not only conduce to awaken us, but to raise us

from the dead : John v. 25, ' The hour is coming, and now is, when

the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and they that hear

shall live.' Look about you, then ; entertain serious thoughts of get-

ting out of a state of sin into a state of grace.

Take two motives to quicken you to this —

1. Better never be awakened if still we continue in our sins, for this

aggravateth them : John iii. 19, ' And this is the condemnation, that

light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light,

because their deeds are evil.' When it prevaileth for conviction only,

and not for conversion, when you know a better condition, and do not

embrace it, this is not only shameful, but wilful sluggishness.

2. Better never rise in the last day if we be not raised from the

death of sin. It would be a kind of good news to the wicked if there

■were an end of them in the grave. No ; all must rise again : John v.

28, 29, ' Marvel not at this ; for the hour is coming, in the which all

that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they

that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done

evil unto the resurrection of damnation. Herein they are worse than the

brutes, death puts an end to their pains and pleasures at once ; but

■when a wicked man dieth, he goeth to receive his everlasting doom and

sentence, which shall openly be pronounced at the last day. Oh, then,

' arise from the dead.' There are two pleas against this exhortation ;

some say, It is too soon ; others, It is too late.

[1.] Do not say, It is too soon ; for we can never soon enough get out

of so great a danger. The case is more difficult every day; and when

you are awakened, and smother your convictions, that bringeth on

j)enal hardness : Heb. iii. 7, 8, ' To-day, if ye will hear his voice,

harden not your hearts.' While it is called to-day, before God's day

be over, and the heat and force of the impulse be lost. The present

time is the only time, and we are not sure the day of salvation may be

longer, because death may cut us off. Sin is a hardening thing ; and

the longer we sin, the more it hardeneth.

[2.] Do not say, It is too late ; for the work is yet possible, as short

as your time is like to be in the world ; and it will be your fliult if it

be not done. The covenant of grace promiseth pardon to every peni-

tent believer, whenever they truly turn to God, without excepting any

liour or person in the world. God doth yet freely offer you mercy ;

and if you will not refuse him, the design of love shall not break on

liis part. Repentance, and cries, and tears will be too late in the other

world, but never here. God is able. Do not say, as Martha, John xi.

39, ' Lord, by this time he stinketh.' God is able to raise dead souls,

as he did Lazarus out of the grave. Indeed, if you think sin is best

for you, and you will not hear of changing your course, then for the

present Christianity speaketh no good to you.

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Secondly, I must apply myself to the regenerate and renewed by

grace, and so show you how they may sleep in sin, and therefore

should awake to righteousness.

1. It may be incident to God's people ; for the foolish and wise

virgins both slumbered and slept : Mat. xxv. 5, ' While the bridegroom

tarried, they all slumbered and slept.'

Reasons.

[1.] There is a diversity of principles within us, the flesh inclining

to sleep, and the spirit inclining to wake : Cant. v. 2, ' I sleep, but my

heart waketh ; ' Mat. xxvi. 41, 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into

temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' The

degrees of grace which the best attain unto in this life are mixed with

imperfections; the commanding faculties do but imperfectly direct,

and the inferior faculties do but imperfectly obey ; the understanding

is but a blind guide, and the will is but imperfectly rectified by grace.

[2.] There are variety of natural occurrences working upon the

diversity of principles within us ; sometimes we are in a prosperous

estate, sometimes in deep trouble, and both may cause deadness and

drowsiness in us. Deep troubles may make us ' weary of well-doing,'

2 Thes. iii. 13 ; Heb. xii. 3, ' Lest ye be wearied, and faint in your

minds.' So in times of wealth, peace, and honour, these may breed in

us security and neglect of God : Prov. i. 32, \* For the turning away

of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy

them.' Ease destroyeth the fool. When Delilah spreads her lap for

us, and the delights of the world open their bosom to us, we had need

to look to ourselves. David enjoying peace and rest fell into those

foul sins of adultery and murder, 2 Sam. xi. 1. He slew Uriah, his

friend, who in adversity spared Saul, his enemy ; his heart smote him

for cutting off the lap of Saul's garment, but without remorse he

plotteth secretly to destroy his faithful servant.

[3.] Conversing with spiritual sluggards, who count it a high piece

of wisdom not to be too forward in religion. Company and example

hath a mighty force upon us, and doth secretly taint our hearts : Isa.

vi. 5, ' Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean

lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.' Mortified,

warm, heavenly, and self-denying christians do exceedingly quicken

us : Heb. x. 24, ' Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and

good works.' But carnal company is a deadening thing ; a man had

need shake them off if he will keep religion alive : Ps. cxix. 115,

' Depart from me, ye evil-doers ; for I will keep the commandments

of my God.' Our dulness is such, that we need most powerful helps.

[4.] Another cause is dead worship. 3Iissa non mordet — The mass

bites not. Spiritual duties are compared to new wine, Mat. ix. 17, but

Pharisaical fasts to old dead wine. A perfunctory sort of worship

never keepeth us awake ; powerful preaching is compared to goads to

prick us: Eccles. xii. 11, ' The words of the wise are as goads, and as

nails fastened by the masters of assemblies.'

[5.] Slumber is another cause of sleeping : Mat. xxv. 5, ' They all

slumbered and slept ; ' first they slumbered, then they slept. No man

becometh stark naught at the first step. Give way to a remiss will,

and it increaseth on you ; one degree of carelessness breedeth another j

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suppose one act of careless praying, or slight hearing, which draweth

on other acts.

[6.] Not keeping graces in a lively and constant exercise: Prov. xix,

15, ' Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep.' The way to he fervent in

duties is to he frequent in them. Wells are the sweeter for draining ;

exercise keepeth us in life and heart.

[7.] Grieving the Spirit causeth him to suspend his quickening influ-

ences, and then the soul is soon in a dead and drowsy estate : Eph. iv. 30,

\* Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of

redemption.' Conscience is more stupid, and the heart more stiff after

some notable disobedience to the Spirit's motions. David and Jonah

are instances of this.

[8.] Immoderate liberty in worldly things, either in worldly cares

or the delights of the flesh : Luke xxi. 31, ' Take heed to yourselves,

lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunk-

enness, and cares of this life.' So Ps. cxix. 37, ' Turn away mine eyes

from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in thy way.'

2. Wherein the evil of this consists ? There is some defect in the

vital graces. Faith is d'ead : James ii. 20, ' Wilt thou know, vain

man, that faith without works is dead ? ' Love is cold : Mat. xxiv.

12, ' Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.'

And hope is slight, whereas it should be a lively hope : 1 Peter i. 3,

\* Who hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection

of Jesus Christ from the dead.' Faith is dead when there is a form

of knowledge rather than a lively assent to the truths of godliness, and

only a dead opinionative belief Love is cold when it doth not over-

rule carnal self-love, and hath not that force and constraint upon the

soul that it should have : 2 Cor. v. 14, 'For the love of Christ con-

straineth us.' And there is not a certain and earnest expectation of

the blessedness to come when the heavenly mind doth not fortify us

against the allurements of sense. Now the defect in the vitals show-

etli itself —

[1.] By some intermission of our care and caution to keep ourselves

from sin, so that we are either overtaken or overborne. Overtaken

through inadvertency : Gal. vi. 1, ' Brethren, if a man be overtaken in

a fault,' &c. ; or overborne by the violence of temptations and lusts :

James i. 14, \* Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his

own lust, and enticed ; ' and grace maketh but a feel)le opposition.

Usually God's children are overtaken by sins that come upon them by

insensible degrees, and do not waken them by sudden and frightening

assaults, and so they lapse insensibly into pride, covetousness, sensuality,

vainglory, and the like sins. But sometimes also they are overborne,

and drawn to dishonour God, and wound their peace, and lay stumbling-

blocks before others.

[2.] In some abatement of our zeal, fervency, and seriousness in the

duties of religion. Grace is ready to die : Rev. iii. 2, ' Be watchful,

and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die;' Isa.

Ixiv. 7, \* There is none that calleth on thy name, that stirreth up him-

self to lay hold on thee.'

[3.] In neglecting our preparations for our great account, which is

the great enlivening work that should keep us awake in our business :

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2 Peter iii. 14, 'Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such

things, be diligent, that ye be found of him in peace, without spot and

blameless.' And watching is most required and pressed in the scrip-

tures with respect to the day of judgment. Now many times God's

children are distracted with worldly cares or benumbed with fleshly

delights, and live securely in an unprepared estate, and do not endea-

vour to get ready for the coming of the Lord, And so the sleeping of

the virgins is to be interpreted; they had faith, or a belief of the Lord's

coming, and made some general preparation for it : Mat. xxv. 1,

\* They went out to meet the bridegroom ; ' but ver. 5, ' While the

bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept ; ' his coming was

delayed, and they grew careless.

3. How far as to the degree may it seize on God's children ?

[1.] There is no intercision of the habit, or radical inclination of the

soul to God. Still God is their portion and their happiness ; their

choice of him as their supreme good remaineth unshaken, and their

hearts are set to obey him and please him in all things. But still they

are not so dutiful to God, and so true to their great end and scope,

but that they are put besides it, and do actions impertinent, and some-

times that seem inconsistent with it.

[2.] It is not an universal slumber and sleep of the whole man,

and to all goodness. The heart awaketh : Cant. v. 2, 'I sleep, but

my heart waketh.' And it is not an estate of sin that they are in, but

some particular sins they are tempted to: Ps. cxix. 133, ' Order my

steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.'

There is something taketh God's part : 1 John iii. 9, ' Whosoever is

born of God doth not commit sin ; for his seed remaineth in him :

and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' They are unsatisfied

with this drowsy dead estate, and complain of it. They complain of

that senseless stupidity, and sluggish dulness, and cold indififerency to

heavenly things which they have contracted : Isa. Ixiii. 17, ' Lord,

why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our hearts

from thy fear ? Keturn for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine

inheritance.'

[3.] They are more easily alarmed and roused up out of it than

those that sleep the sleep of death, when conscience hath but leisure

and help to deliberate ; as a candle newly blown out doth sooner suck

light than one that was never kindled : Ps. li. title, ' A psalm of

David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone

in to Bathsheba.'

[4.] Wlien they rise again, they are more earnest and fervent than

they were before ; they resolve, and arm themselves with the stronger

resolution for the time to come : Ps. li. 6, ' Behold, thou desirest truth

in the inward parts ; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to

know wisdom.' In short, there is a difference between enmity and

laziness ; some deadness that cometh upon us, and death in sin ;

between a drowsy fit, and a state of carnal security ; between careless

living in sin, without any fear of God's wrath and care of repentance,

and some coldness and indififerency we contract.

[See some of these heads more enlarged on in the author's Sermon,

on Mat. xxv. 5.]

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Well, then, since it is incident in part to God's children, I will press

this admonition on them also.

(1.) Awake. It may seize on the young christian who has as yet

no experience of the strength of sin, the danger of temptations, or their

own weakness: Mat. xxvi. 33, 'Peter answered and said unto him,

Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be

offended.' It may seize on one of long standing, who, having made

sure of his eternal interests, may grow negligent, as if he were now past

all danger : Rev. iii. 17, ' Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with

goods, and have need of nothing : and knowest not that thou art

Avretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' We are in

danger not only in prosperity, but in adversity ; as before : Ps. xxx. 6,

7, ' And in my prosperity 1 said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy

favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong ; thou didst hide

thy face, and I was troubled ; ' Phil. iv. 12, ' I know both how to be

abased, and I know how to abound ; everywhere and in all things I

am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and

to suffer need.' In public and in private duties. In private ; so it

was with the disciples : Mat. xxvi. 45, ' Sleep on now, and take your

rest.' In public : Mat. xiii. 25, \* But while men slept, his enemy came,

and sowed tares, and went his way.' Not only upon omission of our

duty, but when we have performed some eminent service : 2 Chron.

XXXV. 20, ' After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple,' &c.,

then did he rashly engage against Necho, king of Egypt, which cost

him his life : Ezek. xxxiii. 13, ' If the righteous trust to his own right-

eousness, and commit iniquity,' &c., viz., by neglecting his watch. Oh,

let us watch then : 1 Thes. v. 6, ' Therefore let us not sleep, as do

others, but let us watch and be sober.' Take heed when a senseless

stupidity is growing upon you, or a dulness and want of zeal for God,

or any tedious irksomeness in God's service, or too much affection to

worldly happiness. If you sleep, you hazard your souls, and expose

yourselves to God's severe correction: Hosea v. 15, 'I will go and

return to my place, till they acknowledge their offences, and seek my

face.' Let us rouse up ourselves : 2 Tim. i. 6, ' Wherefore I put thee

in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee.'

Beg of God to quicken you, as David often did, Ps. cxix.

(2.) As you would show that you have your part in this lightsome

condition of Christianity, do not only renounce the works of darkness,

but reprove them, and shame them out of the world by a holy aweful

conversation. We would all have our part in the comfort and peace

of Christianity ; let us all have a hand in representing the glory and

lustre of it to the world. Let your religion appear to be manifesting

light, not only to direct yourselves, but to convince the world.

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SERMON XVIII.

See then that ye loalk circumspectly, not as fools, hut as luise.

Eph. v. 15.

In the context the apostle inferreth a change of life from the change of

then\* condition ; they sometimes lived in heathenish darkness, but were

now light in the Lord ; and therefore it is an easy deduction he

inferreth, that they should walk as children of the light. And then he

showeth them what kind of walk that is — (1.) Negatively, that they

should ' have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but

rather reprove them.' (2.) Positively, he directeth them here to ' walk

circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.'

In this direction the duty is — (1.) Propounded; (2.) Expounded.

1. It is propounded, ' See that ye walk circumspectly ; ' where —

[1.] The manner; he would have them regard it as a matter of

importance, /SXeTrere ovv, look to it.

[2.] The matter, ttco? uKpo^m TrepLTraretTe, how circumspectly ye

walk. Mark, it is our ivallc that the apostle speaketh of, or the whole

course of our conversations. There may be a zealous fit or pang for

a step or two, but the whole course, manner, and tenor of our lives

must be thus ordered. And the other word, a/cpt/Sco?, signifieth exactly,

accurately : Mat. ii. 8, Herod chargeth that they should search dili-

gently for the child. The word is aKpi/Sm, narrowly. Some may

think the apostle intendeth wary carriage, to avoid danger, and save

themselves. No ; it is not a politic cautiousness to save a temporal

stake, but a holy wisdom to save our souls ; it relateth to our duty to

God rather than to danger from men.

2. As it is expounded by anew proposal, which hath also the advan-

tage in it of a motive and argument : ' Not as fools, but as wise.' In

the judgment of the world you will be accounted fools, but really and

indeed this is your wisdom : Deut. iv, 5, 6, ' Behold I have taught you

judgments and statutes, even as the Lord my God commanded me.

Keep them therefore, and do them ; for this is your wisdom and under-

standing in the sight of the nations, when they shall hear all these

statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding

people.' But mark the emphasis ; the apostle speaketh both negatively,

\* Not as fools,' and positively, ' But as wise.'

[1.] ' Not as fools,' negatively. Fools are a sort of easy people, apt

to be seduced and drawn aside to carnal compliances.

[2.] \* But as wise,' that is, as men of prudence, who weigh all things,

or as those that are endowed with the wisdom of God revealed in his

word : Prov. xiv. 8, ' The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his

way ; ' Prov. xxiii. 19, ' Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide

thine heart in the way.'

Doct. It is the duty of God's children to walk exactly or circum-

spectly.

This is commanded : Heb. xii. 13, 'Make straight paths for your

feet.' God doth not allow men the liberty to take what way they list,

or to enlarge themselves as their fleshly inclinations move them. No;

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their conversations must be bounded and confined witliin such limits

as God hath prescribed : 1 Thes. iv. 1, ' That as ye have received of us

how ye ought to walk and to please God, so you would abound more

and more,' The christian faith and the care of our own salvation

layeth great obligations upon us to walk exactly, according to the rule

that is set unto us, and to improve and increase the holiness that is

already in us, that we may please God better than yet we have done.

And as it is commanded us, so it is commanded to us as the most

comfortable course that we can take: Gal. vi. 16, 'As many as walk

according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the

whole Israel of God.' The word there signifieth to walk orderly and

attentively, as soldiers when they keep rank, who do observe their rule

or the laws of military discipline. These have peace in their own

consciences, and mercy from God in pardoning their many failings. So

Acts ix. 31, ' They walked in the fear of God, and in the comforts of the

Holy Ghost.' We think to be so exact is tedious and troublesome.

No ; it is the ready way to peace and comfort. Whereas others make

a hard shift to go to heaven through many doubts and fears, they have

a comfortable sense of their interest in Christ, and live in the delight-

ful foresight of glory to come. The saints are commended for it : Luke

i. 6, ' It is said of Zachary and Elizabeth, ' they were both righteous

before God, and walked in all the commandments and ordinances of

the Lord blameless ; ' that is, were approved and accepted of God as

sincere and upright persons, who live in obedience to all God's will,

without indulgence to any known sin ; therefore their human frailties

are not mentioned and imputed to them. So Paul: Acts xxiv, 16,

\* Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence,

towards God and towards men.' That was his daily exercise ; se

should we be exactly careful to perform our duties to God and man.

Reasons to evince the necessity of this circumspect walking.

First, We have a strict rule, that doth not yield the least allowance

and indulgence to sin. When David had admired the perfections of

the law, for the purity of it, and its dominion over the conscience, what

was the fruit of that meditation ? Ps. xix. 12, ' Who can understand

his errors ? cleanse thou me from secret faults.' The best man living,

when he compareth himself with the law of God, will be forced tO'

blush and acknowledge more sins than ever he took notice of before.

The law of God is said to be a ' broad law,' and sometimes a ' narrow

law.' A broad law : Ps. cxix. 96, ' I have seen an end of all perfection,

but thy commandments are exceeding broad.' A narrow law, as our

way to heaven is called a ' narrow way,' Mat. vii. 14. It is a broad

commandment, because it compriseth the whole duty of man. Every-

thing is under a law, not only our actions, but our aims ; there is a law

to our thoughts and our desires, and the very sudden and indeliberate

motions of our souls. We make too short an exposition of the law, and

therefore have too large an opinion of our own righteousness. Again,

it is a narrow law, because it alloweth no liberty to corrupt nature to

discover and bewray itself. There are extremities on either side to be

avoided : Deut. v. 32, ' Ye shall not turn aside to the right hand nor

to the left.' It is a proverbial form of speech, used to signify our exact

care to walk in God's laws; it is taken from passengers, that keep

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exactly to the road and highway, from which they could not turn aside

on either hand, without trespassing on some one or other. The same

speech is used, Isa, xxx. 21, ' This is the way, walk in it, when ye turn

to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left ; ' Prov. iv. 27, ' Turn

not to the right hand, nor to the left ; remove thy foot from evil'

Now, then, in a narrow way it is easy to err, for it is hardly found and

hardly kept, but the danger of erring is great. Therefore to escape

the danger, and that we may walk evenly in the ways that lead to

heaven and happiness, we need much circumspection. Let me give

you an instance. Solomon saith, Eccles. vii. 16, 17, 'Be not righteous

overmuch, neither make thyself overwise : why shouldst thou destroy

thyself? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish: why

shouldst thou die before thy time ? ' The meaning is, avoid the faulty

extremes on both sides. But then he saith, ver. 18, ' He that feareth

Ciod shall come forth of them all ; ' that is, he that ordereth his ways

in the fear of God, turneth not after either to the right hand or to the

left ; he is neither too stiff and proud in his own conceit, nor too flexible

and bending, where his duty forbiddeth compliance.

Secondly, What a holy God we have for our witness, approver, and

judge, who will one day call as to an account ! This is often pressed :

Deut. iv. 23, 24, ' Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the cove-

nant of the Lord your God, which he hath made with you, and make

you a graven image, or the likeness of anything, and shall do evil in

the sight of the Lord thy God, which he hath forbidden thee : for the

Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.' Therefore we

must not make bold with his name, law, worship, or interest. So to

j)ress them to seriousness : Josh. xxiv. 19, ' And Joshua said unto the

people, Ye cannot serve the Lord ; for he is a holy God, he is a jealous

God.' And when he smote the Bethshemites, 1 Sam. vi. 20, ' Who is

able to stand before this holy Lord God ? ' It may be you will think

this is the character of God as he represented himself to the Jews ;

but doth not the christian representation of God call for the same

respect and reverence ? See Heb. xii. 28, 29, ' Wherefore we receiving

a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may

serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear ; for our God is a

consuming fire.' He is a God of all grace, but he will not be slighted ;

his mercy doth not lessen his majesty, nor expose it to contempt.

There are two things in this reason — (1.) That God is our witness;

and (2.) He must be our approver and judge.

(1.) He looketh on, and seetli all that we do for the present : Ps.

cxix. 168, 'I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies ; for all my

ways are before thee.' It is impudence, and great contempt of God,

to break his laws before his face. What can we do that is hidden

from him and done behind his back ? And his inspection is accurate :

Prov, xvi. 2, ' The Lord weigheth the spirits.' He not only seeth, but

weigheth them.

2. He must be our approver and judge. If we be sincere, we make

him so : 2 Cor. v. 9, ' Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or

absent, we may be accepted of him; ' 2 Cor. i. 12, Tor our rejoicing

is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly

sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have

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had our conversation in the world.' But whether we will or no, he wiH

call us to an account, and then everything will come into the judgment :

Eccles. xii. 14, 'For God will bring every work into judgment, with

every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.' When

you reckon with your servants, a general bill doth not serve the turn.

Now we cannot be too strict who are to account for all our thoughts^

words, and actions. Christ will not take our accounts by heap and in

the lump, there will be a narrow search into our hearts and lives.

Thirdly, A great obligation to our strict obedience, as we are chil-

dren of the light.

1. Surely there should be a great and broad difference between

them and the children of darkness. Now it is both a saddening and

quickening consideration to consider how far a natural man may go ;

and if jon go lower in the rule of holiness, how can you think your-

selves sincere with Grod ? Christ hath told us, Mat. v. 20, ' Except

your^ righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and

Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.' As

he convinceth the pharisees of unsoundness : Mat. v. 46, 47, ' For if

you love tliem that love you, what reward have ye ? do not even the

publicans the same ? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye

more than others ? do not the publicans so ? ' What singular thing

do ye more than others ? So to convince false christians, what do ye

more than others ? The pharisees were a strict sect ; they did profess

irepLaaeveiv, to exceed, to supererogate ; and add to the duty of the

law in externals. It were wondrous to tell you what a painful and

costly profession they made, insomuch that the Jews had a proverb,

that if two men only should be saved, one of them would be a scribe,

the other a pharisee, such were their long devotions, large alms, and

frequent penances. Now our righteousness must exceed as to principle,

manner, and end. The love of God, a more thorough heart-subjection

to him, and his glory, must be our scope.

2. Because the more light and knowledge a man hath, the more he

is bound to take heed to his ways, that his practice may be according

to his light. The children of light can better choose their way and

foresee their danger ; and if they do not, their sin is double, and so will

their punishment be : Luke xii. 47, ' That servant which knew his

lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will,

shall be beaten with many stripes.' You have more light than others,

and therefore you should walk more exactly ; to stumble in the dark

is not so culpable. None can sin as you do, because none sin against

such clear light as you do. You are ' light in the Lord.' The gospel

hath not only shined upon you, as the sun may upon an opaque and

dark body, but hath also shined into your hearts. You have the

light seated in you, and so are made luminous yourselves ; therefore

you have need to look to the principles, ends, motives, and circum-

stances of all your actions, that you may do nothing that may after-

wards be a shame, disgrace, or grief of heart to you. Whatever vanity,

disorder, or confusion is seen in the lives of others, that are carried to

no certain scope, but are hun-ied hither and thither by the uncertain

motion of their lusts, you should refer all things to their great end

and scope, and not be deceived with a false appearance.

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3. They are the light of the world : Mat. v. 14, ' Ye are the light

of the world ; ' Phil. iii. 15, ' Let us therefore, as many as be perfect,

be thus minded ; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God

shall reveal even this unto you.' They should be a copy and pattern

to others to invite them to the heavenly life by the strictness and

seriousness of their conversations. The same honour is put upon you

that was put upon the star at Bethlehem, to be guides to Christ.

Therefore you. are to be more exemplary, which cannot be without

circumspection.

4. Because there are many snares and dangers ; as in a chessboard,

we can hardly move back or forth but we are ready to be attacked.

In all the businesses, affairs, and comforts of this life, we are apt to

miscarry. To some their table becometh a snare : Ps. Ixix. 22, ' Let

their table become a snare before them ; and that which should have

been for their welfare, let it become a trap.' To others their estates :

\* They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare,' 1 Tim. vi. 9,

Yea, sometimes there may be a snare in our duties : 1 Tim. iii. 6,

\* Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemna-

tion of the devil ; ' that is, grow proud by his ministerial service and

employments, and so become a sect-master, and make divisions. Now

they that are not circumspect are sure to miscarry. He that hath his

eyes in his head, and looketh about him, may escape : Prov. i. 17, ' In

vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.' In short, so many and

so subtle are the temptations which Satan sets for us to entrap us and

draw us from our duty, that we cannot be circumspect and cautious

enough. Therefore we that are placed in the midst of so many

dangers and temptations ought to walk circumspectly, that we may

not be ensnared: Eph. vi. 11, 'Put on the whole armour of God, that

ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.' He assaults

us not only by force, but cunning ; his wiles are more dangerous than

his darts, because they do not approach us with such frightening and

awakening assaults as his darts do. He conveyeth such ensnaring

temptations as he knoweth will best take with the person tempted ;

and to deal with the children of light, ' He transformeth himself into

an angel of light,' 2 Cor, xi. 14. Some are for grace, others for works ;

some indulge the flesh, others use the body with more rigour, and will

not suffer themselves to be at the whistle of every temptation.

5. Most christians have but a weak heart, that is apt to lead them

aside into some unbecoming practice. Our heart is most in danger,

and therefore we have need to look to ourselves : 1 Cor. x. 12, ' I^et

him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.' Those that

seem to be most firm and settled have little cause to trust themselves.

Though it is true that ordinarily, if the first radical inclination to God

and heaven be strengthened, all the other graces grow strong with it,

yet many times, yea, most times, it falleth out that christians are weak

in some things and strong in others ; for all graces do not grow in an

equal proportion in true believers, because of some accidental obstruc-

tion in the receiver, either through bodily temper, or frequent tempta-

tions, or want of serious diligence. So Adam, Solomon, Noah, and

others, whose upper soul was considerably furnished and fortified, fell

by sensual appetite. Some may have a good proportion of zeal yet

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fjiil in humility ; therefore all graces are not in an equal degree in

christians. Some are impotent in bridling a passion, others in bridling

the tongue, or checking pride and envy and self-esteem. There is often

great zeal with little knowledge ; and again, some have great know-

ledge with little charity. Therefore how nmch doth it concern chris-

tians to be cautelous. Some have more to do to govern their passions,

some to keep down their ruder lusts : Titus iii. 3, ' Serving divers lusts

and pleasures.' Sometimes the eyes, that they may not let in tempta-

tions to the soul : Job xxxi. 1, 'I made a covenant with mine eyes ;

why then should I think upon a maid ? ' Sometimes the tongue :

Ps. xxxix. 1, \* I said, I would take heed to my Avays, that I ofiend not

with my tongue.' Sometimes the appetite : Prov. xxiii. 2, ' Put a knife

to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite.' We are to keep all

avenues and passes, but especially to fortify the weakest parts. And

in the general let me tell you, there may be a defect in the under-

standing, but the great cause of all miscarriage is the falseness of the

heart ; therefore how can weak hearts bear up against strong tempta-

tions ?

G. Consider how many guards God hath set upon man, who is apt

to fly out upon all occasions. There is an external guard, the magis-

trate, who is to watch for thy good, Kom. xiii. 4, that nothing may

fall out that may disturb human society. But because that is a lax

innocence that doth only exempt us from the danger and stroke of the

law, and all sins do not intrench upon the welfare of human society,

there is a closer guard upon us. God hath made us and our fellow-

christians to be one another's keepers : Heb. iii. 12, ' Take heed, brethren,

lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from

the living God.' In ' any of you ; ' as not in yourselves, so not in

others : ver. 13, \* But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day,

lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.' We

must not hate another, and suffer sin upon him. But because duties

of common love and charity are often omitted, therefore this is a debt

of justice. Some are appointed by way of office and charge : Heb. xiii,

17, ' Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves ; for

they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they

may do it with joy, and not with grief.' It is a grief to them wlien

they cannot give a good account of you to the Lord. But church officers

cannot be everywhere ; they cannot follow you into your families, and

closets, and retirements, or pry into every corner ; and therefore there

is an invisible guard upon you, the holy angels : 1 Cor. xi. 10, ' For

this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of the

angels ; ' 1 Tim. v. 21, ' I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus

Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without

preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.' The angels

observe you when anything unseemly passeth from you in worship or

in ordinary conversation. A man can hardly be alone ; wherever he

goeth, there are good and bad angels in his company. Now because

the angels cannot know the heart unless it be by guess and ratiocina-

tion, therefore there is a spirit in man which knoweth the things which

are in man : 1 Cor. ii. 11, ' For what man knoweth the things of a

man, save the spirit of a man which is in him ? ' Conscience is God's

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deputy, and doth accuse and excuse by turns. Whithersoever we

go, we carry an accuser and a witness about with us. None can

escape this domestic tribunal. Conscience is either troublesome or

quiet as we behave ourselves ; your own thoughts will be upon you, and

your hearts reproach you. A godly man would not hazard the checks

of his own conscience, and therefore prevents the cause and occasion of

them. But because conscience is often stupefied and benumbed, there

is besides this the Spirit of God, who observeth all that we do. The

Spirit cannot be blinded, and therefore cannot be mistaken ; not a

motion in the soul but he is acquainted with it. The good motions

are of his own operation, the bad oppose his work. He witnesseth our

sincerity : Eom. ix. 1, \* I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my con-

science also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.' He is grieved

with our disorders, Eph. iv. 30, therefore we ought to walk circum-

spectly.

7. Because there are so many spies upon us, who may make an ill

use of our failings.

I shall instance in three — Satan, wicked men, and weak brethren.

[1.] Satan. The devil is our enemy ; he is called our adversary : 1

Peter v. 8, ' Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as

a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.' He

watcheth to get some advantage against us : 2 Cor. ii. 11, ' Lest Satan

should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices.'

He seeketh how to work upon our mistaken judgments or carnal affec-

tions : 1 Cor. vii. 5, ' That Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.'

He observeth us in all our postures, and lays many temptations in the

way, and hath hidden secret darts to mischief our souls which we think

not of. Now shall not we be watchful and circumspect ?

[2.] Your way is most eyed by wicked men, who also watch for your

halting : Jer. xx. 10, ' For I heard the defaming of many, fear on

every side. Keport, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars

watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and

we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.'

Besides that we are in the sight of God and his angels, we have many

enemies who will triumph in our miscarriages, and so strengthen

themselves in their wickedness. They would fain draw something from

us that maybe either a justification of them or matter of sport to them.

To surprise a child of God in his nakedness is their mirth, as the sight

of Noah's nakedness was to cursed Ham. John Baptist's head in a

charger is an usual dish at most men's tables ; reports, true or false,

concerning some eminent servant of God gratify and feed their preju-

dices. There is an envious desire in man to blast eminency, especially

religious eminency, because it upbraideth and reviveth guilt in the minds

of others, and therefore the world would have somewhat to blemish

them. Because they will not come up to the holiness of others, they

seek to take others down to themselves, and hope their censure shall

excuse their not imitating their graces and virtues. The apostle telleth

us, 1 Cor. iv. 9, that God's servants are set forth to be made ' a spectacle

unto the world, and to angels, and to men.' Who would not then watch

over himself when others watch over him ? So that their very

slanderers are a help to watchfulness ; as one chose rather to live among

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his enemies than his friends, to make him wary and cautious, for then

he should be sure to hear of his faults. I am sure the word of God

enforceth strictness upon this account : Col. iv. 5, ' Walk in wisdom

toward them that are without,' And David 2)rayeth for direction

because of his observers: Ps. xxvii. 11, ' Teach me thy way, Lord,

and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies ; ' in the margin

it is, \* because of my observers.' In short, they had need be circumspect

themselves who are to reprove others, both by word and deed.

[3.] There are weak brethren, which are enough to bind us to circum-

spection if there were no other argument, for fear of offending Christ's

little ones, or prejudicing any one who is hopefully coming on in the

way of religion. To lay stumbling-blocks in the way of young converts

is a great sin ; it is like killing a child in the womb by a stroke : 2

Kings v. 2G, ' Is this a time to receive money, and to receive garments,

and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants,

and maid-servants ? ' Is this a time to receive bribes, when a Syrian

nobleman had been but newly gained to a reverence and respect of tho

God of Israel ? Take heed you do not stumble them : Mat. xviii. 6,

' But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it

were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and

that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.' Better suffer a violent

and ignominious death than prejudice and hinder the salvation of any.

Use. Of reproof.

1. Of those that scoff at strictness and accurate walking. These

scoff at that which is the glory of that religion which they do profess,

that which God aimed at, that which Christ purchased, that which the

Spirit worketh. They are guilty of persecution : Gal. iv. 29, ' But as

then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born

after the Spirit, even so it is now.' That persecution was scoffing and

mocking about the inheritance ; we are as much in the favour of God

as the precisest of them all : Gen. xxi. 9, ' And Sarah saw the son of

Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, mocking.'

Will a father take it well that a slave should mock his child because

he is like him ? You will say, It is not their holiness and purity you

laugh at, but their folly and preciseness. But is it foolish to be tender

of God's laws ? Which is better, to conform ourselves to God's will or

men's sinister fashions and customs ? Can a man keep at too great a

distance from sin ? But it is preciseness and fond scrupulosity. So

did the conversations of christians seem to the old pagans : 1 Peter iv.

3, 4, ' For the time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought

the will of the gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess

of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries. Wherein

they think it strange that you run not with them into the same excess

of riot, speaking evil of you.' And shall it be so among seeming chris-

tians ? Have we not the same bible ? do we not believe the same

creed ? are we not baptized into the same profession ? and will you

blame them for being strict and serious, for that in which you are vain

and loose ? Can God be too much loved, or Christ too much prized, or

a man more holy than Christ hath required ? And will you oppose

the practice of those things which your religion calleth you to as well

as them, and please yourselves with the name, and hate them because

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they have the power ? You will say you hate them for their hypocrisy

and dissimulation, and their other miscarriages, notwithstanding their

seeming strictness. Surely it is not sin you hate, for then you would

declaim more against the profane, in whom sin is more notorious. The

plain truth is, your hearts cannot away with their godliness ; and if

you did hate sin in them, you would pity their persons, not scoff at,

but reprove them : Phil. iii. 18, ' For many walk, of whom I have told

you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies to the

cross of Christ.' It may be they have their failings ; but will you cast

yourselves into the sea because they are fallen into a ditch ? Or doth

it become a man infected with leprosy to cry out upon another because

he hath a pimple in his face ? And especially to fall upon the whole

generation of the just, as if you would judge of a street by the sink and

kennel, or of the sound grapes by the rotten ones.

2. It reproveth them that think men are more nice than wise, that

we make more ado than needeth when we press men to a constant

watchfulness and serious diligence in the heavenly life. Oh, consider,

we have slippery hearts, and live in the midst of temptations, and are

to approve ourselves in the sight of the holy God, who expecteth to be

glorified by us. And we are not to give just cause of offence to men,

' neither to Jew, nor gentile, nor to the church of God,' 1 Cor. x. 32.

We are to take heed that wicked men be not hardened by our example,

nor weak brethren scandalised. We are by a constant exercise of grace

to maintain comfortable communion with God, to cherish clear and

lively hopes of eternal life, especially in an age when men are to recover

the credit of religion after the professors of it have miscarried so foully.

In short, we that believe eternity, that there is a heaven and a hell,

and that every action of ours is in its own nature a step either to life

or death, how circumspect should we be! Alas! loose christians make

the world believe that hell and heaven are but things spoken of in jest.

Should not we therefore ' work out our salvation with fear and trem-

bling ? ' Phil. ii. 12. What sense have men of the world to come,

when they do so little in order to it ? What is that you call religion,

that you can get it and keep it up without so much ado ? A man

may have estate enough for two men, and yet not be satisfied ; the

best hath scarce grace enough for one. Here is the mischief of it,

men are for moderation in nothing else but religion, and there a little

serveth the turn.

3. Some slight strictness as a thing out of date, since they know

their liberty by Christ. Alas ! all the doctrines of grace do enforce it,

not lessen it : Titus ii. 11, 12, ' The grace of God, that bringeth salva-

tion, hath appeared to all men ; teaching us that, denying ungodliness

and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this

present world.' Else they are abused : Jude 4, ' Turning the grace of

God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord.

Jesus Christ.' Christ's death and sufferings show us the vileness of

sin, and what a high price God hath ])ut upon his law. He is gone

into heaven, not to resign up his kingdom to Satan, but to make

intercession for grace ; not only to pardon, but mortify sin. The whole

frame of the covenant dotii oblige us to this strictness: Ps. Ixxxiv. 11,

\*For the Lord God is a sun and a shield ; the Lord will give grace and

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glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk

uprightly ; ' Mat. v. 19, ' Whosoever therefore shall break one of these

least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the

least in the kingdom of heaven : but whosoever shall do and teach

them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.'

4. It reproveth those that profess themselves children of light, but

live at large ; though they do not scoff at strictness, yet they slight

it, and so show themselves fools rather than wise ; they miss the com-

fort of the spiritual life, and are only acquainted wuth the toil and

trouble of it.

Use 2. Is to exhort us to this duty. You have had motives enough

before, now I shall give you some helps.

There are some graces necessary, and some practices.

First, For graces which are necessary, such as these —

1. Knowledge ; for without knowledge neither heart nor life can be

good : Prov. xix. 2, ' That the soul be without knowledge is not good.'

David prayethjPs. cxix. 34, ' Give me understanding, that I may keep

thy law.' It is a matter of much skill to be a thorough christian.

2. Not only knowledge, but prudence. That differeth from know-

ledge, as folly doth from ignorance. That referreth all things to

practice: Prov. ii. 10, 11, 'When wisdom entereth into thine heart,

and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul, discretion shall preserve

thee, understanding shall keep thee ; ' Hosea xiv. 9, ' Who is wise,

and he shall understand these things ? prudent, and he shall know

them ? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in

them.

3. Watchfulness, and heed that nothing unseemly pass from us.

Those that are rash and indeliberate, and live at haphazard, can never

walk accurately : Prov. xix. 2, \* He that hasteth with his feet, sinneth.'

In the text /SXeVere, 'See that ye walk circumspectly;' that is, use

great caution. Conscience must act the part of the watchman, and

stand porter at the door, examine what goeth in or out, that nothing

may be a snare or an offence : Prov. iv. 23, ' Keep thy heart with all

diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.' That the heart may be

still kept pure and loyal for God.

4. The fear of God : Acts ix. 31, ' They walked in the fear of the

Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.' This is a grace never out of

season : Prov. xxiii. 17, ' Let not thine heart envy sinners ; but be thou

in the fear of the Lord all the day long ; ' Prov. xxviii. 14, ' Happy is

the man that feareth always ; ' that is, with a fear of reverence, for

slavish fear is a terror. Set yourselves always in God's sight ; our

whole time is spent in it.

5. Diligence, that we may both remove impediments of good and

avoid occasions of evil, that you may take an accurate inspection of

your whole life and conversation. Frequently examine your w^ays,

whither they tend : Prov. iv. 26, 27, ' Ponder the path of thy feet, and

let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the

left ; remove thy foot from evil.'

6. A tender conscience. Make conscience not only of gross sins, but

lesser escapes. Some walk ara/cTct)?, disorderly, 2 Thes. iii. 11, but

do you walk a/cpiySw?, circumspectly. Do not wittingly tread one

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hair's-breadth out of the way, nor run into any sin, much less live in it,

be it never so small and profitable in the esteem of the world : Prov.

vii. 2, ' Keep my commandments, and live, and my law as the apple of

thine eye.' The eye is offended with the least dust.

Secondly, Helps by way of practice.

1. Fix your end ; for when the end is fixed, the means may be the

better suited ; it shineth to us all the way along : \* If thine eye be single,

thy whole body is full of light,' Mat. vi. 22 ; Prov. iv. 25, ' Let thine

eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.' We

should mind all things with respect to our end.

2. Take an account of the way you walk in: Ps. cxix.59, 'I thought

on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies ; ' Lam. iii. 40,

\* Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.'

3. Seek a good guide. Use much prayer to God, that he may

direct you : Prov. iii. 5, 6, ' Trust in the Lord with all thine heart ;

and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknow-

ledge him, and he shall direct thy path ; ' Ps. cxliii. 10, ' Teach me to

do thy will, for thou art my God : thy Spirit is good ; lead me into the

land of uprightness.'

4. Eenew your covenant, and often engage yourselves afresh to this

strict and holy walking, because the strength of former resolutions is

soon spent : Ps. cxix. 106, ' I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I

will keep thy righteous judgments.'

5. Season the heart with strict principles. Two principles I shall

commend to you —

[1.] That the greatest suffering is to be chosen before the least sin.

In suffering, the offence is done to us ; in sin, to God. The evil of

suffering is but for a moment, the evil of sin for ever. Sin separateth

you from God, but aflSictions do not, but bring you nearer to God.

The least sin allowed maketh our sincerity doubtful and questionable :

Ps. Ixvi. 18, ' If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear

me.' Small sins have met with great judgments. Adam for eating an

apple was turned out of paradise ; TJzzah for touching the ark was

smitten with death ; Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for one

lie ; the evil angels were thrust out of heaven for an aspiring thought ;

Zacharias was struck dumb for unbelief; Lot's wife for looking back

was turned into a pillar of salt ; Moses for a few passionate words was

shut out of the land of promise ; David for a proud conceit in number-

ing the people brought a plague upon them. Now God is the same, and

hateth sin as much as ever. No man is driven to a necessity of sinning.

We imagine a necessity when we commit one sin to avoid the tempta-

tion of another, but God never reduceth a man to that strait. If you

mean it of evils of sin, it is false; if of evils of punishment, it is true;

if of evils of sin and punishment together, it is most true. A man

may be often put to suffer for sin that is offered to his choice, but

never to sin that he may not sin. We reduce ourselves to sinful

straits.

[2.] Another strict principle is, that a man cannot be too strict.

There is no nimium in the essentials of religion or the solid parts of

godliness. A man cannot be too holy and too righteous ; a man can-

not love God too much, or Christ too much, nor serve him too faith-

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fully. What is the meaning then of Solomon ? Eccles. vii. 16, 'Be

not righteous overmuch.' There may be too much of that which is

but pretended righteousness. The best fall short of what God's word

and the necessities of their souls require. The world accuseth them

of preciseness, but their consciences accuse them of negligence,

(1.) God's precepts are very strict : Mat. xxii. 37, ' Thou shalt love

the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with

all thy mind.' God is to be loved without measure and limitation.

To think this is too strict is to blaspheme his holy law.

(2.) Patterns of holiness are very high. God's worthies : Heb. xii.

1, ' Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a

cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth

so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set

before us.' The angels : Mat. vi. 10, ' Thy will be done on earth, as

it is in heaven.' God himself : 1 Peter i. 15, 'But as he that hath called

you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.' Wherein

then is this over-righteousness ? I answer — Not in the end, not in

necessary diligence about the means ; but when the means are not pro-

portioned to the end, but one duty shuts out another ; in some things

the devil may tempt us to over-doing

[3.] Another strict principle is, that the least sin allowed makes our

sincerity questionable: James ii. 10, 'For whosoever shall keep the

whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.' It is good

to stand at the greatest distance from sin ; to go too near the brink

is dangerous : 1 Thes. v. 22, ' Abstain from all appearance of evil.'

They that do all that they may do usually do more than they should.

Small sins may procure great trouble, if God sets them home upon the

conscience.

SEKMON XIX.

Bedeeming the time, hecause the days are evil. — Epn. v. 16.

These words contain a new direction to the children of light. Two

things there are in it — (1.) A duty, ' Kedeeming the time ; ' (2.) The

reason of it, ' Because the days are evil.'

First, In the duty there is the act and the object. Both must be

explained.

1. The act, i^ayopa^o/xevoi, buying ; or, as we render it, ' redeem-

ing.' Grotius and some others conceive it may be explained by the

words of Nebuchadnezzar to the astrologers, as they are rendered by

the Septuagint, Dan. ii. 8, ' Ye would gain the time,' on Kaupov v/Mei<i

i^wyopd^ere. And others think the meaning is, that by their wary

carriage they should shift off dangers, and gain as nmch time as

they could to honour God in the world. To this purpose also they

draw in that, Col. iv. 5, ' Walk in wisdom toward them that are with-

out, redeeming the time.' But besides that this exposition would

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bereave us of a very practical lesson, it seemeth not proper to this

place.

[1.] Because the drift of the apostolical writings is to draw men to

a contempt of life, and to a cheerful suffering of persecutions, not to

clancular arts how to shift them.

[2.] Because it is drawn from the consideration of their being

\* children of light/ or ' light in the Lord,' and the obligation that

lieth upon them of ' walking as children of light ; ' and that will rather

enforce a holy conversation for the conviction of heathens, than a wary

•carriage to shun their rage, and a trouble for their own safety. Well,

then, what is the meaning of ' redeeming the time,' or buying the

time ? The term is proper to civil contracts, but is here applied

morally.

(1.) In buying there is some price paid ; we part with one thing to

obtain another ; so we must part with anything less than it rather

than lose time ; as Prov. xxiii. 23, 'Buy the truth, and sell it not.' No

temporal conveniency is too dear to be parted with to get truth and

retain truth. As merchants stand upon no rate or price if they may

get such wares into their hands as they may make benefit of, so time

is such a precious commodity, and so useful to us in order to eternity,

that we should not stand upon ease, carnal pleasures, and worldly con-

veniences, that we may purchase it.

(2.) Emptum cedit in jus emptoris, that which is bought belongeth

to the buyer ; and so the Greelj scholiast, dyopd^eiv rov Kaipov icrrcv

YSlov irocelv, so buy time to make it your own for spiritual advantages.

But our translation useth the word redeem, which implieth another

metaphor, namely the recovery of a mortgage, or the redeeming of

what hath been lost or pawned out ; and so it noteth our former im-

provident misspence of time. We have, as it were, mortgaged it to

Satan, to the world, and to vanity, and now should redeem it out of

the hands of these engrossers, and by future diligence recover our

former neglect.

2. The object, rov Kaipov, ' the time.' The word properly signifieth

the season and opportunity, but yet it is the usual word for time in

scripture, for to a christian all time is season. Time in general is but

short : 1 Cor. vii. 29, ' But this I say, brethren, the time is short/ But

the season or opportunity, which is the flower of time, is shorter ;

therefore this must not be slipped : Gal. vi. 10, ' As we have therefore

opportunity, let us do good unto all men.' There are special seasons

of getting, or doing of good, and they continue not long with us ; they

are always in passing, and being passed, will not possibly return ; there-

fore we should take them when they are fairly offered.

Secondly, The reason by which this duty is enforced, ' Because the

days are evil' Herein I shall — (1.) Give the meaning of the phrase ;

(2.) The force of the consequence.

1. For the meaning of the phrase.

[1.] It may be understood of the whole course or race of man's life :

Gen. xlvii. 9, ' And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of

my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years : few and evil have the

days of the years of my life been.' They are few in themselves, but

especially in comparison with eternity ; and they are evil in regard of

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sin and misery. In heaven tliey are neither few nor evil ; here it is a

mercy they are few, because they are evil. Time in itself is neither

good nor evil, but in regard of the accidents of time, as it is encum-

bered with variety of vexations, cares, and miseries, so our days may be

called evil. And in this sense we must take that of our Saviour, Mat.

vi. 34, ' Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.' Every day bringeth

evil enough and sorrow enough to exercise us. Therefore you had

need to lay up for a better life, for you have but sorry evil days here.

[2.] More properly and specially it relateth to the times the apostle

wrote in, which were hard and calamitous, and full of danger, because

of the wickedness of those among whom they lived. There were many

enemies then, both to christian verity and piety. They lived among

heathens, and troubles every day grew more sore and fierce, as also

near and close. Paul himself felt the smart of them. This epistle

was written out of prison ; so that these days were evil indeed.

2. The force of the consequence. You may conceive it many ways.

[1.] Because others vainly misspend time, christians should be more

careful to redeem it. The worse the times are, the better should we

be, as fountain water is hottest in the coldest weather, and stars shine

brightest in the darkest night. This consideration is not amiss, for

they were to ' have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,

but rather to reprove them ; ' that is, in their practice ; and christians

are to ' shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and froward gener-

ation,' Phil. ii. 15. God's children are best in the worst times, more

strict and watchful when sin aboundeth. The world saith it is an evil

time ; we must do as much as we can to reclaim their lukewarmness.

Let us rather labour to do good than complain of the evil of the times,

a^d so seek to make them better.

[2.] Adversity maketh men serious. It was the aggravation of

Ahaz's sin, that he was the worse for his misery, 2 Chron. xxviii. 22.

If ever a man would be serious and circumspect, it should be in his

misery : Heb. xii. 10, ' For they verily for a few days chastened us after

their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of

his holiness.'

[3.] With relation to the heathens among whom they lived, he

adviseth them to redeem the time : Col. iv. 5, ' Walk in wisdom

toward them that are without, redeeming the time.' Men that live

a profane life themselves, as the unconverted heathens did, take all occa-

sions to speak evil of religion, or of those that embrace a different

course. Give them no advantage, but by your sedulous diligence

in the heavenly life keep up a full testimony in their consciences

against that which they practise.

[4.] Some are so bad and froward, that they would take away liberty,

estates, yea, life itself from you, and with it all occasions of doing and

receiving good. You carry your own lives in your hands, and the

lives of many of God's precious instruments are in danger ; and there-

fore before means and opportunities be wholly lost, redeem the time.

This I take to be the principal consideration ; and other scriptures

enforce it : Eccles. xi. 2, ' Give a portion to seven, and also to eight,

for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.' It is wisdom

to do God's work in God's time. We may die, or our estates or our

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liberty be taken from us ; it is good to be aforehand with the times,

and take the season while it lasteth : John ix. 4, ' I must work the

works of him that sent me whilst it is day ; the night cometh, when na

man can work.' Opportunities being lost, they are not easily if at all

recovered : John xi. 9, ' Are there not twelve hours in the day ? ' There

is a prefixed time. A man would not neglect the daytime to go about>

his business. As long as providence continueth the occasions and

opportunities of exercising our functions and abilities, we should not

alarm ourselves with needless fears, but be quickened to the more

serious diligence. When God hath a mind to use us, he can secure

us and keep us safe : John xii. 35, ' Yet a little while is the light with

you, walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you ; '

and ver. 36, ' While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be

children of the light ; ' that is, I am not long to stay with you as

the light of the world ; make use of me while you have me, or else yoU;

are like to be left in a blind unhappy condition for ever. Get your

knowledge complete, directions sure, that you may live like christians

when I am gone. The scriptures are so full and so apposite, that we

need no more to explain the words.

Doct. That it is the duty of christians to look to the due improve-

ment of the time and season.

I shall draw out the force of the apostle's exhortation in this

method —

1. The commodity that Ave are to buy, and that is, time and season.

2. The use we are to put it to, that is, to glorify God, and save our

souls.

3. The encouragements to the bargain.

I. The commodity or thing to be bought, Kaipo<; ; the word signi-

fieth time and season, the general and particular opportunity.

1. Time. Our whole life is but the larger season ; it is not time

that you may spend as you list, but it is opportunity given you for the

great work and business of your souls.

[1.] If you have not begun already by conversion, it must not be

delayed and left to uncertainties. The sooner you begin to buy time,

the better bargain you will have ; for every man would have as much

for his money as possibly he can, therefore take the market while it is

at the best : Eccles. xii. 1, ' Kemember thy Creator in the days of thy

youth.' While the effects of his creating bounty are fresh in our sense

and feeling, as they are in the flower and vigour of youth, then let us

remember the duty, love, and service we owe to our Creator. Then we

have more advantages to serve him, senses lively, affections tender, wits

more nimble and acute. If there must be a change, it is better it

should be sooner than later ; a twig is more easily bent than a bough

or the limb of a tree. By degrees we grow stiff and habituated to sin :

Jer. xiii. 23, ' Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his

spots ? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do eviL'

David was not of their opinion that think that religion doth not

become us while we are young : Ps. cxix. 9, ' Wherewith shall a young

man cleanse his way ? ' Many think devotion is better received when

their youthful heats are s})ent. No ; then there is more need of its

grave precepts to check the fervour of youthful lusts (as the putting in

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of cold water stays the boiling of the hot), and to mortify the flesh and

rule the senses. Where nature hath disabled the body, there is some-

what the less for grace to do. The scriptures always call for a present

obedience : ' To-day, if you will hear his voice,' Heb. iii. 7. A man

cannot set forth too soon in his journey to heaven. There is little love

to God, to think of repenting when we can sin no longer ; you can be

contented that God should be longer dishonoured and disobeyed, pro-

vided that at length you may be saved, No ; it is best and most

acceptable when you seek the Lord betimes, and give him the kindness

of your youth. We have the whole duration of God to reflect upon

for our comfort : Ps. xc. 2, ' Before the mountains were brought forth,

■or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world : even from ever-

lasting to everlasting thou art God,' compared with Ps. ciii. 17, ' But

the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them

that fear him ; and his righteousness unto children's children.' And

shall we adjourn and put off God to an odd corner of our lives, to the

decrepitness of old age ; and when the devil hath feasted on your youth,

give him the fragments of the table ? It is an honour to us as well as

to God to begin betimes. We read of Mnason of Cyprus, 'an old

disciple,' Acts xxi. 16, and of Epenetus, 'the first-fruits of Achaia

unto Christ,' Kom. xvi. 5 ; and of Andronicus and Junia, ' who are of

note (honourable) among the apostles, who also were in Christ before

me,' Kom. xvi. 7, It is good to have the priority and precedency in

grace. When some believe in Christ sooner, others later, it is the

mighty efi'ect of God's goodness to us, and no small privilege, that we

believe sooner than others, that we are freed from the slavery of Satan

and our own lusts, and have our great concernments the sooner put out

of hazard. The apostle took notice of those 'who first trusted in

Christ,' Eph. i. 12, as having a prerogative and degree of honour above

others.

[2.] After you are once admitted into the evangelical estate, your

whole time should be redeemed and spent for God : Luke i. 75, ' In

holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives.' Not

now and then only ; your whole time is God's, though not to be spent

in one sort of duties ; not only in duties of immediate worship, but in

the duties of your callings also, but still to God : Ptom. vi. 10, the

example of Christ is urged, ' in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.'

God must be ultimately and terminatively at the end of every action,

though some things that we do may nextly and immediately concern

ourselves or others. Acts of direct worship concern God immediately,

other acts of our callings, yea, and recreations, concern God ultimately.

A christian's end is the measure of all his actions, and he must\_ do

•nothing impertinent thereunto, or inconsistent therewith. If christians

■did mind this, what a spirit of holiness would it awaken and breed in

us ! So Gal. ii. 20, ' The life that I live in the flesh, I live by the

faith of the Son of God.' I must not only hear or pray in faith, but

trade in faith, yea, take food and physic in faith, and eat and drink

in faith. Grace must still act, and elevate, and raise the intention to

Ood, and overrule the rational life to higher ends : Zech. xiv. 20, 21,

' In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness to

ihe Lord ; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls

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before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be

holiness unto the Lord of hosts.' Not only sacred, but common

actions must have God's impress upon them. Thus figuratively doth

■he describe the holiness of the gospel. We are never sincere and

upright with God till we turn all our second- table duties into first-

table duties, and perform all our actions in the fear and love and for

the glory of God : 1 Peter i. 17, ' Pass the time of your sojourning

here in fear.' Our whole conversation must be seasoned with grace.

As God discovereth his divine power in the least of his creatures, in

the framing of a gnat as well as in the sun, so must a christian show

himself a christian in all his actions, in his devotions, in his business,

iind in his recreations : Acts xxvi, 7, ' Unto which promise our

twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.'

But could they always serve God ? There is something else to be

done, eating, drinking, caring for our bodily interests, industry in our

•callings. The expression noteth the constancy of their worship ; they

•did every day and every night consecrate some part of their time to

the worship of God, and kept themselves in an aptitude for prayer

and other holy duties as occasion did require. But also it showeth

not only their constancy, but their integrity ; when employed in works

of charity, or their vocation, they did in all their actions study to

honour God : 1 Cor. x. 31, ' Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever

we do, let us do all to the glory of God.' Eating and drinking is an

offering ; but it is not a meat-offering and drink-offering to the belly,

or sensual appetite, but a service to God : ' Do all in the name of our

Lord Jesus Christ,' Col. iii. 17. In all these actions we must study

to approve ourselves to God. A christian hath many works to do, to

examine his title and right to eternal life, to be much in penitent

exercises, to be bewailing sin and begging mercy, to instruct his children

and servants, in the sanctified labours of his outward calling ; but night

and day he is serving God.

2. The season : buy it whatever it cost you. The season of receiv-

ing good and of doing good.

[1.] Of receiving good, and that —

(1.) From God. God's seasons and opportunities must not be over-

slipped. There are special times when God, by a fair concurrence of

all circumstances, maketh nearer approaches to a sinner than at other

times : Isa. Iv. 6, ' Seek the Lord while he may be found ; call upon

him while he is near.' God's times are not at the beck of our desires ;

he will be observed in his near approaches, as when he is ministerially

near by pressing exhortations ; this season must not be carelessly past

over : John xii. 36, ' While ye have light, believe in the light, th t ye

may be children of the light.' Christ speaketh there of his own

personal ministry. So when God is preparatorily near by the checks

of conscience and the convictions of his Holy Spirit : Prov. i. 23, ' Turn

ye at my reproof. Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you ; I will

make known my words unto you.' It is dangerous to let such con-

victions die away in our hearts, as Felix stifled gripes of conscience.

No iron so hard as that which hath been often heated and often

•quenched, and none so hardened in sin as they that have lost the

advantage of a sound conviction. So when he is savingly near by the

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drawings of his Spirit, we should not delay and put off such a work

of concernment as our return to God is ; his treaty of peace may soon

break up, and the covenant be out of your reach. When he draweth

you should run, Cant. i. 4 ; when he knocketh, you should open. Rev.

iii. 20. And sometimes we feel that he knocketh hard and loud.

Wlien the wind blows, we should loose the sails, John iii. 8 ; when

the waters are stirred, we should put in for cure, John v. 4. Set about

the business before these motions cool, and lose their efficacy. When

the spouse would not open to her beloved, it cost her afterwards many

a weary step and bitter sigh, Cant. v. 6, 7. Many times God doth as

it were call us by name, by speaking to our case and condition. Now

it is dangerous to let that time sli]) when God doth as it were single

thee out to make thee an object of his grace. Remember the Spirit

doth not always strive with sinners : Gen. vi. 3, ' My Spirit shall not

always strive with man.'

(2.) To receive good from men ; as when God in his providence

casteth you upon the company of wise and holy persons, and you have

excellent advantages of being built up in your most holy faith ; as

when the disciples had Christ's company and personal presence with

them : John xii. 35, ' Yet a little while is the light with you ; walk

while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.' And elsewhere

he chideth them for profiting no more by his converse with them :

John xiv. 9, ' Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not

known me, Philip ? ' That they knew so little of the dignity of his

person and office. So elsewhere he reproves Martha, who was so busily

employed about the service of the entertainment, while Mary sat at his

feet (the posture of hearers) and heard his gracious words, Luke x. 41,

42. In good company Ave have a fairer opportunity of exhorting and

quickening one another, of getting doubts resolved, and scruples

answered. Solomon telleth us, Prov. xx. 5, ' Counsel in the heart of

man is like a deep water ; but a man of understanding will draw it

out.' We must improve these seasons of receiving good to our souls :

Rom. i. 12, ' That I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual

faith both of you and me.'

[2.] Of doing good. There are special seasons of performing our

duty to God and man.

(1.) To God. Many times we are strangely influenced and acted by

the impulsion of the Spirit ; now upon such occasions we should not

hang off : Ps. xxvii. 8, ' When thou saidst. Seek ye my face ; my heart

said unto thee. Thy face, Lord, will I seek.' God speaketh to us by

the injection of holy thoughts and the secret excitations of his grace,

and we speak to him by real and ready returns of obedience.

(2.) For doing good to men, to their souls and bodies. We should

take all occasions of drawing others from their sins, and gaining them

to Christ. If we lose time, we should not lose opportunity. Some-

times providence puts an opportunity in our mouths, as Nehemiah had

of speaking to the king concerning Jerusalem that lay waste : Neh. ii.

6, ' And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant

have found favour in thy sight, that tliou wouldst send me into

Judah, unto the city of my fatliers' sepulchre, that I may build it.'

So Esther iv. 14, ' Who knoweth but thou art come to the kingdom

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for such a time as this ? ' Some seem to be made and raised up by

providence for such a turn. We read of Paul, Acts xvii. 16, ' His

spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idol-

atry.' Impulse of spirit, though it make not new duties, yet it deter-

mineth the circumstances of a duty already known. Sometimes a

word in season doth mightily prevail for instructing, comforting, and

converting of others. So we must not neglect the seasons of visiting,

feeding, clothing, when God casteth us upon the occasion : 1 John iii.

17, ' But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have

need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwell-

eth the love of God in him ? ' When Christ so happily met with the

woman of Canaan, he falleth a- talking with her for the good of her

soul, John iv. 7. But for improving the season, more afterwards.

Let it suffice to intimate now, that everything is beautiful in its season :

Eccles. iii. 17, ' There is a time for every purpose, and for every

work.' Blood out of its proper vessels soon corrupts ; so things done

out of their season do more hurt than good.

II. The use we must put it to when we have gotten this commodity

into our hands. It is a precious commodity ; you should never let it

go but for something better than itself. There are two great ends, the

glorifying of God, and the saving of our own souls.

1. One great end in employing our time is the glorifying of God :

John xvii. 4, ' I have glorified thee on earth ; I have finished the work

which thou gavest me to do.' So should every christian say when he

Cometh to die. Christ had his work, and we have ours. Christ's work

was the work of mediation ; ours the work of constant service and

thankfulness. We must employ all our talents of gifts, place, and

relation, to God's glory. All things glorify God in the event, the

wrath of man not excepted ; but this must be our choice and scope :

' The wrath of man shall praise thee,' Ps. Ixxvi. 10. The fierce en-

deavours of his enemies ; it is no thanks to them, but to the wisdom of

his providence ; it doth not lessen their fault nor punishment. But

we must actively glorify God, not passively and objectively only. We

are made for this end : Prov. xvi. 4, ' The Lord hath made all things

for himself.' And we are made new creatures for this end : Eph. i.

12, ' That we should be to the praise of his glory.' The saints above

spend all their time in glorifying God without difficulty, strife, and

danger ; it cost them no shame nor pain, neither trouble nor loss of life

or limb ; but we must glorify him upon earth in the midst of opposi-

tion, if we would be glorified with him in heaven, and be out of gun-

shot as they are. We are more careful of events than duties. When

the days are evil we are apt to inquire, Lord, what wilt thou do for thy

great name ? Do not ask what God will do, but consider what you

must do. You must glorify him though he be dishonoured by others ;

and you should trouble yourselves more with what you should do than

what shall become of you,

2. The other great end is the saving of our own souls ; that is the

use of our time : 2 Peter iii. 14, ' Be diligent, that ye may be found of

him in peace, without spot and blameless.' Because the apostle's words

give me a fit method, 1 shall a little insist on them.

[1.] Our great work is to enter into God's peace, to be found of him

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in a renewed and reconciled estate. This is of unspeakable impor-

tance, and this is opus diei in die suo, the business of our day : Luke

xix. 42, ' If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day.

the things which belong unto thy peace ; ' and Luke ii. 14, ' Peace

upon earth.' The day was given you to make your peace. AH man-

kind was lost in Adam ; God will give them a day to come in and

recover themselves. Some men have but thirty, some forty, some fifty,

some sixty years ; but alas ! the most part do not mind the work of

the day. Surely this is your great business. It is a work worthy your

time, and all the labour you bestow upon it. It is a most necessary

work: Luke x. 42, 'One thing is needful.' It is a most excellent

work to be in a state of amity with God, to have the great breach

made up, and difi'erence compromised: Kom. v. 1, ' Being justified by

faith, we have peace with God.' And the lltli verse, ' We have joy

in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received

the atonement.' It is a most profitable work, for it procureth us the

blessings of this life, and of a better: Mat. vi. 33, 'But seek ye first

the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall

be added unto you ; ' 1 Tim. iv. 8, ' Godliness is profitable unto all

things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is

to come.' It is better for soul and body : 1 Cor. xv. 58, ' Wherefore,

my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding

in the work of the Lord ; forasmuch as ye know your labour is not in

vain in the Lord.' How comfortable will it be when we go out of the

world, to say with Christ, John xvii. 4, ' I have glorified thee on the

earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do ; ' with Paul,

2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, ' I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course,

I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of

righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at

that day : and not to me only, but to all them also that love his ap-

pearing ; ' with Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 3, ' Eemember now, Lord,

I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a

perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.' It is

a great contentment to a mariner, after a dangerous voyage, to come

safe ashore.

[2.] ' Without spot.' This relateth to the soul, and the filthiness

contracted by sin. This is your business, to get out your deep and

inveterate stain. You began as soon as you made conscience of your

baptism, and you never leave till it be perfected in glory : 2 Peter i.

4, ' Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises,

that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having

escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust ; ' 1 John iii.

3, ' He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself as Christ is pure.'

[3.] The third word, ' without blame,' relateth to the conversation :

Eph. i. 4, ' According as he hath chosen us in him before the founda-

tion of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before

him in love.' Carry on a blameless conversation in the world, obnox-

ious to no just reproof, that neither by the omission of any known duty,

nor by the commission of any known sin, you may give others just

cause of offence ; but be always working out your salvation with fear

and trembling.

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SERMON XX.

Bedeeming the time, hecause the days are evil. — Eph. v. 16.

Thirdly, I shall now proceed to the encouragements to the bargain-

to redeem time and season.

First, Let me press you to redeem the time.

1. Too much time hath been spent already ; 1 Peter iv. 3, 'For the

time past of our life may suffice us.' In infancy we were in no capa-

city to act grace ; we lived the life of sense rather than reason, and did

only feed and sleep. When we began to bewray our reason, we showed

the folly that was bound up in our hearts, and since that we have spent

a great deal of precious time in sin. Now as travellers that have

stayed long in their inn mend their pace, and ride as much in an hour

as before in two, so because we have spent much time already, we should

redeem time: Eom. xiii. 12, 'The night is far spent, the day is at

hand ; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put

on the armour of light ; ' the text that converted Augustine, who

opened the bible in this place, when he heard a voice, saying, Tolle,

lege. We have all been too long disputing and traversing the case

with God ; it is good to come to a resolution, and break off the old,

vain, sinful, carnal way of living, that we may at length set about the

work of godliness.

2. We are to be accountable to God for time. When he cometh to

reckon with his people, time is one of the circumstances mentioned,

either for the aggravating sin or commending his mercies : Ps. xcv. 10,

' Forty years long was I grieved with this generation,' God might

have reckoned with you twenty, thirty, forty years ago, with honour

enough to his justice ; but he hath borne with you all this while. So

for commending his mercies : Luke xiii. 7, ' Then said he unto the

dresser of the vineyard. Behold these three years I come seeking fruit

on this fig-tree.' When the scripture speaketh in such cases numeric

rotundis, in round numbers, as ten, twenty, or the like, we need not

inquire after the interpretation, but it signifies a long time. But when

there is numerus impar, an uneven number, why is it three years rather

than four or six? I answer — Look to the harmony of the evangelists,

and you will find that after Christ's baptism he had spent three years

in the ministry, and was now entering upon his fourth year. God.

keepeth an exact account how long we have learned of him : Heb. v.

12, ' For when for the time ye ought to be teachers of others, ye have

need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the

oracles of God ; ' Jer. xxv. 3, ' From the thirteenth year of Josiah the

son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day (that is, the three and

twentieth year), the word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have

spoken unto you.' God keepeth an exact account; full three and

twenty years had he been reclaiming them. All these things are but

pledges of the great process at the day of judgment. God will call

you to an account, not simply for your mercies and sins, but for the

time you have spent, so long patience, so much means. Oh, then,

reflect upon thine own heart : 1 must die, and give an account for all

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my time, and I cannot give an account of one day among a hundred ;

my time hath been spent in foolish mirth, troublesome cares, and idle

company, in vain sports and recreations. Pass a reckoning upon your

time for the present, and if you cannot answer conscience, you cannot

answer God. So much in meals and banquets, so much in sleep, so

much in sports and recreations, so much in worldly business ; and then

think how little a remainder is there for God. I remember an account

of a phantastic in Plutarch, that gave thus much time to his barber,

thus much to his perfumer, tailor, cook, and half to his philosopher,

3. That time is only yours which is spent well, in pleasing God, and

doing good ; for that time is bought and redeemed which otherwise

is lost to you. We lose all that time which is not spent in the love

and service of God. Strictly and properly we are never said to live as

long as we are alienated from the life of God. A man may abide long

in the world, till he be eaten out by his own rust, or droppeth like

rotten fruit ; but he cannot be said to live long ; as a man may be

long at sea, but is tossed to and fro by the waves, yet he cannot be said

to make a long voyage when driven back into the port out of which

he came at first. The apostle saith, 1 Tim. v. 6, 'But she that

liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.' Her time is useless, lost

as to all spiritual purposes. You are a loser by that day in which you

have not done or received some good.

4. Time is not ours to dispose of at pleasure. A christian, when he

giveth up himself to God, he giveth up everything that is his to God,

time and strength as well as body and soul ; he hath nothing at his

own dispose, so that he hath nothing that he is absolute master of to

use it as he pleaseth : 1 Cor. vi. 15, ' Shall I take the members of

Christ, and make them the members of a harlot ? ' My time is not

mine, but Christ's. It is sacrilege to rob God of what is consecrated to

him. My to ^rjv, to live is Christ, Phil. i. 21.

5. Time is a precious commodity, worth the looking after. The devil

values it ; if he can cheat you of your time, he can cheat you of your

souls ; for when conviction is strong, and all your prejudices are borne

down, and his outworks taken, excuses and self-flatteries vanish. The

last thing that he is loath to let go is time ; his game is to cheat you

of to-day, and so of the next day. God saith, 'To-day,' Heb. iii. 13;

and the devil saith, Not to-day, but at a more convenient season ; as

Felix put off Paul, Acts xxiv. 25, 'When I have a more convenient

season, I will call for thee,' as to be rid of a troublesome creditor, we

promise future payment. Moclo et modo own liahent modum — the

sinner's morrow will never come. In hell they know the worth of time.

Dying men that are affrighted in conscience discover the passions of

the damned. What would they give for one year, one month longer,

yea, for one week, or one day more ! But all the wealth in the world

will not purchase a day.

6. The present time is the best: Ps. cxix. GO, 'I made haste, and

delayed not, to keep thy commandments.' Ludovicus Cappellus telleth

us of a Jewish rabbin, who being asked when a man should repent,

answered, One day before his death ; that is, presently, this day ; it

may be your last in the world : ' Behold, now is the accepted time ;

behold, now is the day of salvation,' 2 Cor. vi. 2. Heaven and hell is in

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the case ; heaven is to be gotten or lost. Speed is necessary. We are

commanded to ' fly from the wrath to come,' Mat. iii. 7, and to ' fly for

refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us,' Heb. vi. 18. Your

business is to avoid everlasting death, and to prepare for everlasting life.

7. You have no time but what may be serviceable for some good use.

There is no time wherein thou dost not enjoy some blessing to provoke

thee to thankfulness, or hast not some sin to be mortified, or some good

work to be done. David had his morning meditation, Ps. xix., and his

evening thoughts : Ps. viii. 3, ' When I consider the heavens, the work

of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained ; ' and

his night meditations when he could not sleep : ' My reins also instruct

me in the night season,' Ps. xvi. 7. When the rain falleth : Job xxxvii.

7, ' He sealetli up the hand of every man, that all men may know his

work.' We have a great deal of work to do in a short time.

8. We have much work to do, therefore let us spend it in matters

that most concern us. We all complain of the shortness of time, and

yet every one hath more time than he useth well. We should rather

complain of the loss of time than the want of time. Vitam non

accepimiis brevem, sed facimus ; nee tarn inopes temporis sumus, quam

2:)rodigi. We do not want time so much as waste it ; much more might

be done for God than ever yet hath been done, if we were serious and

diligent. We make our lives shorter than they are by interposing so

many unnecessary diversions, and spending so much time as we do in

vanity and folly and needless recreations. Every man should call him-

self to an account how he spendeth his precious hours: Isa. Iv. 2,

\* Wherefore do you spend your money for that which is not bread ? and

your labour for that which satisfieth not ? ' What do I spend my time

and labour upon ? Works of absolute necessity must be first done and

most minded : ' One thing is needful,' Luke x. 42 ; this is unum

necessarmm and unum magnum, the one thing and the great thing :

Phil. iii. 13, ' This one thing I do ;' that is, that we may become better

christians every day. Next to that, other things must be regarded in

their order, and place, and according to their weight. In the general,

use time well. If it be short, do not make it shorter by your negli-

gence and improvident misspending of it. A thing that is hired for a

while, it is a loss to us if it be not used and employed ; as a horse that

is bargained for if he be kept idle, or money taken up at interest. So

it is with time lent us by God for a while ; we pay dear for it if we use

it not, and improve it not for God. It is good to see what advantage

we make of time daily. One could say when he heard the clock strike,

Now I have another hour to answer for. Many of the heathens pressed

a review at night, tI irape^riv ; Wherein have I transgressed ?

Seneca, quotidie a]md me causam dico, it was his practice still to

arraign himself. What vice have I resisted ? what disease of the mind

have I cured ? qua parte meUo7' e ? wherein art thou bettered and

improved? In the story of the creation God reviewed every day's

work, and saw that it was good. Surely these or such like should be

our night questions. What have I done to-day ? what advantage have

I made of time that I may not lose it ? what glory have I brought to

God ? what good have I done to others ? wherein have I profited my

own soul ?

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9. The slight price we are to give for time. You part with nothing

but wliat is better lost than kept ; with a little ease of the flesh, vain

pleasure which passeth away as the wind, a little worldly profit, which

at death will be of no use to thee. Now these are of no worth in com-

parison of time.

[1.] The ease of the flesh, whnt is that to the gain of the soul ?

Pains must be endured first or last. Now what a foolish thing is it to

go to hell to save a little labour? to live in endless pains, because we are

loath to put ourselves to the trouble of prayer and other holy duties for a

little while, or to work out our salvation with fear and tremljling? The

body was made for labour, and is the more active the more it is exer-

cised, as wells are the sweeter for draining, whereas its necessities and

infirmities are multiplied and increased by a fond indulgence. There-

fore do not spare the body and stand upon a little ease. God's children

have given up their bodies to him as well as their souls: Rom. vi. 13,

' But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead,

and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God ; ' and

Eom. xii. 1, ' That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, hol}^

acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' And what ia

given up to him must be used for him, though it be with some pain

and self-denial ; and the least part of self-denial is the labour of holy

duties. It is said, Dan. iii. 28, they ' yielded their bodies that they

might not worship any god but their own God.' If they yielded their

bodies to such cruel tortures, are we not ashamed to complain of the

toil and burden of a little service done to God, which also carrieth its

own comfort and solace along with it ? A christian, whether he

looketh backward or forward, upward or downward, seeth no reason

to insist upon the ease of the body. Look backward ; what pains did

Christ endure in his body ! his face spit upon and buffeted, his hands

and feet nailed to the cross, his head crowned with thorns. In his life

he neglected his refreshings, when hungry, to do good to souls, John

iv. ; and shall we be so delicate and tender of the body as not to endure

a little pains for God's sake ? If we look forward, this earthly taber-

nacle must be dissolved, 2 Cor. v. 1, a poor clay house, that must be

crumbled into dust ; it is better to be worn out with labour, than eaten

out with rust. Ay ! but look a little further ; it shall be raised up a

glorious body, and then it will be no grief of heart to us that we have

lived fruitfully and painfully in the exercise of godliness, and been

much in fasting and prayer; though you have deprived your bodies of

some delight and pleasure which others take, then you shall find all

recompensed to you. Those knees which were made hard like camels'

hoofs (as it was said of James) by kneeling in your daily addresses to

God in prayer shall then be a testimony of your diligence ; those

spirits that have wasted in godly exercises shall then be recompensed to

you ; and when those that lived in vanity, ease, and idleness, shall be

full of horror and amazement, you shall lift up your heads with joy.

Look upward ; we hope this body shall be one day in heaven ; there

is the place of your rest from all that is painful and troublesome :

Eev. xiv. 13, ' Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from hence-

forth ; yea, saitli the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and

their works shall follow them.' Then the body shall become an ever-

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lasting temple, wherein the soul fully sanctified shall ever dwell, and

never part more ; then we shall not begrudge the labours of the body

in prayer, preaching, and other holy duties. Look downward ; the

bodies and souls of the wicked are cast into hell fire : Mat. x. 28, ' Fear

not them that can kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul ; but

rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.'

There are pains immediately inflicted on the body, not only such as

]-esult from the agonies and horrors of the soul. Well, then, better

take pains for a while than to endure pains for evermore, to be held in

the bands of duty than in chains of darkness.

[2.] Vain pleasures and delights, which spend time immeasurably.

All pleasure should be used with fear and caution, lest it strengthen

the sensual inclination, and enchant our minds and hearts, and divert

us from God and heaven. Now this vain pleasure and delight is

inconsiderable in itself, for it is short, gone as soon as come, like a

wind it passeth away. If it leave anything behind it, it is a sting in

the conscience, for obeying appetite before reason, or spending our time

so unprofitably for a thing of nought : Prov. xiv. 13, ' Even in laughter

the heart is sorrowful ; and the end of that mirth is heaviness ; ' and

therefore elsewhere it is compared to the ' crackling of thorns under

the pot,' Eccles. vii. 6, that maketh a great blaze and a loud noise,

none of the most pleasing, but soon vanisheth. So all their songs,

jests, frothy discourses, mimical and antic practices, they do not good,

rather much hurt. Therefore to be so caught with empty and light

pleasures, so as to neglect the glory of God and saving our own souls,

is extreme madness. It is misbecoming a man, an active creature, and

made for business : Eccles. ii. 2, ' I said of laughter. It is mad , and of

mirth. What doeth it ? ' What solid good or considerable profit bringeth

it to us ? A man maketh himself a brute when he giveth his heart to

it and maketh it the business of his life. Tully saith he is unworthy

the name of a man qui unum diem velit esse in voluptate, who would

spend one day in pleasure. Surely much more it misbecometh a christian :

James v. 5, ' Ye have lived in pleasure upon earth, and been wanton ;

ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter.' For a

christian, that looketh for everlasting pleasures in another world, to set

his heart upon the poor pitiful delights and joys of this earth, and to

live delicately and luxuriously, and to forget God and heaven, and all

serious preparation for the world to come, what is it but to defy his

Christianity, and live as a carnal worldling, to seek his joys in the

place of his exile and banishment? yea, to carry himself like a beast

appointed for the shambles, rather than to carry himself as an heir of

glory ? and therefore to part with this vain mirth should not be tedious.

Part with it we must, because it spendeth much time, and diverts the

heart from better cares; and it should be no grievous thing, considering

how unreasonable it is to frolic it in the midst of so many sins and

dangers.

[3] Worldly profits and emoluments, which at death will be of no

use to us : Mat. xvi. 26, ' For what is a man profited if he shall gain

the whole world and lose his own soul ? ' The soul may be lost by

sins of omission as well as commission. If our worldly projects have

distracted our minds, and bereft us of our time, oh, how grievous will the

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thought and remembrance of it be at the hour of death ! Job xxvii. 8,

• For what is the hope of the hypocrite, tliough he hath gained, when

God taketh away his soul ? ' Jer. xvii. 11, ' As the partridge sitteth

on eggs, and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches, and not by

right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall

be a fool.' Therefore, though we overlook some worldly conveniences,

yet if we gain time, we have made a good purchase. Why should we

be greedy of wealth and prodigal of time ? All the wealth in the

world will not purchase one day longer, nor procure a little respite for

us, when God requireth our souls from us. And in the other world it

is of no use to us ; our works follow us there, but our wealth doth not :

Eccles. V. 1.5, ' As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he

return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour which he

may carry in his hand.' We must go out of the world, and shall

survive the present estate, and then all that we have heaped up cannot

stead us in that other world. Oh, how much better is it then to redeem

the time, to mind such things as will be serviceable to us in the country

to which we are a-going, and to seek after these things here below with

weanedness and moderation, that we may have time and a heart for

better things ! 1 Cor. vii. 29-31, 'But this I say, brethren, the time is

short : it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they

had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they

that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not ; and they that buy, as though

they possessed not ; and they that use this world, as not abusing it ;

for the fashion of this world passeth away.'

10. The necessity should quicken us, because there are many things

which are apt to steal away and engross our time, and therefore must

be redeemed ; as —

[1.] Sloth and idleness. Some are loath to be put to the trouble of

any serious work ; though their time hangeth on their hands, and they

know not what to do with themselves or with their time, yet they spend

it in roving thoughts or trivial actions, being unfit for aught that is

serious ; they lie open to temptations, especially the temptation of mis-

spending time. Now it is no hard bargain to exchange a sin for a

duty, to part with our sloth and do our proper work. Sloth is an

averseness from labour, through a carnal love of ease or indulgence to

the flesh ; and if this labour be to be exercised about our most necessary

duties, it is the more culpable. Sluggishness is so contrary to reason

(and by the sentiment of nature a slothful servant is an evil servant),

that the most backward cannot allow themselves in their negligent and

careless course of living without some pretences and excuses. One is,

they desire better things ; but ' the soul of the sluggard desire th, and

hath nothinj^,' Prov. xiii. 4. And why? Another proverb will tell

you that ' his hands refuse to labour,' Prov. xxi. 25. Another is,

there is some difficulty they must grapple with : Prov, xx. 4, ' The slug-

gard will not plough by reason of the cold ; therefore shall he beg in

harvest.' Ploughing is when the season begins to grow wet and cold :

' The slothful man saith. There is a lion in the way ; I shall be slain in

the street,' Prov. xxii. 13. In those countries lions raged in the night ;

sometimes they came into the towns and villages to seek their prey :

Prov. XV. 19, ' The way of the slothful man is as a hedge of thorns,

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but the way of the righteous is plain/ Every little opposition and diffi-

culty will put him by a duty ; he goes about it as if all the way were

strewed with thorns, and he multiplies his fears and difficulties.

Something is out of the way when he should do anything for God and

the good of others. So Prov. xxvi, 16, ' The sluggard is wiser in his

own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.' Though they

do nothing for God and eternal life, yet they seem to be wise, carp at

the diligence of others, and excuse their own negligence ; and with-

drawing themselves from labour and danger, accuse others as fools and

melancholy persons, and so condemn what they should imitate, though

others be as wise as the counsellors of princes. Seven was their number

in the oriental countries : Esther i, 14, ' The seven princes of Persia

and Media, which saw the king's face, and which sat the first in the

kingdom.' Now the soul being thus disposed, time must needs run

on, and our great work left undone.

[2.] Vain and sinful pleasures and carnal sports. These rob us of

our time, not only as there is a great deal spent in them, but chiefly

as they taint our hearts, that we never truly mind the glory of God

nor eternal happiness: Isa. v. 12, 'And the harp and the viol, the

tabret and the pipe, and wine are in their feasts ; but they regard not

the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.'

"While men excessively abound in all manner of delights, nothing is

to be seen or heard among them that is savoury or serious ; they

give themselves wholly to a dissolute or voluptuous course of life. These

cannot mind the improvement of time. Their principle is, Isa. xxii.

13, ' Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die.' Whatever they

do, they are still losing time, for they look only to present things, and

have no design of living with God in heaven: Job xxi. 13, 14, ' They

spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the

knowledge of thy ways.' Their carnal mirth excludeth all sense of the

need of God or care of the world to come ; for this little vanishing

pleasure they hazard eternal joys: Luke xii. 19, 'And I will say to

my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take

thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.' They are only taken up with

sensitive or sinful joys, and so post on the faster to their eternal misery,

till one moment puts an end to all their joy for ever. Now since these

vain delights tempt us to slight God, and religion, and eternal life, and

the preparations necessary, we must be the more careful.

[3.] Worldly distractions ; these divert our cares and thoughts from

the most necessary things. Our worldly business ought to be minded

with a due regulation and subordination to our great end. It is our

work given us to do, but usually men are excessive : Ps. cxxvii. 2,

' Tliey rise early, and go to bed late, and eat the bread of sorrows.'

They rack their minds, and waste their spirits, and make this their

main care, as if time were only given them, and they were made for

nothing else, but to get wealth and heap up treasure to themselves.

No ; things indifferent must give way to things absolutely necessary,

things less necessary to things more necessary, and all to things abso-

lutely necessary : Mat. vi. 33, ' But seek ye first the kingdom of God

and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you ; '

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Luke s. 42, ' One tiling is needful' And therefore great things must

be most minded by us, other things in a due proportion.

[4.] Vain company ; they steal a jewel from us they can never

restore, which is our precious time. There are some sinful comjian-

ions we are never likely to be the better for ; and if they be not likely

to be the better for us, we must not be familiar with them, but slum

them: Ps. cxix. 115, 'Depart from me, ye evil-doers, fori will keep

the commandments of my God.' There are others who entertain us

with idle chatting and censuring: 1 Tim. v. 13, 'And withal they

learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house ; and not only

idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things they ought not ; '

that is, they fall into loose discourse, censuring and meddling with other

folk's matters. Now in all these cases a christian should not be careful

to please others to the wrong of his own soul. Non nasciticr aliis qui

mortuus est sihi. He that is to die for himself, and give account for

himself, is not born to humour others with the loss and prejudice of

his great affairs. In the general the rule is, that we should spend

time in nothing that must be repented of ; and all talk that is imper-

tinent and inconsistent with our duty is of that nature.

Secondly, Why we must redeem the season.

1, Because all things are beautiful in their season. It is said, Ps.

i. 3, that the good man ' is like a tree planted by the rivers of water,

that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.' Now fruit in its season is

a carriage answerable to all providences : Mat. ix. 15, ' And Jesus said

unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn as long as the

bridegroom is with them ? but the days will come when the bride-

groom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.' Ps. Ivi.

3, ' At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.' When fears are

apt to surprise us, we are to establish our hearts with the fear of God.

So Eom. xii. 15, ' Eejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with

them that weep ; ' an allusion to the two gates of the temple, Quarum

una erat sponsorum, altera lugentium, utrisque convejiieniia dicebant

Levitce — Grotius.

2. Because the season may soon slip out of our hands : Gal. vi. 10,

\* As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, espe-

cially to them that are of the household of faith.' Take and seek all

occasions of doing good. To take the season relates to the necessitie3

of others ; to seek the season relates to our own capacity and ability ;

both together bind the duty stronger on us. He may die, and you

may be discouraged and disabled ; and therefore take the present

opportunity, while it lasts, to do all the good you can. Suppose it be

to relieve others' bodily necessities : Prov. iii. 28, ' Say not unto thy

neighbour, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give, when thou

liast it by thee.' We must^^ not defer a benefit. Some are like hogs,

good for nothing till they are dead ; they will not part with anything

till they are incapable of the use of it any longer. So for exhorting :

Heb. iii. 13, ' But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day.'

So for serving public good : Acts xiii. 36, David, ' after he had served

his own generiition by the will of God, fell asleep.' They that mind

to do good in the world engage themselves in a warfare, and the loss

of our season is no small part of the enemy's conquest.

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3. This is wisdom. Some are wise in time, others too late ; as the

foolish virgins ; they saw a necessity of getting oil into their vessels,

but it was too late, Mat. xxv. 10. But the godly make much of time

before it is lost. Alas ! we have no security of the next day but our

own word ; and he hath nothing to seciu'e him that hath only his own

overweening presumptions to secure him : ' Thou fool, this night thy

soul shall be required of thee,' Luke xii. 20. The greatest folly is

seen in the loss of time and season. It is ill being taken unprovided.

4. The foresight and provision of the creatures may shame us. God

will not only teach careless men by his prophets and messengers, but

by his creatures. There is a great deal of morality lieth hid in the

bosom of nature if we had the skill to find it out. In this business of

redeeming the time we are sent to the pismire : Prov. vi. 6-8, ' Go to

the ant, thou sluggard ; consider her ways, and be wise : which having

no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and

gathereth her food in the harvest.' This little creature is as it were

put into the pulpit to preach to man ; as Christ elsewhere sendeth us

to the fowls and lilies to learn how to trust God for food and clothing.

The creatures are as it were in a glass, wherein we may not only see

God's glory, but our own folly and sin. Some would have thought

that there had been no use of the ant but to devour grain, and that we

might have been better without such a creature than with it. If it

serves for no other use, this is enough, that it is an emblem of dili-

gence, sagacity, and industry. This wisdom is merely natural instinct,

which should shame us men who are endowed with reason on purpose

to provide for the time to come, especially for eternity. Solomon

heigh teneth this sagacity and industry, because the ant 'hath no guide,

overseer, or ruler,' to show her her work, or to require it of her, or to

punish her for idleness ; no epjoSicoKriri. There is a God to look

after us, and call us to an account, and to punish us in case of negli-

gence ; and yet in summer we do not provide for winter, and are not

wise to redeem the time. So elsewhere God shameth us by the fowls

of heaven : Jer. viii. 7, ' Yea, the stork in the heavens knoweth her

appointed times, and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow

observe the time of their coming ; but my people know not the judg-

ment of the Lord.' They duly observe the seasons of the year for

coming and going, but man doth not observe the seasons of grace or the

time of wrath. In things that do more nearly concern us, we come

short of the unreasonable creatures.

5. Most of the calamities of the world come for not observing and

improving the season : Eccles. viii. 6, ' To every purpose there is time

and judgment ; therefore the misery of man is great upon him ;' that

is, everything hath its proper season, upon which the happy success

of their undertakings doth depend, and if this be let slip, the misery

of man is great upon him. The Lord vouchsafeth his blessing to ac-

tions done in his time and after his manner ; therefore we need to take

the season.

Use 1. Is reproof of several sorts of men.

1. Of them that wilfully spend their time vainly, either in doing

nothing, or doing what they should not, or in doing evil : autjiihil, aut

aliud, aut male agendo.

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[1.] In doing nothing. Time and life was given us for some end

and purpose; every man hath his work wherein to glorify God. Men

are not made to fill up the number of things in the world, as the

stones ; nor to grow bulky, and increase in stature, as plants and trees ;

nor to taste bodily pleasures without remorse, as the beasts. We have

higher faculties of reason and conscience to foresee the end and choose

the means, and diligently by those means to pursue after the end. Our

end is to glorify God and enjoy him ; the means are the duties of our

general and particular callings, and we must be diligent in both. An

idle man is a burden to himself, a prey to Satan, and a grief to the

Spirit of God. A burden to himself, for he knoweth not what to do

with time; in the morning he saith. Would God it were evening. A

prey to Satan ; if the devil findeth them at leisure, he will be sure to

employ them : standing pools are apt to putrefy ; birds are not taken

in their flight, but when they pitch and rest. They are a grief to the

Spirit of God , idle men quench the vigour of nature, and therefore

are incapable of the quickenings of grace. In short, the world was

never made to be a hive for drones ; every one hath his employment

for public good. To spend the whole life in eating, drinking, and

sporting is beastly or brutish : ' Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance

of idleness,' were the sins of Sodom, Ezek. xvi. 49. Every member of

the body hath its function and use, whereby it becometh serviceable to

the whole. All have not the same office ; that would make a confusion ;

but all have their use, and are, according to their gifts and talents,

diligently to employ themselves. They are unprofitable burdens of the

earth that live idle and to no use, as if their souls were only given

them as salt to keep their bodies from stinking.

[2.] Those that do aliud agere, that is, do somewhat, but not what

they should do, spend their whole time in hunting after the profits of

the world, or in making provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.

No ; there are better things to mind. Everytliing is lost that helpeth

us not towards heaven, much more that which hindereth our progress

thither. That is our first care, the glorifying God and saving our souls:

Prov. iv. 7, ' Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom ; \*

that is, heavenly wisdom.

[3.] 3Iale agendo, in doing evil, or serving the lusts of the flesh.

That time is lost indeed, for then you lose your souls and your time too,

and do the devil's work in God's time : 1 Peter iv. 3, ' For the time

past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles,

when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings,

banquetings, and abominable idolatries.'

2. It reproveth them that delay their conversion and return to God;

as those invited to the marriage-supper did not deny, but delay, Mat.

xxii. They do not say, Non placet, sed non vacat — I am not at leisure.

Oh, it is dangerous to neglect the season. If you did thoroughly see

the danger, you would see you cannot make too much haste. This

great necessity that is upon us admitteth no deliberation, and therefore

we should take the next opportunity. To promise ourselves a more

convenient season hereafter is to be liberal at another's cost, which yet

you are not sure of. The holy and heavenly life is compared to a

journey ; he is a foolish traveller that sets forth at night, and beginneth

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his journey when the sim is setting. It is set forth by a race often ;

who ever heard of a race that was but a stride long ? By a warfare ;

now who wouhi expect to conquer when himself is weakest and his

enemy strongest ? Yet nothing more usual tlian delays and put oflfs ;

one is full of business, and when he hath a little mastered it, then ho

will be for a devout retirement, and will think of saving his soul :

' Suffer me first to go and bury my father,' said he in the Gospel, Luke

ix. 59. Alas ! when you are more leavened with a worldly spirit,

religion will find little entrance. Some their youthful heats are not yet

over and spent, and they think something is to be allowed to them ;.

but when those youthful lusts and sensual inclinations are confirmed

by long custom, how will you break the force of them ? The misery

is, God always cometh out of season to a carnal heart, or in the sinner's

reckoning. We even say to him, as the devil did to Christ, ' Art thou

come to torment us before the time ? ' Mat. viii. 29.

3. Eeproof to fallen believers, who do not take the next advantage of

recovering themselves by repentance. The longer sin continueth un-

mortifled or unpardoned, the more dangerous is your case. A candle,

as soon as the flame is blown out, sucketh light and is re-enkindled ;

but when it is grown cold and stiff", it requireth more ado. Peter's

repentance presently overtook his sin : Mat. xxvi. 75, ' He went out and

wept bitterly.' ' Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath, neither give

place to the devil,' Eph, iv. 26, 27. It is true of reconciliation with

God. If a man were unclean, he was to wash his clothes before evening.

God would not let Adam sleep in his sins, but came to him in the cool

of the day. If we are fallen, we should not lie in the dirt : Jer. viii.

4, ' Thus saith the Lord, Shall they fall, and not arise ? Shall he turn

away, and not return ? ' Let not your commerce and traffic with

heaven lie dead. Sin maketh you fly from God, and we hang off from

him. A backward heart must be urged and pricked forward.

4. It reproveth those that withstand the special seasons of grace,

when God's arms are most open to receive us. Some scriptures seem

to assert a special season, that may not be had at other times : Isa. Iv.

6, ' Seek the Lord while he may be found ; call ye upon him while he

is near ; ' Ps. xxxii. 6, ' For this shall every one that is godly pray

unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found ; ' Isa. xlix. 8, ' In an

acceptable time have I heard thee ; in the day of salvation I have helped

thee ; ' Luke xix. 42, ' If thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things

that belong to thy peace ; but now they are hid from thine eyes.'

When this day is past, we are in danger of eternal ruin.

But to state this matter.

(1.) The time in which God will pardon and accept those that repent

is as long as life ; for whenever men repent, iniquity shall not be their

ruin. Turn and live, sin and die, are truths that will always hold

good.

(2.) The times while powerful means of grace are continued do not

always last. Persons have their day and nations their day. He may

take away his word from a people that reject it, and offer them his

grace no more : Acts xiii. 46, ' But seeing you put it from you, and

judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the-

gentiles.'

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(3.) When God's motions are more powerful, these God may suspend

upon our disobedience : Gen. vi. 3, ' My Spirit shall not always strive

with man.' God at some times moveth the heart more strongly towards

conversion than at other times. Now this time should not be lost, the

day of patience, the day of offers, the day of motions. The day of

patience is as long as life lasteth ; the day of offers, while means and

motions are continued. It is dangerous to slight either. Present time

is best.

Use 2. Is to press you to redeem the time. All our time is due to

God ; and were it not for bodily necessities, it were to be spent in his

immediate service. But this is the life of heaven, not of earth. A

good proportion must be given to him ; yea, in a sense our all. Com-

mon actions must be sacred in their intention and aim : Isa. xxiii. 18,

' And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord.'

The particular time we are to spend in the immediate service of God

is not expressly determined, because God trusts love, and expecteth

much from a willing people, who are not wont to dispute away their

duties, but practise them ; and because he would leave something to

the conduct of the Spirit, and a due latitude to men's several conditions

and occasions. And though there be not express directions, yet injunc-

tions are very large and comprehensive : 1 Thes. v. 17, ' Pray without

ceasing.' We have worthy patterns : Ps. cxix. 147, ' I prevented the

dawning of the morning, and cried;' and ver. 164, 'Seven times a

day do I praise thee.' Therefore you must do what will stand with

love, with your manifold necessities, and spiritual welfare and advantage,

and the special seasons God offereth in his providence. For means —

1. Be sure the body be not a clog to the soul : Luke xxi. 34, ' Take

heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be over-charged with

surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the cares of the world.' When you

gratify the body, you make way for a gross neglect of the soul.

2. Love to God, that keepeth the heart liberal and open upon all

occasions of duty.

3. The heavenly mind. Are you in good earnest ? Would you go

to heaven, and dwell with God for ever ? The children of this world

are wise in the course of their affairs, what time to redeem, and what

advantages to take. If you were more heavenly-minded, you would be

wiser in your affairs for a heavenly life.

SERMON XXL

Wherefore he ye not umvise, hut understandhig loJiat the ivill of the

Lord is. — Eph. v. 17.

These words are an inference from the whole discourse, begun ver. 8 ;

more especially from the two last exhortations, to ' walk circumspectly,'

and ' redeem the time ; ' ' wherefore be ye not unwise,' &c. Observe

here —

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1. The note of inference, 'Wherefore.'

2. The duty inferred, which is propounded — (1.) Negatively, 'Be ye

not unwise ; ' (2.) Positively, ' But understanding what the will of the

Lord is.'

1. The note of inference, ' Wherefore,' that we may not be deceived

as the ignorant, nor delay as the slothful ; neither mistake otu- duty,

nor fail in the readiness of our obedience, but observ^e what God re-

quireth, that we may do it diligently and while there is time.

2. The duty inferred is propounded negatively, ' Be ye not unwise.'

Be ye not acjipove^, foolish, simple, who are deceived with every fair

appearance. Positively, ' But understanding what the will of the Lord

is.' XvvievTe^ is more than jLvcoaKovre^, for avvUvai is 'attentively to

weigh: Mat. xiii. 19, koI [Mrj avvievTo<i, ' and understandeth it not.' Beza,

No7i advertit animum ; we must not barely understand our duty, but

prudently and practically consider of what moment it is to our eternal

woe or welfare, either to omit or perform it.

Doct. That wisdom and a good understanding of the will of God is

necessary to accurate walking or ready obedience.

I. Before I give you the reasons, let me state the point as it lieth in

the text.

1. That every man that hath a tender conscience would be accurate

and exact in his obedience to God, not contenting himself with a slight

tincture of Christianity, but looking into every creek and turning of it,

that he may in no point be lacking and defective in his duty. Now

this cannot be without much wisdom and knowledge ; therefore here,

when the apostle presseth them to ' walk circumspectly,' he presently

addeth, ' Not as fools, but as wise.' And again, ' Be ye not unwise,

but understanding what the will of the Lord is.' So elsewhere : Col.

i. 9, 10, ' That ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all

wisdom and spiritual understanding ; that you might walk worthy of

the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and in-

creasing in the knowledge of God.' So Col. iv. 12, \* That ye may

stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.' They are growing

to a fuller maturity both in christian knowledge and practice.

2. We have no sure rule to walk by but the will of God. It is his

favour we seek as our life, his displeasure which we fear as death to

ns ; into his presence we hope at last to come, and his wrath we shun

as our greatest misery ; therefore it is his will we must obey, or we

are not safe : 1 Peter iv. 2, ' That he no longer should live the rest of

his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God ; ' Kom.

xii. 2, ' And be not conformed to this world ; but be ye transformed

by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good

and acceptable and perfect will of God.' Many walk according to the

course of this world : Eph. ii. 2, ' Wherein in times past ye walked

according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the

power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience.'

Others live by sense and passion and carnal reason, and ensl ave that

wisdom that they have to their sensual passions and desires ; but he

that would approve himself to God must be careful that he liveth

according to the will of God, for if he doth what God will have him

to do. he is safe.

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3. This will is revealed to ns in his word. There our duty and our

happiness is clearly stated : Ps. cxix. 105, ' Thy word is a lamp to my

feet, and a light to my path.' Tlie light of nature discovereth some-

what of our duty, but very imperfectly with respect to the light of

Christianity, which discovereth our lost estate by nature, the way of

deliverance by a redeemer, that obedience in its full extent whereby

we express our gratitude or thankfulness to God. There is a great

deal of wisdom in the law part of the word : Deut. iv. 6, ' Keep there-

fore and do them, for this is your wisdom, and your understanding in

the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say,

Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' Much

more in the gospel part : Eph. i. 8, ' Wherein he hath abounded to us

in all wisdom and prudence.'

4. This word we need thoroughly to understand, otherwise how shall

we know our duty ? Prov. xix. 2, ' Also that the soul be without know-

ledge, it is not good ; and he that hasteth with his feet sinneth.' That

proverb discovereth the two great causes of men's miscarriage, ignorance

and precipitancy ; either they understand not their rule, or else mind

it not, but run on as they are led by their headlong passions ; therefore

we have two opposite precepts : Prov. iv. 25, 26, \* Let thine eyes look

right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee ; ' ' Ponder the

path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.' They that would

walk circumspectly had need have their eyes in their head, and to mind

their business, if they would not slip, or stumble, and dash their foot

against a stone. Still examine your actions by the word of God.

5. This understanding must not be idle, but reduced to use and

practice. The scrij^ture showeth that this should be our end in seek-

ing knowledge : Isa. ii. 3, ' And he will teach us of his ways, and we

will walk in his paths;' Ps. cxix. 34, 'Give me understanding, and I

will keep thy law ; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.'

Knowledge without practice layeth us open to the greater judgment :

Luke xii. 47, 48, ' And that servant which knew his Lord's will, and

prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten

with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things

worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whom-

soever much is given, of him shall be much required ; and to whom

men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.^ Both are

beaten ; but according to the degree of knowledge, our crimes receive

an aggravation of sin and punishment ; and the more light and grace

God bestoweth upon any, the greater duty he requireth from them.

Again, John vii. 17, ' If any man will do his will, he shall know of the

doctrine whether it be of God.' A readiness to serve God in God's

way bringeth us soonest to a knowledge of God's will. Therefore our

aim in getting understanding of God's word is not that we may jangle

about questions, but direct and order our conversations. The word

was not given us to try the acuteness of our wits in disputing, but the

readiness of our obedience in practising.

6. This reducing what we know to practice is our wisdom. Know-

ledge is never right but when wi.sdom goeth along with it : Prov. viii.

12, ' I wisdom dwell with prudence.' Besides a knowledge of divine

mysteries, there must be wisdom and prudence to rule and order our

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actions and practices, and to guide ns in our respective duties to God

and man. The two great diseases of our understandings are ignorance

and folly ; ignorance, because we know not our proper remedy ; and

folly, because we know not how to apply it.

[1.] There is a cold and naked knowledge of divine things, called by

the apostle, ' A form of knowledge,' Rom. ii. 20 ; which is threefold —

(1.) A grammatical and memorative knowledge, such as children

have, that are taught to speak of divine mysteries by rote, such as

God, Christ, heaven, hell, sin, righteousness. These rather rehearse

the words than they can be said to know and believe the things spoken

by them ; they say after others, but do not believe or mind the things

wherein they are instructed : Luke i. 4, ' That thou mightest know the

certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.'

(2.) Another degree above this is dogmatical and opinionative

knowledge, when men's memories are not only planted with the seeds

of knowledge, but they exercise a kind of conscience and judgment

about these things, so far as to form their opinions to the orthodoxy of

the times they live in ; but yet ' wisdom entereth not into the heart,'

Prov. ii. 10. This maketh men disputers of this world, rather than

serious practisers of godliness. They have a religion to talk of, but

not to live by. It may be they can more accurately discourse of divine

things than a serious christian ; as a vintner may have his cellar better

stored than a nobleman, but he hath it for sale, not for use.

(3.) There is yet a further degree of speculative knowledge ; that

is, when men have some kind of touch upon the heart, but it is too

slender and insufficient to settle the power of religion in their hearts, or

to maintain it against the opposition of lusts within or temptations

without. So some are enlightened, and taste the good word: Heb.

vi. 4, 5, ' For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened,

and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the

Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of

the world to come.' And they may escape the pollutions of the world

' through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,'

2 Peter ii. 20. It is hard to conceive how such practical and impor-

tant truths should be understood or considered without some touch

upon the heart, which may affect men in part, and produce some par-

tial reformation.

[2.] There is a practical and saving knowledge, when we know God

so as to love, serve, and obey him. This is not only knowledge, but

wisdom, such a knowledge as is ' able to make us wise to salvation,'

2 Tim. iii. 15 ; such a knowledge as ordereth means to their proper

end, which is the glory of God and the salvation of our souls. This

knowledge which teacheth us to walk circumspectly, and that reneweth

the heart, is our wisdom : Col. iii. 10, ' And have put on the new man,

■which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created

him;' Jer. xxii. 16, 'He judged the cause of the poor and needy;

then it was well with him : was not this to know me, saith the Lord ? '

All other knowledge to this is but learned folly rather than true

wisdom.

7. This wisdom is sometimes spoken of as a gift, and sometimes as

a duty ; it is both.

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[1.] This wisdom is spoken of as a gift : Jer. xxiv. 7, ' I will give

tliem a heart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my

l)eople, and I will be their God ; for they shall return unto me with

their whole heart.' It is God's resolved gift to the elect : Isa. xxxii.

4, ' The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge.' It is

God alone that can make such as were heady and inconsiderate to-

be better advised, and to understand his will. This is spoken of as a

gift of God.

[2.] In many other places it is spoken of as a duty : Prov. iv. 7,

\* Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom, and with all thy

getting get understanding.' With respect to this double notion we

are sometimes bidden to pray, and ' cry and lift up our voice for under-

standing,' Prov. ii, 3 ; and again, ver. 4, ' To seek for her as for silver,

and search for her as for hid treasures.' This must be our constant

and earnest request to God. And then we must use all holy means,

and take all occasions of getting and increasing this wisdom. God

giveth it, and we must labour for it ; for God will never give it to the

lazy soul. And we must labour for it as men that dig in the mines for

treasure ; it lieth not on the surface, nor is it a few general and obvious

trutlis, which will give us this holy wisdom and understanding. It

doth not belong to preachers only to dig in the mines of knowledge,

but all christians ; they should not content themselves to see with

other men's eyes, but judge for themselves. It is a matter of much

skill to be a thorough christian.

II. The reasons why much wisdom and a good understanding i»

required of christians.

1. That they may resemble God, and discover his perfections to the

world. The notions which we have of God are, that he is wise, power-

ful, and good. Now all these christians are to express, for they are

' to show forth his virtues,' 1 Peter ii. 9 ; and among others, that he

is wise, by whose counsel we are guided in our circumspect walking.

The honour of God lieth at stake ; if we behave ourselves foolishly, we

dishonour him in the world. If wisdom be a part of God's image, the

new creature must represent it to the world as well as other things.

And therefore we should not be fools, but wise, and show ourselves

to be light in the Lord.

2. That there may be a due impression of his word upon us, which

is all wisdom ; and if we understand it and improve it, it must needs

make us wise also ; for the impression is according to the nature of

the seal ; and so the new creature must needs be the wisest creature

on this side heaven ; for —

[L] He fixeth his right end, which is the glorifying and enjoying

of God, whilst others disquiet themselves about a vain show : Ps.

xxxix. 6, \* Surely every man walketh in a vain show ; surely they are

disquieted in vain.' Whilst they labour, cark, and turmoil themselves

to get together a few poor transitory enjoyments, in which there is

neither durable possession nor solid satisfaction. The S])iritually wise

man is seeking after God and eternal life, beyond which he cannot

aspire.

[2.] He chooseth apt and proper means, which is the way God

hath prescribed him to walk in : Deut. iv. 6, ' Keep therefore, and do

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them, for this is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of the

nations which shall hear these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation

is a wise and understanding people.'

[3.] He doth not dally with religion, but thoroughly sets himself to

observe and obey the dictates and directions of it : Mat. vii. 24, \* I will

liken him to a wise builder.' Well, then, the impression must needs

be according to the seal and stamp. Where there is a saving knowledge

of divine mysteries, and diligence to order our actions accordingly,

there must needs be true wisdom and prudence. Some excel in it more

than others, but all are wise to salvation,

3. To make us thorough christians, or for our own direction, that we

may keep to our rule in all things : Ps. cxix. 33, ' Teach me, Lord,

the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end.' The nar-

row way of obedience is hardly found, and hardly kept, and easily mis-

taken, especially when prejudices, lusts, and interests are apt to pervert

and blind us. Therefore this knowledge and wisdom doth caution us

against sins and snares, that we be not corrupted and ensnared by

them : Ps. cxix. 11, ' Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I may

not sin against thee.' Knowledge doth not only discover sin, but

fortify our resolutions against it : 1 John ii. 14, ' I have written unto

you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in

you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.' As it discovereth sin, it

is good to have something in our hearts to check it : 1 John iii. 9,

'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remainetb

in him ; and he cannot sin because he is born of God.' Truths in

the word rise up in dislike. As it fortifieth our resolutions : I am

in God's way ; I look for all my acceptance and reward from him :

Gen. xxxix. 9, ' How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against

God ? ' This lifteth us above fears and flatteries, that we are neither

discouraged nor enticed. So for duties ; it urgetli us to perform them:

Prov. vi. 22, ' When thou goest, it shall lead thee ; when thou sleepest,

it shall keep thee ; when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.' It is

good to have a bosom monitor, and something that may plead God's

interest in our own hearts. In all cases it instructeth us, and mindeth

us of all particular duties, to avoid snares and temptations.

4. Not only to direct us in the general duty of christians, but to

make us useful in our particular relations. We are all bound to get

knowledge. There are public and private relations ; public, as that

of magistrates : Ps. ii. 10, ' Be wise now therefore, ye kings ; be

instructed, ye judges of the earth.' It is a critical thing many times

to understand Christ's interest, and make their own veil to it ; so that

a king needeth much wisdom. When Solomon asked wisdom, ' the

thing pleased the Lord,' 1 Kings iii. 10. Ministers and guides of the

church : Mai. ii. 7, ' For the priest's lips should keep knowledge.'

These are the church's storehouse, therefore they need to be well fur-

nished with all kind of knowledge, speculative and experimental, that

they may draw it forth upon all occasions. Private, as husbands, that

they may carry on the duties of the family : 1 Peter iii. 7, ' Likewise,

ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge ; ' that is, they

are to labour for much prudence and wisdom, that they may be able

to know their own dutv and instruct others : 1 Cor. xiv. 35, ' And if

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they will learn anything, let them ask their hushands at home ;' and

that they may not govern things in their houses according to passion

and will, but God's word. Parents, that they may instruct their

children; for they are 'to bring them up in the nurture and admoni-

tion of the Lord,' Eph. vi. 4. Private christians, that they may com-

fort and build up each other in their most holy faith : Kom. xv. 14,

\* And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are

full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one

another ; ' that we may not be ciphers in converse, and our coming

together may not be like a dumb show, without speaking any savoury

or comfortable and edifying word to one another. Therefore be not

unwise,

5. The great danger of ignorance, or the evils that come from the

want of spiritual wisdom.

[1.] To ourselves. Our worship is but a fond superstition, a blind

devotion to an unknown god, a mere guess directed by custom and

some devout aims : John iv. 22, ' Ye worship ye know not what ; we

know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.' Our zeal is but

a wild fury : Eom. x. 2, ' For I bear them record, tliat they have a zeal

of God, but not according to knowledge.' A dead fire, fervidus, non,

lucidus ; like a blind horse full of mettle, but ever and anon stumbling,

[2.] To others. There is no preventing trouble in the church or

scandals to the world if we have not spiritual wisdom and understand-

ing. Whom doth Satan make use of as his instruments but those in

whom there is weakness of mind and strength of passions ? these are

unstable : Eph. iv. 14, ' That we henceforth be no more children, tossed

to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the

sleight of men, and cunning craftiness ; whereby they lie in wait to

deceive.' These through pride and unskilfulness breed divisions : 1 Tim.

iii. 6, ' Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the

condemnation of the devil.'

6. The incredible delight and peace it begets in our souls,

[1.] The bare knowledge of God's will is very delightful, and yieldeth

much more pleasure to the mind than an epicure can find in his most

exquisite sensual enjoyments. It is incredible what contentment an

anxious soul hath in the finding out of any truth whereof he was

doubtful before, and it cannot be conceived till v;^e feel it : Prov, xxiv. 13,

14, ' My son, eat thou honey, because it is good ; and the honeycomb,

which is sweet to thy taste. So shall the knowledge of wisdom be

unto thy soul ; when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward.'

There is a comparison between the oblectation of the mind and the

pleasure of bodily taste. Nothing can be so sweet/ to the palate as under-

standing is to the soul, especially when we ourselves have searched it

and found it out, when we see a truth with our own eyes. He doth

not speak there of that sweetness which the conscience hath in the

feeling of God's love, nor of the delight of the heart when it findeth

liberty in the ways of God, but of the satisfaction and oblectation of

the mind and understanding when truth is so fully cleared up that

there remaineth no doubt or scruple about it.

[2.] The peace which accompanieth it. Many times there is little

account made of God's will in the world, and it falleth out so that he

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that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow : Eccles. i. 18, ' For in

much wisdom is much grief ; and he that increaseth knowledge

increaseth sorrow ; ' and when he is forced for conscience' sake to differ

from others, he meeteth with much trouble, for ignorance is furious.

Yet this is a satisfaction to him, that he knoweth this is pleasing to God,

and so hath more comfort in the knowledge of a hated truth than

worldly men in all the advantages which a false wa}'' giveth them :

Prov. iii. 31, 32, ' Envy not the oppressoi', and choose none of his ways :

for the froward is abomination to the Lord ; but his secret is with the

righteous.' That is rendered as a reason why they should not envy wicked

men ; they know they aie in a way pleasing to God, and this supporteth

them in all their troubles. Now this satisfaction we cannot have,

unless we have the thorough knowledge of the truth we profess, or the

holy ways of God we are engaged in. Therefore we need to get a

distinct clear knowledge of the whole will of God revealed in his

word.

7. The properties of this knowledge and wisdom show the necessity

of it. All knowledge is to be prized, for il? is man's excellency above

the beasts ; but especially divine knowledge, which far transcendeth

all the wisdom of the world.

[1.] Because it is employed about the highest things, to know God's

nature and will, what he is, and how he is to be enjoyed. Alas ! what

mean things do most of the world employ their time and wit about, in

comparison of a poor christian ! To know God, though not compre-

hensively, yet satisfyingly and savingly : Ps. cxxxix. 6, \* Such know-

ledge is too wonderful for me ; it is high, I cannot attain unto it ; ' 1

Tim. iii. 16, 'And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness.'

What are all the profound speculations of the world to this ? 1 Peter

i. 12, ' Which things the angels desire to look into.' The angels, that

much exceeded us in understanding, desire to pry into these things, a

speculation that is fit for their best thoughts.

[2.] These things are most useful and profitable : John xvii. 3, ' And

this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and

Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.' Curious knowledge bringeth more

pain than pleasure, but profitable knowledge should be most prized by

us ; as to know how to be reconciled to God, what is pleasing to him, or

to conquer sin, and escape damnation, and obtain eternal life ; these

are the matters about which we should most busy ourselves, and employ

our understandings ; for what doth more deeply concern us than these

things ?

Use 1. Is of reproof to divers sorts of persons who live in ignorance,

or countenance ignorance upon several pretences.

1. That it belongeth not to them to dig in the mines of knowledge ;

they leave that to clerks and men of learning ; as if it were not a

common duty lying upon private christians, as well as those whose

office doth particularly engage them to study the scriptures : Heb. viii.

11, ' They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest.' All need

to learn how to be saved ; and therefore, if you know not how to live

unto God, how to conquer sin, and how to escape damnation, what will

become of you ? The apostle saith, 2 Cor. iv. 3, ' If our gospel be hid,

it is hid to those that are lost.' A man in ignorance is never like to

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hit his way, nor can he know wliether he he in or out, whether he has

escaped his o^reat danger, or shall be accepted in the judgment. While

you are ignorant, the devil may cheat you, and do what he lists with

you.

2. Others have a little genei-al and traditional knowledge of the

religion commonly professed among us, and talk of it by rote after

others, but generally look no further than the outside of it ; they

neither know the reasons npon which the certainty of this religion is

grounded, nor the tenor of it, what it doth require at their liauds,

especially as to the practical and vital truths, that do more nearly con-

cern the vigour and power of godliness, as the work and power of the

Holy Ghost in regenerating and converting men to God, or the life

of faith, or the difference between the state of sin and grace. As

Nicodemus : John iii. 4, ' How can a man be born again when he is old ?

Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born ? '

These scorn to be taxed of ignorance, though they know little but

certain rituals and externals of the religion commonly practised

among us. Therefore press them to more acquaintance with religion

and the life of faith and holiness, they scorn you, and all that you can

offer in that kind ; for it is ever true, that carnal men savour not the

things of the Spirit, but they are carnal under a christian or pagan

profession.

3. Some confine their knowledge to a few obvious truths, and for

other things they leave it to preachers more accurately to search after

the mind of God, and content themselves to see with other men's eyes.

But if knowledge be to be confined to a few truths, why hath God

given men so copious and large a rule, and revealed so many things as

helps to our faith and practice ? It is a kind of censuring the scripture,

as if the greatest part of these sacred writings were not necessary.

Certainly it is a matter of great skill to be a thorough christian. Our

knowledge should cost us pains, as well as our obedience. A little

slight superficial knowledge will not fully subdue the heart to God.

Though some truths are fundamental, yet every piece and parcel of

truth hath its use and place ; and the knowledge of it is not only for

delight, but safety. Many say that fundamentals are but few ; believe

them, and live well, and you shall be saved. True, yet the accessory

truths do much conduce, both to the belief of fundamentals, and to

quicken our practice of necessary duties. He were a foolish builder

that should only be careful to lay a good foundation, and never mind

roof or windows, lights or doors ; no, nor should be able to discern

the coming of those that should untile the house, or let in such a

continual dropping as would at length founder the building, and bring-

it to ruin. Besides, though it be not absolutely necessary to salvation

that a christian should know every truth, yet he must never do any-

thing against the truth, and he should not be willingly ignorant of any

truth. To be willingly ignorant of lesser things may be damnable : 2'

Peter iii. 5, ' For this they are willingly ignorant of, that by the word

of God the heavens were of old.' Now men are willingly ignorant,

not only when they refuse the truth when it is plainly cleared

up to them, out of a wilful obstinacy, but also when they will not use-

the means out of laziness and sloth. Crassa negllgentia dolus esL

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Men will not search when they have a mind to hate and condemn any-

thing which unqnestionably concerns God's interest in the world.

4. Some think ignorance is the mother of devotion, and that men

leave off to be good when they grow more knowing. Snrely that is the

fanlt of the men, not of the knowledge ; for all divine truths be-

friend sanctification. Others say the world is too wise to be governed ;

and since everyone came to know religion, and dispute of it, it breedeth

factions. But this is unjust also ; it were well if the world were too

wise to be brought under a kingdom of darkness. If men will impose

on the church of God things which they ought not, they have cause to

impute the divisions to their own tyranny and usurpation, not to the

scriptures or the study of the scriptures ; as if this principle of an easy

implicit faith, to believe as the church believeth, were more effectual

to produce true piety and goodness than the knowledge of God's will.

This is to set men above God, as if they by their testimony and impo-

sitions did more safely secure the interest of religion in the world than

God hath done by a book indited by his own Spirit, or as if that

were dangerous to be commonly read or meditated upon. In short,

God's children are children of light, and the children of light must not

be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. None will

deprive others of this privilege but those that have no mind to it them-

selves.

Use 2. Is to press us to get this knowledge and understanding of

God's will. The apostle speaketh to children of light ; and none of

us know so much but we may know more.

1. Labour to get a more full knowledge of heavenly mysteries,

especiall}'' of those which are necessary to salvation, not excluding

other truths which secure the necessary things ; for we must not

always be children, and keep to our milk : Heb. v. 12, 13, ' For when

for the time ye ought to be teacheis, ye have need that one teach you

again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are

become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every

one that useth milk, is unskilful in the word of righteousness, for he is

a babe.' Besides, there are maculce et vulnera intellectiis, the spots

and the wounds of the understanding Dangerous are the wounds,

but errors as spots much hinder our edification and growth in grace ;

for all grace is either light or strength, and strength is increased by

the increase of light : 2 Peter i. 2, ' Grace and peace be multiplied

unto you, through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.'

2. Get a more clear knowledge. Fulness relateth to the object,

or matters known ; clearness to the subject or faculty knowing, A

christian should see further into those truths which he doth already

know : Hosea vi. 3, ' Then shall we know, if we follow on to know

the Lord.' Moses' first request was, 'Tell me thy name ;' his second,

\* Show me thy glory.' The godly are unsatisfied : Prov. xxx. 2, 3,

\* Snrely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the under-

standing of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the know-

ledge of the holy.' To know a truth as we ought to know it : 1

Cor. viii. 2, 3, 'And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he

knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know ; but if any man love God, i

the same is known of him.' New light is not a finding out new truths,

but a seeing further into the same truths. Our <jrrowth in knowledge

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is ratlier intensive as to degrees than extensive as to objects ; not know-

ing new truths but when okl principles are improved : Prov. iv. 18,

\* But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and

more unto the perfect day ; ' Ps. cxix. 18, ' Open thou mine eyes, that

I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.' David doth not pray

that God would make another law, but that God would give him a

clearer understanding of this.

3. Get a more certain knowledge, or more confirmed knowledge in

the truth : Acts ii. 36, ' Let the house of Israel know assuredly, that

God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord

and Christ ; ' John xvii. 8, ' For I have given unto them the words

which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known

surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou

didst send me.' Not by hearsay and tradition, but solid evidence :

John iv. 42, \* Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have

heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the

Saviour of the world.'

4. Get a more distinct knowledge. Truths are best known in their

frame and dependence. A confused knowledge is always unsatis-

factory, it is not cognitio quietativa, till we see how one truth agreeth

■with another, as the curtains of the tabernacle were fastened by loops ;

till we are able to ' compare things spiritual with spiritual,' 1 Cor. ii. 13,

or know things according to the analogy of faith : Rom. xii, 3, ' For,

I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among

you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but

to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure

of faith.' Every truth must be known in its order and place, other-

wise we have but a confused notion of things, as the blind man saw

men walking like trees.

5. Get a more experimental knowledge. Most of Christianity is not

only to be believed, but felt : 1 John v. 10, ' He that believeth on the

Son of God hath the witness in himself.' We must have not only a

sight, but a taste : 1 Peter ii. 2, 3, ' As new-born babes, desire the sincere

milk of the word, that they may grow thereby ; if so be ye have

tasted that the Lord is gracious.' And feeling : Phil. iii. 10, ' That I

may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship

of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.' Otherwise

it is but a form of knowledge. Experience is the inward seal and con-

firmation of truth : John xvii. 17, \* Sanctify them through the truth,

thy word is truth ; ' John viii. 32, ' And ye shall know the truth, and

the truth shall make you free.'

6. Get a more practical knowledge. Knowledge is for use, not an

idle speculation. As a gallant and a physician cometh into a garden,

one looketh upon the colour and beauty, the other upon the virtue and

use of herbs and flowers : 2 Peter i. 8, ' For if these things be in 3^ou

and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor

unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ ; ' 1 John ii. 4, \* He that saith,

I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the

truth is not in him.' A practical christian is more ready to serve and

please God every day.

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SERMON XXIL

Aiid he not drunk ivith wine, ivherei7i is excess ; hut he filled ivitJi

the Spirit.— 'Kfu. v. 18.

Here is a new direction to the cliiklren of light, who are bonnd to

walk accurately and circumspectly, and to redeem time to glorify God

and save their own souls. One great impediment of a watchful and

diligent life is drunkenness and intemperance; therefore those who

would walk accurately and redeem time must be sober and temperate

in all things : ' Be not drunk with wine,' &c.

In the words we have — (1.) A dehortation, ' Be not drunk with

wine.' (2.) A reason, ' Wherein there is excess.' (3.) The opposite

duty, ' But be filled with the Spirit.'

1. The dehortation. In which —

[1.] The matter of the sin, 'Be not drunk with wine.' Under the

term ' wine ' all inebriating and intoxicating drink is comprehended,

called in the scripture by the general name of \* strong drink ; ' Isa. v.

11, ' Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may

follow strong drink ; that continue until night, till wine inflame them.'

Meaning thereby, not wine only, but other drinks made of honey, dates,

rice, malt, or any other grain that for strength often cometh not short

of wine, and may inebriate or make men drunk as well as it ; as the

Nazarite was to separate himself from wine and strong drink: Num.

vi. 3, \* He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall

drink no vinegar of wine, nor vinegar of strong drink ; neither shall he

drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.' This is the

matter of the sin.

[2.] The manner, when made drunk by it. The word importeth

sometimes a more liberal use of wine; as John ii. 10, 'When men

have well drunk.' Sometimes an excessive and inordinate use, as here,

such as breedeth some distemper. There is implied a lawful

use of wine : 1 Tim. v. 23, ' Drink no longer water, but use a little

wine, for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities.' And the case

is shortly stated, Eccles. x. 17, ' For strength, and not for drunkenness.'

Vigour, health, and strength, for the duties of our general and parti-

cular calling, is to be preserved, but drunkenness is to be avoided.

2. The reason, ' Wherein there is excess.' The word acrwro?

properly signifieth prodigality and riot, as Luke xv. The word for the

prodigal is aaforta ; and ver. 13, \* in riotous living ' is aa-(£noi<i ;

and 1 Peter iv. 4, excess of riot, eh t7]v uvttjv tt}? aaooTta'iavdxvo-iv ;

what we translate 'excess,' the Vulgar translate 'luxury ;' some trans-

late ' dissoluteness,' which they interpret a wasteful profusion, without

any prudence or consideration, joined with all licentiousness, that they

take to themselves to abuse God's creatures.

3. The opposite duty is, ' Be ye filled with the Spirit.' Where by

the ' Spirit ' is meant the Spirit of God, the author of all grace, who

dwelleth in the hearts of the faithful. And by ' being filled,' not an

absolute and exact fulness, but a plentiful enjoyment of his grace.

Things are said to be filled when they are a-tiUing ; and though

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tliey be not brimful, yet this is the prevalent principle. Christ only

had the S[)irit without measure, John iii. 34 ; others, according to

their recej)tivity, as they are able to receive: they are still a-filling,

and are made capable of larger measures of grace. If any ask, Why

is this required of us, to be filled with the Spirit? is it in our

power to command his influences, and fill ourselves as full as we

please ?

I answer — We are to use the means, to ask, seek, and knock ;

and then the rich treasures of grace will be opened to us. The

apostle speaketh to children of light ; if they do not hinder their

own filling by their sensuality or negligence, what can they want ?

If we obstruct his motions by our carnal practices, or do not improve

them by our negligence and folly, the fault is our own. Let us

faithfully use the means to obtain this benefit, and we shall not want

it. So that it lieth much upon us to be filled with the Spirit.

Doct. That all sincere christians should be careful not to be filled

with wine, but with the Spirit.

I shall consider — (1.) The avricrroi^^a, the matters put in opposi-

tion one to the other ; (2.) The inconsistency of the one with the

other ; (3.) The reasons why christians are under this obligation.

I. The matters put in opposition to each other, which are both

things and actions. The things are 'wine' and the 'Spirit;' the

actions, being ' drunk with wine,' and ' filled with the Spirit.'

First, The things ; these two are put in opposition —

1. To check the temptation. The sensual pleasure which men find

in wine enticeth them to excess. There are higher pleasures men

should be taken up with, namely, the joy of faith and a delight in holi-

ness. It seemeth hard to pleasant natures to abjure all accustomed

delights ; but the temptation will be less powerful if we can })ersuade

them that their delight is not abrogated, but preferred ; transplanted

from Egypt, that it may grow in Canaan. It is but change the object,

or turn the affection into a spiritual channel, and you shall have delight

enough : James v. 13, ' Is any among you afflicted ? let him pray. Is

any merry? let him sing psalms.' So Eph. v. 3, 4, 'But fornication,

and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among

you, as becometh saints. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor

jesting, which are not convenient ; but rather giving of thanks.' All

men seek causes of mirth and cheerfulness: you shall not lose your

cheerfulness, you need not quench your thirst at the dead water of the

next ditch, if you will take a little pains to go a little further, and seek

out the fountain of living water. Indeed it is the S|)irit nmst direct

and incline you, but this is the way of your cure. There is a double

error we are guilty of in disposing our affections; we mistake in the

object, and we offend in the measure. If the first error were well

cured, the second would be soon prevented. Seek a right object for

your oblectation and delight, and if that be esteemed according to its

worth, you would the better be weaned from other things ; as whore-

dom would cease by the choice and love of a beautiful and lawful wife.

2. To show the difference between the holy societies or meetings of

the faithful, and the dissolute feasts of the heathens in honour of their

idols. In these they came away filled with wine, bat in christiaa

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assemblies with the Spirit; and that is the reason why idolatry is

mentioned when these excesses are forbidden : 1 Peter iv. 3, ' When we

walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings,

and abominable idolatries ; ' because these excessive feasts were fre-

quent at the solemn worship of their idols. Carnal rejoicing maketh

a loud noise, and vents itself in a carnal manner ; for as idolatry is a

work of the flesh, so is drunkenness. But now in christian meetings

the rejoicing is spiritual, and vented in psalms and thanksgiving and

fervent prayers, and they were feasted with God's promises. The

devil betimes sought to bring in intemperance into the christian

meetings by the love-feasts, which some abused to riot and luxury ;

and therefore the apostle seeks to obviate this abuse.

3. Because of the analogy between wine and the Spirit ; they are

often proposed in scripture as correspondent, or as having some like-

ness in their operations ; as wine cheereth and exhilarateth the spirits:

Ps. civ. 15, ' It maketh glad the heart of man ;' so the Spirit filleth

the soul, and exhilarateth it. Only in this fulness there is no excess :

Cant. V. 1, ' Drink abundantly, beloved.' And in this mirth there

is no dissoluteness ; when we are filled with the S[nrit, it is no cor-

ruptive joy, but perfective, such as strengtheneth the heart : Neh. viii.

10, ' The joy of the Lord is your strength.' There are some common

effects between wine and the Spirit, as appeareth by the sacrament,

where we are said to ' drink into one Spirit,' 1 Cor. xii. 13, where

the outward element is wine, because the copious plentiful measure of

the Spirit doth work like effects spiritually which wine taken in large

draughts doth bodily; as it filleth the soul with joy and gladness,

Cant. i. 4, and looseneth the tongue in the praises of God : E})h. v. 19,

' Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs ;

singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.' The children

of God, when they have gotten a full draught of the Spirit, express their

joy in hymns and praises to God. Again that there is a correspondency

appeareth by the scoffing of those that were unacquainted with the

motions of the Spirit ; as the mockers said, ' These men are full of new

wine,' Acts ii. 13, and Peter's answer, ver. 15, 'These are not drunk

with wine, as you suppose.' So Hannah's praying fervently was judged

by Eli to be drunkenness, 1 Sam. i. 14. All iervent motions of the

Spirit seem to standers-by like the effects of wine ; yea, some that are

inflamed with wine think they are inspired, and mistake the fumes of

wine for the motions of the Spirit. Now for these reasons the apostle

puts them together.

Secondly, The actions, 'Being drunk with wine/ and Tilled with the

Spirit.' Both must be explained.

1. The action on the one side, ' Being drunk with wine.' Two

things must be spoken to — (1.) The nature of the sin; (2.) The

heinousness of it.

[1.] For the nature of it ; it is immoderate or inordinate drinking ; it

is excessive when more is taken than natural necessity calleth for, or

sober and christian cheerfulness doth allow. Necessity is a part of our

measure, for God denieth us nothing that is necessary for us. In some

cases lust multiplieth our necessities, but that is our disease. When

the apostle saith, \* Drink a little wine for thy manifold infirmities/

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1 Tim. V. 23, he means to cure them, not to cause them. But yet a

more liberal use of the creature is allowed beyond bare necessity, for

delight and cheerfulness ; but then grace must interpose, which judgeth

by two rules — the light of nature and scripture.

(1.) The light of nature judgeth what is fit for a man as a man. So

he consists of a body and a soul. If the body be oi)pressed, it is a

kind of self-murder. So it is said, Hosea vii. 5, ' In tlie day of our

king, the princes have made him sick with bottles of wine.' Intemper-

ance and immoderate drinking doth not only misspend time, and abuse

the good creatures of God, but filleth the body with crudities and

diseases ; which is carefully to be thought of by them that have given

up their bodies to God, and would not have sin reign in their mortal

bodies, as all christians have done : Rom. vi. 12, 13) ' Let not sin reign

in your mortal bodies, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness

unto sin ; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from

the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.'

But then for the soul, when men disturb their reason, or disable it, and

hinder it from its proper office ; certainly when there is some gross

defect in reason, a man turneth himself into a beast. And therefore

the light of nature will condemn gross and brutish sensuality : Jude

10, ' But these speak evil of those things which they know not ; but

what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt

themselves.'

(2.) The light of scripture doth direct us alsO' in eating and drink-

ing ; for a christian is to be guided and ruled by God's word even in

his common actions, not by his own appetite ; for he is to ' put a knife

to his throat,' Prov. xxiii. 2: nor the pleasure of others: Hosea vii.

5, ' The princes made him sick with bottles of wine.' Our appetite is

not our rule, for that may transport us easily to inordinances in this

kind. We have but two common parents, Adam and Noah ; one the

begetter, and the other the repairer of mankind ; and both miscarried

by appetite, the one by eating, the other by drinking. Nor the desire

of others : heathens thought it a crime to force any to drink : Esther

i. 8, ' And the drinking was according to law, none did compel ; for so

the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should

do according to every man's pleasure.' But what doth the scripture

add above this? That considereth two things — (1.) The expense of

time ; (2.) Our great end, the glory of God.

(Is^.) The expense of time, that we do not make it a business : Isa.

V. 11, ' Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they

may follow strong drink ; they continue until night, till wine inflame

them.' They made a business of it, passing an(l lavishing away the

time in swilling and drinking which was allotted to labour and more

serious and necessary employments ; they spend day and night in

revelling and drinking, as if they were out of their element till they be

at it, or cannot give over when once they set to it. Now when men

make a set business of drinking, though they be not grossly distem-

pered, yet they are drunkards before God.

{2d.) The end, which is the glory of God. This should be our end

in eating and drinking : 1 Cor. x. 31, ' Whether therefore ye eat or

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drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God,' This is to be

considered ; if we be unfitted for the service of God, though there be

no gross defect of reason follow (as some men are of a stout body and

a strong brain), yet these the scripture excepteth not from drunken-

ness : Isa. V. 22, ' Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and

men of strength to mingle strong drink/ They can take in much, and

go away with it ; which is rather the commendation of a tun, than a

man. Though the natural use of reason be not taken away, yet the

heart is unfitted for God. Our Lord would have us consider that,.

Luke xxi. 34, ' Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts

be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness ; ' when you are for-

getful of God, and unmindful of better things.

This sin may be considered either as to the act or habit.

(1st.) As to the act of drunkenness. It is possible a good man may

fall into it by surprise ; as Noah, Gen. ix. 21, ' And he drank of the

wine, and was drunken.'

(2d.) As to the habit. It is said, ' Drunkards shall not inherit the

kingdom of God,' 1 Cor. vi. 10. Nothing good and honest can be

presumed of them.

[2.] The heinousness of this sin of drinking excessively, beyond that

measure which fitteth men both in soul and body for the service of

God and the duties of their callings. That is set forth in the word

aaoiTia ; it is prodigality and wasteful profusion.

(1.) Of the blessings of God's providence, or the good things given us

to sweeten our pilgrimage and encourage our service ; they are perverted

to God's dishonour, which is foul ingratitude. How many waste their

estates hereby ! for it is said, Prov. xxiii. 21, ' The drunkard and

glutton shall come to poverty ; ' Prov. xxi. 17, ' He that loveth wine

and oil shall not be rich.' Which is said not only because of the

costly expense which is necessary to feed and supply these vices, but

because they divert the mind from more serious employments, whereby

as instruments of God's providence we may provide for ourselves and

those that belong to us.

(2.) Of our fame, because it exposeth us to ridiculous things, and so

to the contempt of others: Prov. xx. 1, 'Wine is a mocker, sti'ong

drink is raging : and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.' So

it is said, Hab. ii. 16, ' Thou art filled with shame for glory ; drink

thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered.' It forfeits a man's

credit and reputation, because it uncovereth a man's nakedness, and

so maketh him contemptible.

(3.) Of their bodies, as it destroyeth their health, and filleth them

with diseases : Prov. xxiii. 29, 30, ' Who hath woe ? who hath sorrow?

who hath contentions ? who hath babblings ? who hath wounds without

cause ? who hath redness of eyes ? They that tarry long at the wine,

they that go to seek mixed wine.' He reckoneth up six evils that

come of drunkenness : First, One in general, that is woe, meaning

thereby all kinds of hurt and damage ; he hath woe, he cannot sn{)press

it in his bosom, but must needs cry out, woe is me ! Secondly,,

\* Who hath sorrow ? ' meaning thereby trouble of conscience, or a

bitter and sad reflection upon the inconveniences of drunkenness, as

poverty, beggary, an ill fame, and a diseased body. Thirdly, ' Who

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hatli contentions ? ' that is, quarrels which arise upon a h'ght occasion,

and ni.iiiy times have a bloody issue. Fourthly, ' Who hath babblings ?'

that is. scurrilous talk, for men are ready to pour out all kind of froth

and folly in their distemper. Fifthly, 'Who hath wounds without

cause r^ ' this is the fruit of the contentions spoken of before ; he hath

stripes or wounds given him by those whom he abuseth, or by danger-

ous fiills fi-om stairs, precipices, &c. Sixthly, The last evil is 'redness

of eyes,' meaning thereby the weakening and deforming the most noble

sense we have by too great an effusion of humours, and the plenty of

fiery f'unies thence exhaling, which causeth the soreness and redness of

eyes. This is the lot of them that drink too plentifully, or frequently,

or deliciitely. Therefore afterwards it is said, ver. 32, 'At the last it

biteth like a ser])ent, and stingeth like an adder.' Whilst men are

pouring down their throats plenty of choice liquor, they dream of

nothing but pleasure, but at length they are bitten with many and

sore diseases.

(4 ) Of tlieir souls, which may be considered with respect to their

natuial, spiritual, or eternal estate. As to their natural estate, it

taketh away the wit and judgment: Hosea iv. 11, 'Whoredom, and

wine, and new wine, take away the heart.' Brisk wits have been

dulled by intemperance. As to their spiritual estate, it disposeth

to all sins, especially to uncleanness. Venter mero cestuans facile

despumat in libidinem, saith Jei'ome ; Whilst men overflow, they easily

cast over the foam and froth of lust. And Solomon telleth us,

Prov. xxiii. 33, ' Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine

heart shall utter perverse things.' Men's lusts are inflamed, and then

they grow impudent, and their wantonness lays them open to shame.

Lot, that was chaste in Sodom, yet committed incest with his own

daughters in the mountains, being first made drunk by them. And

besides, it bringeth on slavery and security upon the soul. Slavery,

for this inordinancy is im])erious and tyrannous; it is hard to reduce

men from this brutish excess, and their very distemper becometh

another nature to them : Deut. xxix. 19, ' They add drunkenness to

thirst.' It is spoken there proverbially for continuance in sin ; you

■cannot reclaim them. Solomon representeth the drunkard as resolved

to seek after the wine again when he hath felt the inconveniency of it:

Prov. xxiii. 35, ' They have stiicken me, shaft thou say, and I was not

sick ; they have beaten me, and I felt it not : when shall I awake ? I

will seek it yet again.' So for security ; it bringeth on such a stupid-

ness upon the conscience that nothing will awaken them : Prov. xxiii

34, 'Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea,

or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.' And as to their eternal

estate, the soul is lost for ever without repentance.

2. The action on the other side is, to be ' filled with the Spirit ; '

where we see that we should not content ourselves with a small measure

of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, but endeavour to be filled with

them, ever getting the habits increased : 2 Peter iii. 18, ' But grow in

grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;' and

actuated: Cant. iv. 16, 'Awake, north wind, and come thou south ;

blow upon my gai'den, that the spices thereof may flow out ; ' that is,

that we may have lively thoughts of God's love, and keep up a holy joy,

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zeal, and fervency in his service. A little grace seemeth enough to a

lazy he;irt ; if they be but a little tinctured with religion, they think

it a great matter ; few are deeply baptized into the spirit of it. Men

have quickly done in religion, and think everything enough in grace.

We love perfection and excellency in all other things, but in Christianity

we regard it not. But alas ! —

[1.] A little grace is as none as to comfort, for small things cannot

be discerned. We love God so little, that we cannot tell whether we

love him at all : John xv. 11, \* These things have I spoken unto you,

that my joy might reniiun in you, and that your joy might be full.'

There is Christ's joy, and their joy ; they are delightful objects to Christ,

and Christ to them ; he may still rejoice in them as his disciples and

people, and they may rejoice in him as their Saviour. There is no way

to get this joy but by being tilled witii the S{>irit.

[2.] A little grace is as none in a temptation : Mark iv. 40, 'Why

are you so fearful ? how is it that you have no faith ? ' compared with

Mat. viii. 26, ' Why are ye fearful, ye of little faith ? ' It could not

do its office, and support them in the storm. And therefore it is a

shame to us that we have so little love to God, or fear of his name, or

trust in his mercy, or earnest expectation and hope of eternal life.

[3 ] A little grace will not break the force of the sensual inclination,

so that our minds will haidcer after our carnal delights. The duty,

being ' filled with the Spirit,' is a cure of the distemper, being ' drunk

with wine, wherein is excess.' ' We will remember thy love more than

wine,' Cant. i. 4. So much as our hearts feel of the one, so far are they

weaned from the other. These better things put us out of relish with

those base dreggy delights. It is but a taste of the Spirit that is lost :

Heb. vi. 4-6, ' For it is impossible for tiiose that were once enlightened,

and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the

Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, and the powers

of the world to come ; if they fall away,' &c. The apostle speaketh

of ' tasting.' A large draught of experience would confirm the- soul :

Luke viii. 14, ' And that which fell among thorns are they which, when

they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and

pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.' Though men

have good sentiments of religion, yet through the cares and pleasures

of the world they could bring nothing to perfection. The carnal gust

is too strong for the spiritual, and therefore it choked it, and kept it

under. But what is it to be filled with the Spirit ? The phrase is

taken two ways — (1.) Either to be filled with the gifts of the Spirit ;

or (2 ) With the gi'aces of the Spirit.

(1.) The gifts of the Spirit : Acts ii. 4, 'And they were all filled

with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the

Spirit gave them utterance;' Acts iv. 31, 'And they were all filled

with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.'

There was something of an extraordinary gift in that. And this is not

excluded here ; for in those days they could on a sudden utter a psalm

or hymn of {)raise to God, ver. 19.

(2) To be filled with the graces of the Spirit. And here we must

consider his three offices — as he is our guide, sanctifier, and comforter.

(Is/.) As our guide, he leadeth us into all truth, that is, into the know-

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ledge and belief of the gospel. So they that understand and believe

these mysteries are said to be full of the Holy Ghost ; as, for instance^

Stephen, Acts vi. 5, is said to be ' a man full of faith, and of the Holy

Ghost ; ' And Paul: Acts ix. 17, The Lord (even Jesus that appeared

unto thee in the way as thou earnest) hath sent me, that thou mightest

receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost ; ' meaning, be

endowed with the knowledge of the gospel, as their ^cortcr/io?, their

illumination, was at their baptism. Christ had revealed himself to him

from heaven, which begat great consternation ; and Ananias cometh

as a means to enlighten him with the light of the Holy Ghost, that he

might be more fully acquainted with the mysteries of the gospel.

(2d) As our sanctifier. So they are filled with the Spirit who have

the fruits of the Spirit in great abundance, who are filled with all ' good-

ness, righteousness, and truth,' ver. 9 ; that is, that have these things

in a rich and plentiful measure. More particularly — (1.) Who have

a powerful and prevalent principle in them to keep them from sin :

Kom. viii. 13, ' If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of tlie body.'

Where there is a weak and faint resistance, there is but little of the

Spirit. (2.) Who are strongly inclined to God, and excited and assisted

by grace to do what he commandeth. Thus Barnabas ' was a good

man, and full of the Holy Ghost,' Acts xi. 24 ; that is, mightily affected

"with the glory of God and the good of souls. So proportionable com-

mon christians, when their hearts are filled with zeal and devotion:

Eom. xii. 11, ' Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord ; ' when a mighty

spirit of faith and love to God cometh upon them, that they boldly

appear for God : 2 Cor. iv. 13, ' We, having the same spirit of faith ;

according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken ; we

also believe, and therefore speak ; ' not in a bashful inconsiderate way,

but openly, hazarding all their interests.

(3d) As comforter ; and so when we are filled with peace and joy

in believing, this is by the power of the Holy Ghost : Eom. xv. 13,

'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that

ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.' The

impressions of the comforting Spirit do either concern our present

interest or our future hopes. Our present interest, when a comfortable

sense of God's love aboundeth in us, when he puts gladness in our hearts

by lifting up the light of his countenance upon us. So it is said. Acts

xiii. 52, ' The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost.'

They did so esteem the grace of the gospel, that though they suffered

persecution for it, yet their hearts were filled with joy. Our future

hopes, that also is matter of joy and delight to us ; and the more we

find of this, the more we are filled with the Holy Ghost : Acts vii. 55,

Stephen ' being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into

heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right

hand of God.' He was full of the Holy Ghost before, but then his

faith and confidence in God was enlarged, even to some kind of ecstatic

motion. As a good soldier, that hath always a habit of courage, in the

danger of battle it is quickened in him, his valour is whetted, and a

great ardency cometh upon him ; so holy men, that have always the

spirit of faith, upon necessary occasions they are elevated beyond the

line of their ordinary strength, and feel a kind of anticipation of

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heavenly joys, as if they were already in heaven's blessed place, and in

the midst of the glory of the world to come.

II. The inconsistency of the one with the other ; to be drunk with

wine is inconsistent with being filled with the Spirit.

1. They that are filled by the one are acted by a contrary principle.

The apostle Jude telleth us of ' sensual persons, not having the Spirit,\*

Jude 19. They whom the apostle speaketh of there were such as

separated themselves from the rest of the faithful, and therefore pre-

tended to a greater degree of light, and more familiarity and acquaintance

with the Spirit of God, than other christians did. But the apostle

disproveth their pretence and presumptions, because they were sensual,

or took an inordinate liberty in the ways of the flesh, more particularly

the way of fleshly lusting. Drunkenness is reckoned amongst the

fruits of the flesh, Gal. v. 21 ; and temperance, whereby our fleshly

appetite is kept within bounds, is among the fruits of the Spirit, ver. 23.

Therefore light and darkness cannot be more contrary than these two

things are ; the one implieth the most brutish of carnal pleasures, the

other the highest of spiritual delights. Two contrary principles

cannot stand togetlier in any prevalent degree ; now here is an opposite

principle in predominancy, the loose spirit of licentiousness and drunken-

ness, opposite to the holy Spirit of God.

2. This contrary principle hath such an influence on them, that the

spirit of the gospel hath no place in them.

[1.] Their sight is blinded : 2 Cor. iv, 4, ' In whom the god of this

world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light

of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine

upon them ; ' 1 Cor. ii. 14, ' But the natural man receiveth not the

things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him ; neither

•can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned ; ' 2 Peter i.

9, ' But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see far off.'

They are acute in pleasing their appetites, but the mind can rise no

higher ; they either believe not, or mind not things to come so as to

quicken them to any care about them.

[2.] The delight and relish of the soul is corrupted : Phil. iii. 19,

' Whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind

earthly things ; ' Luke xii. 19, ' And I will say to my soul. Soul, thou

hast much goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease, eat, drink,

and be merry.' No relish for higher things.

[3.] Their strength is weakened, that they cannot resist any temp-

tation. They are slaves to their brutish affections : 2 Peter ii. 19,

\* For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought ia

bondage '

Use 1. See the folly of the exchange of the joys of the Holy Ghost

for the sordid pleasures of excess. Will you cheat yourselves in this

brutish excess, and grieve the Spirit of God ? How miserable is it to

part with the birthright for brutish pleasures ! Heb. xii. 16, ' Lest

there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel

of meat sold his birthright.' Shall a slight pleasure prevail more than

the joys of heaven ? You hazard name, health, soul and all, for a

contemptible delight, which is not valuable to a leasonable man.

2. Because it is an imperious lust, you must offer violence to it, and

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bridle your appetite, as David poured out the waters of Bethlehem

before the Lord.

3. Never hope to join these irreconcilable things, fulness of wine and

fulness of the Spirit; as many put on a pretence of the Si)irit the belter

to cover and hide their licentiousness ; though they live not in open

scandalous sensuality, yet they serve the flesh in a more cleanly manner :

these are never brought under the power of the gospel, nor made par-

takers of the Spirit thereof.

SERMON XXIII.

But he filled with the Spirit. — Eph. v. 18.

DocT. That all sincere christians should be careful to be filled, not

with wine, but with the Spirit.

Here let me open — (1.) What this Spirit is that we must be filled

with ; (2.) Show the reasons why we are bound to be filled with the

Spirit ; (3.) The means how we come to be filled with the Spirit.

I. What this Spirit is, or what is meant by it ? I answer — Either

the person of the Holy Ghost, or some created gift, called ' the divine

nature,' or ' the new creature ; ' the word signifieth both. Sometimes

it is taken for the person of the Holy Ghost himself, with whom we

are in covenant, as well as with the Father and the Son : Mat. xxviii.

19, ' Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and

of the Holy Ghost.' As we take God for our God, that is, for our

proper Lord and chief good, and Christ for our Eedeemer and Saviour,

so the Holy Ghost for our guide, sanctifier, and comforter. Sometimes

it is taken for the gifts and graces of the Spirit, that divine nature

which is begotten in us : John iii. 6, \* That which is born of the Spirit

is spirit.' The first word ' Spirit' noteth the author of grace, the second

the effect, the renewed heart. We have both the fruit and the tree, the

fountain and the stream ; the one cannot be without the other, not the

graces without the Spirit, for they are his production ; and the Spirit

himself cannot be said to dwell in any but where he produceth these

graces ; for his presence anywhere is to be determined by some eminent

efiect, and this residence and dwelling by a constant effect, ^e?' modum

Tiahitus permanentis, non per modum actionis transeuntis. Therefore

he cannot be said to dwell in any heart but where he produceth these

graces. The Spirit doth first renew and sanctify the souls of the elect,

and then abide there to keep afoot God's interest in them, and main-

tain it against all opposition within and without, more and more over-

coming their sweetest and dearest sins, and quickening them to all

their duties, assisting them in the exercise of grace, and increasing it

by all fit and holy means. Well, then —

1. We have the Holy Ghost himself, called the Spirit of God r

1 Cor. vi. 11, 'In the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit o£

our God ; ' and the Spirit of Christ : Gal. iv. 6, ' God hath sent the

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Spirit of his Son into our hearts ; ' Eora. viii. 9, ' Now if any man

have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' We cannot live inde-

pendently without influence from God, for all life is originally in him,

and from him conveyed to us, and that by his Spirit. All that God

doth in creation is done by the Spirit : Job xxvi. 13, ' By his Spirit

he hath garnished the heavens : ' Ps. civ. 30, ' Thou sendest forth thy

Spirit ; they are created.' So in a way of grace, which is called a

\* new creation,' we have all from his Spirit : 2 Cor. v. 17, 18, ' If any

man be in Christ, he is a new creature ; old things are passed away,

behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who

hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ ; ' Titus iii. 5, 6, ' But

according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration,

and the renewing of the Holy Ghost ; which he hath shed on us

abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.' Now this creature,

once produced, cannot subsist without the continual presence of the-

Spirit, there being so much opposition within and without.

[1.] Within there is an enmity to the divine and heavenly life:

Gal. V. 17, ' For tlie flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit

against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that

ye cannot do the things that ye would.' So blind are our minds, so

depraved are our hearts, so strong are our lusts, which evils remain in

such a measure in the regenerate, that there is but a cold resistance of

sin, a faint and dull desire, and a sluggish pursuit after spiritual and

heavenly things, that unless the Lord by his Spirit do still open the

eyes of our minds, and strengthen the inclination of our hearts, and

reconcile our alienated and estranged affections to himself, our faith

will be dead, our love to him will soon grow cold, and our obedience-

fail. In short, there is still within us such addictedness to sin, such a

love to the present world, such indulgence to the flesh, that no less

agent can keep alive the work of God in our hearts.

[2.] Without there is the world, which presents tempting objects :

2 Tim. iv. 10, ' For Deraas hath forsaken me, having loved this present

world.' Or assaults us with violence for our love to God, and loyalty

to Christ : 2 Tim. iii. 12, ' Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ

Jesus, shall suffer persecution.' And the devil earnestly joineth his

suggestions with both sort of temptations : 1 Peter v. 8, 9, ' Be sober,

be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh

about seeking whom he may devour ; whom resist steadfast in the faith,

knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren

that are in the world.' By this the flesh is strangely stirred, and we

should soon be overcome, were we not assisted by the powerful and

all-conquering Spirit of Christ: 1 John iv. 4, 'Ye are of God, little

children, and' have overcome them ; because greater is he that is in

you than he that is in the world.'

2. The word ' spirit ' signifieth also the new new nature, or that

gracious frame of heart which is produced in us by the Holy Ghost.

This may be considered as working towards God or towards men.

[1.] As the new nature standeth affected to God, so the spirit of the

gospel is described by the apostle : 2 Tim. i. 7, ' God hath not given

us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and a sound mind.' Nega-

tively, ' not a spirit of fear ; ' it is a spirit above the hopes and fears of

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the world : 1 Cor. ii. 12, \* Now we have received, not the spirit of the

world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things

that are freely given to us of God.' One part is put for both. They

that look for no great matters in the world have not much either to

fear or hope for, and are not greatly moved with anything that doth

befall them in the present life. But then positively it is called ' a spirit

of love, power, and a sound mind ; ' where (1.) by ' a spirit of a sound

mind ' is meant a true knowledge of God in Christ, and a firm belief

of the life to come, or a being sound in the faith : 2 Tim. i. 13, 'Hold

fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and

love which is in Christ Jesus.' Two things the gospel discovereth —

God in Christ, and the life to come. God in Christ : John xvii. 3,

' And this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus

Christ whom thou hast sent ; ' 2 Cor. iv. 6, ' For God who commanded

the light to shine out of darkness, hath sinned in our hearts, to give

the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus

Christ.' The other great discovery of the gospel is the life to come :

2 Tim. i. 10, ' And hath brought life and immortality to light through

the gospel.' Now the Spirit revealeth both ; both the truth of our

redemption by Christ : 1 Cor. xii. 3, ' No man can say that Jesus is

the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost ; ' that is, own Christ for the true

Messiah ; and then a clear and firm persuasion of the world to come is

wrought in us by the Spirit also : Eph. i. 17, 18, ' That the God of

our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the

spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him : the eyes of

your understanding being enlightened, that 3'e may know what is the

hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance

in the saints.' Now this giveth us a sound mind. (2.) A ' spirit of

love ' is a pure and fervent love to God, which doth incline us to seek

after him, and delight in him as our portion and happiness. The

seeking after God is made the great duty of man ; we lost him by the

fall, and they that love him cannot live without him : Prov. viii. 17,

' I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me,'

An early and earnest seeking after God is made there an act of love ;

and so delighting in God is our great duty also ; as Ps. xxxvii. 4,

\* Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desire of

thy heart; ' Phil. iv. 4, ' Rejoice in the Lord alwa)% and again I say,

Kejoice.' Now this is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, for love is of

God : 1 John iv. 7, ' Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of

God ; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.'

Love is of God, not only as the original pattern, but the original cause :

2 Thes. iii. 5, ' The Lord direct 5^our hearts into the love of God,' The

Spirit keepeth our hearts fixed towards God, and in a readiness and

willingness to do what is pleasing to him. (3.) A ' spirit of power,'

and that is hope, and doth enable us to carry on our duty, whatever

temptations we have to the contrary. Surely it is a mighty power which

doth enable us to deny present delights, and overcome the terrors of

sense, that we may be more at liberty for God and heavenly things ;

for this hope produces two effects —

(1.) Fortitude and resolution to encounter any difficulties we meet

with in our passage to heaven : 2 Cor. iv. 1 G-18, ' For this cause we

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faint not ; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is

renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a

moment, worketli for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of

glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the

things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal,

but the things which are not seen are eternal.'

(2.) Sobriety and contempt of the world, which is a great part of

our strength also : Phil, iv. 13, ' I can do all things through Christ

which strengtheneth me.' And is joined with hope : 1 Peter i. 13,

\* Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind ; be sober, and hope to the

end, for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of

Jesus Christ.' This enableth us to overcome those appetites and

desires by which the rest of the world are mastered and captivated,

and our resolutions for God and heaven are thereby fortified and

strengthened in us. Well, then, this is the spirit we should be filled

withal, faith in Christ, love to God, and the hope of the world to come ;

which three effects do answer the nature of God, whom we apprehend

under the notions of wisdom, goodness, and power. To his wisdom

there answereth the spirit of a sound mind, to his goodness the spirit

of love, and the spirit of power to the power of God ; so that by these

graces we are made partakers of the divine nature, and these suit with

the word of God, the means by which God worketh these graces of the

Spirit in us; which is sometimes represented by light, because the

highest wisdom is there revealed, and the way of salvation sufficiently

taught : 2 Tim. iii. 15, ' Thou hast known the holy scriptures, that

are able to make thee wise to salvation ; ' and sometimes called the

\* power of God,' Rom. i. 16 ; and also the ' good word of God,' Heb.

vi. 5 ; and the good knowledge of God. And so that man is sufficiently

furnished for the kingdom ol heaven, and all the duties thereof, whose

mind is enlightened to know God in Christ Jesus, and heart inclined

to love God, and live to him ; and who hath chosen the blessedness of

the next world for his portion, and in the meantime 'liveth in the

joyful hopes and foresight of it. This man hath the true spirit of the

gospel.

[2.] This spirit fits and frames us for our duty to man. That we

have, Eph. v. 9, ' For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and

righteousness, and truth ; ' that is, the Spirit that God hath sent

among us by the preaching of the gospel doth bring forth and produce

in us all kindness, justice, and fidelity. There is not a more benign

and gentle thing than the gospel spirit, nor anything that doth more

fit us to live peaceably and usefully in human society. The first

property is ' goodness ; ' and it suiteth with the author, for it is said,

Ps. cxliii. 10, ' Thy Spirit is good.' The Spirit of God is a spirit of

love, delighting to do good to all ; and all his motions tend to make

men good and useful to others ; therefore it is said, Gal. v. 22, ' But

the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness,

goodness, faith ; ' all these respect our duty to man, The second is

' righteousness,' or justice in all our dealings, giving every one his

due, whether inferiors, superiors, or equals. A mighty spirit of

righteousness it breedeth in the world, and maketh it reign in the

hearts of those whom he possesseth ; and therefore the kingdom of the

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Messiah is so famous for righteousness : Ps. xlv. 7, ' Thou lovest

righteousness, and hatest wickedness ; therefore God, even thy God,

hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.' The

third is, ' truth,' or fidelity ; for this Spirit is the spirit of truth, and

the holiness which he worketh is true holiness, and nothing so contrary

to it as hypocrisy, lying, and dissimulation : Eph. iv. 24, 25, ' And that

ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness

and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man

truth with his neighbour.' Nothing more opposite to the gospel spirit

than guile and treacherous craftiness, wiles, and deceit.

II. The reasons why christians are so strictly bound to be filled with

the Spirit.

1. That we may answer the great and rich preparations of grace-

which the infinite love of God hath made for us by the merit of Christ

and the promises of the gospel. The merit of Christ, that is at the

bottom of it. It is said, Titus iii. 5, 6, 'And the renewing of the

Holy Ghost, which he hath shed on us abundantly through Jesus

Christ our Saviour.' If we neglect the benefits in part or in whole, we

slight the price. His intent was that we might have abundance of his

Spirit. It is compared to rain ; we have not only a few heat-drops of

grace, but a plentiful shower, that as barren land we might be made

more fruitful to God : Isa. xliv. 3, ' I will pour water upon him that

is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground ; I will pour my Spirit upon

thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring.' A metaphor to set

forth the abundance and increase of the comforts and graces of the

Holy Spirit. It is compared to a living fountain : John iv. 10, 'If

thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me

to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given

thee living water ; ' and ver. 14, ' The water that I shall give him

shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.'

Not a draught, or a plash, or a dead pond, but a living spring. Now

when Christ hath provided so much, for us to be contented with a

little is to disvalue his bounty. It is compared to a rich perfume or

oil : 1 John ii. 20, ' But j^e have an unction from the Holy One.' There

was not only a little to be put upon the head of Aaron, but it was to

run down to all his garments. Every christian should richly partake

of this precious ointment, that was poured out on our head, and so

Cometh from the Holy One to us. It is compared to a banquet or

feast of wine: Cant. v. 1, 'Eat, friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly,

beloved.' He alloweth us not only to be barely refreshed, but satis-

fied to the full. Now for us to be scanty when there is such a large

allowance vouchsafed to us, showeth we have some dislike, or not an

appetite prepared.

2. Because of their necessity.

[1.] If it be those that only profess Christianity, but are not yet

really converted to God, they are in danger to be filled with a worae

spirit, if not filled with the Spirit of God. Heathens, that are without

the pale of grace, are under the power of the devil : Eph. ii. 2, ' Where-

in in times past ye walked, according to the course of this world,

according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now

worketh in the children of disobedience.' And where the gospel is

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preached, it is the same with the carnal : Acts v. 3, ' Why hath Satan

filled thine heart, to lie to the Holy Ghost ? ' 1 Sam. xvi. 14, ' And

the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the

Lord troubled him/ The heart of man is never empty of one guest or

another ; the evil spirit harboureth there where the good spirit is not

entertained. Now this is fit to be represented to the regenerate also,

because the devil seeheth to re-enter : Eph. iv. 27, ' Neither give jilace

to the devil ; ' compared with the 30th, ' And grieve not the Holy

Spirit of God.' Satan is dethroned and shut out of the hearts of all

true believers, yet he seeketh to recover his old possession and exercise

his former tyranny, and doth always wait to surprise us when we give

him any advantage ; by grieving the Spirit, or continuing in any

known sin, he settleth there. Therefore it concerneth us to be always

filled with the Spirit, that Satan may not have room in our hearts, or

the least opportunity to enter again, as he will if we indulge our pride,

envy, revenge, wrath, sensuality, or any other noisome lust.

[2.] For those that are regenerated, and have received the spirit of

the gospel and not of the world, there needeth a further supply of the

Spirit of Jesus Christ : Phil. i. 19, ' For I know that this shall turn to

my salvation, through your prayers, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus

Christ.' Whereby is meant a further addition of grace wrought in us

by the Spirit. The Holy Ghost doth not only plant these graces in us

at first, but doth continually increase them, and assist us in the exer-

cise of them.

(1.) He doth increase them. Faith is his gift, and he doth enkindle

in us an holy love to God, and raise the heart to the hope of eternal

life. This is the inward man, but this inward man must be strength-

ened : Eph. iii. 16, 'That he would grant you according to the riches

of his glory, to be strengthened with might, by his Spirit, in the inner

man.' These impressions are weak in us at first, but by the word and

prayer and other holy means they are increased. Faith : Luke xvii.

5, 'Lord, increase our faith.' Love: Phil. i. 9, 'And this I pray,

that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in

all judgment.' Hope : Kom. xv. 13, ' Now the God of hope fill you

with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope

through the power of the Holy Ghost.' That faith may be more

strong, love more fervent, hope more lively. Therefore still we need

more of the Spirit.

(2.) He doth assist us in the exercise of these graces : Heb. xiii.

21, ' Make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in

you that which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ.'

The regenerating Spirit doth abide in us, and doth renew us more

and more, and concurreth to every action. As preservation and pro-

vidence is to creation, so this work of perfecting is to the first regener-

ation. As we are first created in Christ to good works, so we are per-

fected in Christ. Yea, Cod doth not only give us power, but doth con-

tinually co-operate, and work in us and with us, without which co-oper-

ation we can do nothing that pleaseth him. He concurreth to every

action, and we do not only \* live in the Spirit,' but ' walk in the Spirit,\*

Gal. V. 25. We are continually quickened by his influence, and enabled

to mortify sin or produce the fruits of holiness. Now, then, we should

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always be filled with the Spirit, get more of his presence into our hearts,

that we may he more enabled for the duties of our heavenly calling.

3. That the glory and excellency of our religion may appear. Those

most honour God and Christ who have a more plentiful measure of

his Spirit dwelling and working in them, for they make it evident unto

the world that they have a power and a presence which the world hath

not: 1 Peter iv. 14, 'If ye be reproached for the name of Christ,

happy are ye, for the Spirit of gloiy and of God resteth upon you ; on

their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified ; ' and

2 Thes. i. 11, 12, \* Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our

God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good

pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power : that the

name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in

him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.'

If a christian live up to his principles, he will show that his religion

breedeth the most noble and excellent spirits in the world, a divine

spirit. Pie is above all dangers, because his great interests are secured

elsewhere ; the heart is enlarged to all that is excellent, and he can do

and suffer that which others dare not.

[1.] Take this spirit as it worketh towards God. Negatively, it is

not a dastardly spirit or a spirit of fear ; the great cause of fear and

bondage is taken away, which is sin, for he is reconciled to God. The

next cause of fear is removed, which is the wrath of men ; he believeth

God's particular providence, and that they cannot stir hand or foot

without God : Acts iv. 28, ' For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy

counsel determined before to be done.' The third cause of trouble is

the hazarding of his worldly comforts ; God is able to give him a

hundred-fold notwithstanding persecution : Mark x. 29, 30, ' And

Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that

hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or

children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive a

hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and

mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions ; and in the world

to come eternal life.' He hath a serious foresight of the world to come :

Luke xii. 32, ' Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father's good plea-

sure to give you the kingdom.' It is enough God hath delivered him

from sin and hell. Now how quietly and securely may such a one

possess his soul in the midst of all the troubles of the world ! Well,

then, to be out of the reach of fear is a great privilege ; and this spirit

is given by Christ to his people for the advancement of his interest in

the world. But positively —

(1.) It is a spirit of power. Surely that is a glorious and powerful

spirit that can vanquish the most rooted inclination of nature, and can

strive against our sensualit}^ not by a fruitless resistance, but so as to

conquer it, and make you go through all conditions with an equal

mind ; to bear afflictions with that quietness, modesty, and contented-

ress as is strange to the world, and prosperity with that humbleness

and lowliness of mind as if you were destitute of all things : James i.

9, 10, ' Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted ; but

the rich in that he is made low.' The one, when he hath nothing in

the creature, hath all in God ; the other, when he hath all things, is

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as if he had nothing ; he possesseih as if he possessed not. Thus doth

Christianity level mountains and exalt valleys, and teach us to bless

God for giving and taking, to fear God for his goodness : Hosea iii. 5,

' They shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days ; ' and

love him for his judgments : Isa. xxvi. 8, ' Yea, in the way of thy judg-

ments, Lord, have we waited for thee ; the desire of our soul is to

thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.'

(2.) It is a noble spirit, as it is a spirit of love, sincerely and with-

out self-respect to aim at the glory of God, and do his will. So ' the

righteous is more excellent than his neighbour/ Prov. xii. 26.

(3.) It is a spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind. None go so

wisely to work as believers, for they take the surest course to avoid the

greatest misery and obtain the greatest happiness : Prov. xv. 24, ' The

way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.'

While others busy themselves about impertinent vanities or temporary

trifles, they busy themselves about the greatest things, the knowledge

of God in Christ, and the obtaining of eternal life. It is no low-spirited

thing to be godly ; they that judge so are blind, and are seduced by

the delusions of the flesh.

[2.] Take this spirit as it worketh towards men : ver. 9, ' The fruit

of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.'

(1.) All goodness: 1 Thes. iv. 9, 'Ye are taught of God to love

one another.' God's teaching is by impression ; it is a spirit that

inclineth us to do good to others. Naturally men's hearts are narrow,

minding their own interests ; but a christian is one that taketh it to

be his work to do good, and to ' do good to all men, especially to the

household of faith,' Gal. vi. 10. This they do with such a facility

and easiness, that it is become as another nature to them.

(2.) For righteousness ; the world applaudeth that, it being so neces-

sary for human society. Though the spirit of the gospel be a spirit

of courage and fortitude, yet it is not a boisterous zeal without know-

ledge, nor a bloody zeal without love ; it can suffer wrong, but do none.

(3.) So for truth ; they that live always in the eye of God dare not

dissemble with men ; their consciences can have no quiet without sim-

plicity of commerce.

Object But where are such christians to be found ?

Ans. (1.) Blessed be God there are such, and many such, though

the world will not own it : 1 Peter iv. 6, ' For for this cause was the

gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged

according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit/

(2.) If any be degenerated, it is because they are not filled with the

Spirit. It is a lamentable thing that badness, and folly, and feebleness

of mind should be so common among those that profess and call

themselves christians. (1.) Instead of a spirit of power, how unwilling

are they to strive against sin ! how unable to resist temptations ! The

devil doth to them what he listeth : 'They are taken captive by him

at his will and pleasure,' 2 Tim. ii. 26. (2.) As to the spirit of love,

some are so corrupted with self-love and the love of the world, that

they scarce know what it is; they are cold, dull, and sleepy in all

divine matters, because they have so cold a sense of the love of God in

Christ. (3.) For the spirit of a sound mind, how injudicious are most

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christians ! The unction should preserve them, 1 John ii. 20 ; but

they are pliable to every fancy. Surely these have received little of the

impress of this true and good religion,

III, The means how we come to be filled with the Spirit, Certainly —

1. It is from God, who is the author of all grace : 2 Cor. v. 18, ' And

all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus

Christ.' He meaneth all things which belong to the new creature.

None could give us these things but God himself, as appeareth by

their nature and use ; the subduing our corruptions, the sanctifying

our natures, and the conforming us to his holy image ; otherwise we

should be equally, and as much or more indebted to another agent for

our reparation as we are to God for our creation, which is not con-

venient and agreeable to God's honour. Besides, what needed there

so much ado to bring it about ? Why should Christ come out of God's

bosom if we could renew ourselves ?

2. That God doth it through Christ the scripture also witnesseth :

Titus iii. 6, ' Which he hath shed on us abundantly through Jesus

Christ our Saviour.' Whatever the Spirit doth, it is in his name.

3. That this frame of heart is wrought in us by the Spirit or Holy

Ghost that came down from heaven, is evident also in scripture. None

but this Spirit can give us such holy inclinations to obey God with

love and delight. None but this all-conquering Spirit can renew the

souls of men, so depraved and enslaved by sensuality.

4. It is given us by the gospel, for that is called \* the law of the

Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,' Eom. viii, 2. That is Christ's law, and

is stamped upon the heart by the Spirit of God : 2 Cor. iii. 3, ' Foras-

much as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, mini-

stered 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.'

5. The gospel worketh two ways — (1.) Morally ; (2.) Powerfully,

[1.] Morally, and in a way of wisdom, as it containeth such precepts

and promises, together with the doctrine and example of Jesus Christ,

as may quicken us to a holy heavenly life, so that it is a fit means to breed

this spirit in us. Everything communicateth its own nature to us ;

a holy doctrine is most fit to sanctify the heart, and a heavenly doc-

trine to breed a heavenly mind, a spiritual doctrine and institution to

convey more of the Spirit to us : John xvii, 17, ' Sanctify them through

thy truth ; thy word is truth ; ' 2 Peter i, 4, 'Whereby are given unto us

exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be par-

takers of the divine nature.'

[2.] Powerfully and effectually, as it is accompanied with the in-

ward operations of the Holy Ghost : 2 Cor. iii. 18, ' But we all with

open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed

into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the

Lord.' The gospel doth wonderfully excite the dead and drowsy heart

to spiritual and heavenly things, as it worketh ministerially ; but the

success is of the Spirit, and therein the gospel is made to differ from

the law, as it is \* the ministration of the Spirit,' 1 Cor. iii. 8.

6. If any have this power and Spirit of the Lord Jesus, it is the

mere favour of God ; if any want it, it is long of themselves. If they

have it, it is God's favour : James i. 18, ' Of his own will begat he us

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with the word of truth.' If they want it, it is long of themselves,

because of their neglect of the means, and abuse of common grace.

Though we cannot bind God to give it us : ' It is not of him that

willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,'

Bom. ix. 16, yet we are to use the means, or else we shut the door

upon ourselves, and show that we have no esteem of this blessed gift

if we do not seek after it. The husbandman, when he plougheth and

oleareth his ground from thorns and stones, doth no way oblige God to

send his rain and sunshine upon it ; we do not oblige God to give us

his Spirit to renew us, yet it is our duty to use the means. But will

God then give me his Spirit ? The question concerning man's duty

is easily answered ; but if the question be of God's acceptance, it is

needless to be answered ; for this reason, — the use of means is under a

command, and I must do my duty whatever cometh of it. God chal-

lengeth his people for neglect : Hosea v. 4, ' They will not frame their

doings to turn unto their God ; ' when they will not so much as think

of endeavouring or using the means, or doing all they can ; they will

have God to sanctify them, but they will not stir a foot to help them-

selves.

7. One of the means is prayer. Christ hath taught us to pray for

the Spirit, Luke xi. 1-13. None so fatherly as God ; no gift so neces-

sary as the Spirit. When you pray for the Spirit, you pray as children

that ask bread. A wanton child, that would tread his bread under his

feet, may be denied ; but a hungry child will not be mocked. We

may crave health, and wealth, and outward prosperity, and receive

that answer. Ye know not what ye ask ; but when you beg the sancti-

fying Spirit, you beg what is good and necessary for you ; you ask a

thing pleasing to the Lord, as Solomon when he prayed for wisdom,

1 Kings iii. 9, 10. One thing more I will add : You say. If I could

go to God as a father, I might hope to prevail. I answer — Consider

the covenant you are visibly under, and use importunity : Luke xi. 8,

' If he will not rise and give him because he is his friend ; yet, Slu ttjv

uvacSetav, because of his importunity he will rise, and give him as

many as he needeth ; ' if not interest, yet importunity may prevail.

8. Sometimes God maketh the offer to you when he knocketh at the

door of the heart or stirreth the waters. You doubt whether God will

give it when you ask it, but will you take it when God offereth it ?

Prov. i. 23, ' Turn you at my reproof ; behold I will pour out my

Spirit upon you.' Man is departed from God, but he will not lose us

so, and therefore he doth reprove us for our folly ; outwardly by the

rebukes of his providence, inwardly by the conviction of his Spirit.

Now if we refuse or neglect these, ^ye provoke God to forsake us, and

give us up to hardness of heart. Surely these smitings should bo

improved to further our return to God.

9. When you consent to God's covenant, and enter into his peace

you have a certain promise. We consent by faith and repentance. As

for faith: John vii. 39, ' This he spoke of the Spirit, which they that

believe in him shall receive.' And for repentance: Acts ii. 38,

' Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus

Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the

Holy Ghost.' A resolved submission to the way of the gospel quali-

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fieth yon. But you will say, How can we believe and repent first,

and receive the Spirit afterwards? Ans. — By the converting grace of

the Spirit, given as a free lord, we repent and believe ; then the Spirit

is given to us in a more eminent manner by God as a governor. There

is a difference between the spirit of regeneration and the spirit of

adoption and perseverance. The spirit of regeneration is tied to no

condition, but is dispensed according to the good pleasure of God ; it

is his resolved gift to the elect : Ezek. xxxvi, 26, 27, ' A new heart

also will I give you, and a new spirit I will put within you ; and I

will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a

heart of flesh : and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you

to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.'

10. After you are sincerely turned to the Lord, you must obey the

Spirit in further subduing the lusts of the flesh, and not take part with

the flesh against him : Gal. v. IG, ' Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall

not fulfil the lusts of the flesh ; ' but more and more cherish his

motions : 1 Peter i. 22, ' Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying

the truth through the Spirit.' Especially forbear heinous sins, which

grieve the Holy Spirit, and if indulged, quench it ; and so you cut off

all means to increase in holiness.

SEKMON XXIV.

Spedldng to yourselves in -psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs,

singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. — Eph. v. 19.

This is rendered as a reason why they should be filled with the Spirit,

as drunkards are with wine, because it breedeth a spiritual joy, which

discovereth itself by two effects — singing psalms and giving thanks.

In tlie one we praise God, in the other we bless God : Heb. xiii. 15,

' Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually ; that is the

fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.' Praise relateth to his

excellency, giving thanks to his benefits.

I begin with ' singing psalms.' As the drunkards had their drunken,

wanton, obscene, and filthy songs, by which they tainted each others'

minds, so they that were filled with the Spirit had their spiritual songs,

by which they edified one another and glorified God : ' Speaking to

one another,' &c. In the words there is —

1. A duty prescribed, and that is, ' singing of psalms.'

2. It is amplified, and set forth in its parts or necessary branches,

outward and inward.

[1.] The outward part ; there we have — (1.) The subject matter,

'psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs.' (2.) The actions con-

versant about it — (1st.) Speaking ; (2d.) Singing.

[2.] The inward part, ' Making melody in your hearts to the Lord.'

Doct. That singing of psalms is an ordinance of God's worship under

the gospel.

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I, Before I come to prove it, let me observe something out of the

words, to fix and state the duty.

First, Observe that singing of psalms is made to be a fruit of being

filled with the Spirit. This I gather from the context, 'Be filled with

the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual

songs;' and in the parallel place. Col. iii. 16, ' Let the word of Christ

dwell in you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one

another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace

in your hearts to the Lord.'

You will say, What need was there to exhort the Ephesians to be

filled with the Spirit, or to have the word of God dwell richly in them

for such a service ? Any small measure of the Spirit is sufficient,

since the matter is provided to our hands, and we have nothing to do-

but to read it and repeat it. I answer —

(1.) It may refer to the extraordinary gift, when any blessed God

in a psalm, to which they were moved by the special operation of the

Holy Ghost, inspiring them with matter and words. As Luke i. 41,

42, ' And it came to pass, that when Eh'zabeth heard the sahitation of

Mary, the babe leaped in her womb ; and Elizabeth was filled with the

Holy Ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice, and said. Blessed

art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb ; ' that is,

she was transported and inspired with a prophetic spirit, and therefore

brake out into that benediction. And ver. 67, 68, 'And his fixther

Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed

be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people,'

&c. By the special motion of the Spirit of God coming upon him he sung

this hymn. So it is said, Acts x. 44-46, ' While Peter yet spake these

words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And

they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as

came with Peter, because that on the gentiles also was poured out the

gift of the Holy Ghost ; for they heard them speak with tongues, and

magnify God.'

(2.) Though the faithful be not moved by the Spirit to indite new

songs, yet we need the help of the Spirit to sing to the praise of the

Lord, and our own edification and consolation. A rich and full portion

of the Spirit is needful to perform these duties after a right manner.

Look, as there was heretofore a singing by the Spirit, so a praying by

the Spirit: 1 Cor. xiv. 15, ' I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray

with the understanding also : I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing

with the understanding also.' They did use an extraordinary gift in

prayer as well as in singing of psalms. W^hat shall we then conclude ?

that there should be no praying unless by such an extraordinary

impulse or gift ? or else that his help is not now necessary for pi-ayer ?

No such thing. It requireth a rich and full portion of the Spirit, and

knowledge of the word, to pray in a right manner ; so also to sing

psalms. So that as we are still to pray in the spirit, we are still

required to sing in the spirit, that our spiritual fervency be not abated,

nor our delight in God quenched, and that our hearts be not stolen away

in the duty. Surely they are strangers to the life and powei- of this

ordinance that see not a need of his help, or that the word of God

should dwell in them richly. To show you this I will examine— (1.)^

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What need of being filled with the Spirit ; (2.) That the word of God

slioukl dwell in us richly ; and —

1. What need of the help of the Spirit? It signifieth the Holy

Ghost or his graces.

[1.] The Holy Ghost. We need the help of the Spirit—

(1.) To purify and cleanse our hearts from vain thoughts and carnal

affections. This is a work of the Spirit : 1 Peter i. 22, ' Seeing you

have purified your souls, in obeying the truth, through the Spirit.'

And this is needful for this duty ; for till our souls be purified and

clarified from the dregs of sense, the sweetest things will become

loathsome to us : Kom. viii. 5, ' For they that are after the flesh, do

mind the things of the flesh ; but they that are after the Spirit the

things of the Spirit.'

(2.) To be excited and quickened by the Spirit, which is another of

liis operations, for it is the Spirit that quickeneth and giveth life. We

are of ourselves dull and backward even in inspired songs ; as Deborah

seeth a need of exciting herself : Judges v. 12, \* Awake, awake,

Deborah ; awake, awake, utter a song.' That fourfold ingemination

showeth there is a deep drowsiness of spirit naturally in us, and there-

fore she stirreth up herself and others to praise and thanksgiving.

(3.) To direct the intention to a spiritual end, that we may not

rest iu the works wrought, nor in the carnal delight of the action.

That also is God's work : 2 Thes. iii. 5, ' The Lord direct your hearts

into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.' This

showeth our need of his grace, so that there is great need of the Spirit

to sing psalms with such a frame of heart as such a heavenly piece of

worship requireth.

[2.] The graces of the Spirit, faith, hope, and love.

(1.) Faith, without which this duty will be but a cold dead service,

performed without any delight or spiritual refreshment. Believers'

hearts are soon filled with pleasure ; every excellency and every act of

God findeth them a delightful work whether in creation or providence;

as a son taketli delight in a book wherein his father's royal acts or gests

are recorded. Especially in his redemption by Christ : 1 Peter i. 8,

'Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him

not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.'

They know whatsoever is sung or said of God is true, and it is of

their God ; and therefore upon all these occasions they vent their joy

in God.

(2.) Love : Ps, v. 11, ' But let all those that put their trust in thee

rejoice ; let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them ; let

them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.' Eveiy mention of

God is pleasing to tlie soul that lovetli him. There is somewhat

said or sung concerning their best friend, and therefore it doth afi'ect

their hearts.

(3.) Hope also contributeth to this joy that is vented in singing :

Rom. XV. 13, ' Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in

believing, that 3'e may abound in hope through the power of the Holy

Ghost.' Spiritual delights prepare the soul for heaven. They have

so much of God and glory in them that they must needs be excel-

ilent helps for our salvation. Carnal pleasures are unwholesome, like

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luscious fruits that make us sick ; but these delights of faith, hope, and

love are safe and healthful.

2. Let the word of God dwell richly in j'ou. This is the Spirit's

instrument, which he maketh use of to produce all his great effects in

the souls of men ; his great business is to stamp it on the heart : Rom.

vi. 17, \* But Grod be thanked that ye were the servants of sin ; but ye

have obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine which was delivered

you ; ' and thereby to beget the divine and heavenly nature in us :

2 Peter i. 4, \* Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious

promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.'

And so suiteth us to all the duties that tend to the support or com-

fort of the new creature. Now the more richly it dwelleth in us, the

more we profit by every act of worship, be it prayer, or singing, or

hearing. A right disposed mind will not want holy thoughts ; a little

thing sets it a-work, because there is something akin in their hearts to

all that is represented from without. There is a double advantage

when the word dwelleth richly in us — (1.) We understand better

what is said or sung : Ps. xlvii. 7, ' Sing ye praises with understand-

ing.' We cannot praise God or Christ sincerely unless we understand

the reasons why we should praise him, or wherein his praise consists.

(2.) We praise God more affectionately, for unknown things neither

stir our desires nor delight ; but the more we are versed in the scrip-

tures, the more our minds and hearts are apt to be wrought upon, for

there occur to us such pregnant and pressing thoughts that the duty

cannot pass unprofitably.

Secondly, Observe, that which is to be sung is ' psalms, and hymns,

and spiritual songs.' This is put in opposition to those carnal and

wanton songs wherewith vain persons feed the oblectation of their

minds. There are certain songs which God threateneth to turn into

lamentation : Amos viii. 10, ' I will turn your feasts into mourning,

and all your songs into lamentation.' And there are holy songs which,

are not corruptive, but perfective, and must needs end well.

Some raise a scruple, whether we may or must only sing scripture

psalms, as the psalms of David and otiier prophets.

I answer — We do not forbid other songs, if grave and godly, to be

received into the chvn-ch. Tertullian showeth that in the primitive

times they used this liberty, either scripture psalms, or such as were of

a pi'ivate composure. Post aquam manualem et lumina, ut quisque de

scripturis vel proprio ingenio potest, provocatur in medium Deo canere.

Por scripture psalms, that they only should be used, it may be argued

that it is more safe to give that honour to the word of God and the

psalms there recorded, for the whole christian world consents to the

bible, and that the faithful should be accustomed to the songs therein

contained, lest some secret error creep into other composures, which

the present age is not aware of, and afterwards is hardly gotten out of

the minds of the people, who are accustomed to repeat these things in

their worship. And yet, on the other side, it would seem to make

more for profit if the shadows of the law were more interpreted in some

holy hymns, that do more expressly concern Jesus Christ our mediator.

You see, upon special occasions in the old testament, they had some

new psalms ; as all the prophets, Moses, David, Isaiah, Habakkuk, not

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contented with the old psalms, added new of their own suitable to the

present occasion. Now we are acquainted Avith greater and more

wonderful grace h}^ Christ, some new hymns seem necessary in the

praise of our Kedeemer.

If you reply that the state of the church is different from what it was

when God revealed his mind by divinely inspired prophets, I answer —

They should not be sung as infallible scripture, but as helps to gospel

devotion contained in the scripture ; as ordinary gifts succeeded in the

place of extraordinary. And as we are not tied to the words of scrip-

ture in preaching and praying, so not in singing. Yet upon the whole

I shall prove two things — (1.) That scriptural psalms may be sung ;

(2.) In many respects they are fittest to be sung.

1. That they may be sung. The word of God limiteth not, and we

have no reason to make any restraint. Paul saith, ' Speaking to your-

selves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs,' not naming any ;

therefore why not these ? Besides, the learned observe, these are the

express titles of David's psalms, DTIQTQ D'^'Piin Dmti^, which the

Septuagint translate, y^dX/xoi, v/xvoi, koI what, 'psalms, hymns, and

songs,' seem to recommend to us the book of David's psalms. These

afford matter of instruction, comfort, and glory to God ; and why

should these be passed by, since these are the ends of singing ? Besides,

Christ himself sung scripture psalms (whose example is our instruction),

for it is said.Mat. xxvi. 30, ' And when they had sung an hymn, they went

out into the Mount of Olives,' which probably was one or more of David's

psalms ; possibly their great hallelujah, began at Ps. cxi,, with some

following : and seeing in all other things Christ usually observed their

passover rites, when it is only said he sung a hymn, what shall we

understand by this, but such a hymn as was usual in that age ? The

evangelists specify no new hymn made for this purpose, who are wont

to mention matters of far less moment and concernment. So Acts xvi.

25, ' And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sung praises unto

God.' It must be such a hymn as they were both acquainted with, or

else how could they sing it together ?

2. Scripture psalms in most respects are fittest to be used in the

church, as being indited by an unerring Spirit, and of a more diffusive

concernment than any private composure of a particular person ; for it

is improbable that any should have such a large heart as the penmen

of scripture, who were so powerfully assisted by the Holy Ghost. Nor

can it be easily presumed that others can devise better addresses to God

by way of praise and thanksgiving than these did. Suppose men of

known holiness and integrity should do this, yet a common gift will

not command such reverence and affection as an extraordinary and

infallible gift. Therefore, since here we are safe, we need the less

to seek further. Certainly we should not cavil at the present practice of

many of the churches of Christ, who only content themselves with these

forms, being instructed out of the gospel how to apply them to our

redemption and deliverance by Christ. Austin saith, Scriptuy^ce tuco

sunt castce delicice mece — The holy scriptures are my chaste delights,

especially the psalms, which seem to be composed for the use of all

l)ersons.

Thirdly, I observe, that it is a duty to be managed both with the

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inward and outward man. Both parts are mentioned in the text, for

here is 'speaking' and 'singing,' and also 'making melody in the heart'

We are not to speak to God only, but to one another, which cannot be

done without the voice. The heart is the principal thing indeed, but

the voice is also included.

1. There is the outward part, ' singing,' which is a lawful pleasure,

sanctified to a holy use, as helping the soul in spiritual worship. As

our bodies are united to our souls, so they act together ; and while the

sensible part is subordinated to the rational, it is not an impediment,

but an help. The outward singing is fitted to elevate the mind and

affections to God.

2. There is the inward part, without which the outward singing is

but a clamorous noise. Voice without the spirit is but lip labour and

lost labour : Isa. xxix. 13, ' Wherefore the Lord said. Forasmuch as

this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do

honour me, but have removed their hearts far from me.' At least it

profiteth but a little, as all bodily exercise doth : 1 Tim. iv. 8, ' For

bodily exercise profiteth little.' Therefore the soul must be looked to :

Luke i. 46, 47, ' My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath

rejoiced in God my Saviour.' So Ps. Ivii. 7, 'My heart is fixed,

God, my heart is fixed ; I will sing and give praise ; ' Ps. xcviii. 4,

\* Eejoice and sing praise.' Unless the heart and inward affections be

stirring in this duty, the outward act serveth for no purpose. It is

heart work, expressed by ' making melody in the heart ; ' by a holy

delight we find in God, more than being taken with outward singing.

So it is expressed, Col. iii. 16, by 'singing with grace in our hearts to

the Lord.' A spiritual gracious frame of heart is required to sing in

a right manner.

Fourthly, I observe, that it is a duty required not only to be per-

formed by us alone, but in the assemblies of the faithful. We may

sing by ourselves with great comfort: James v. 13, ' Is any merry?

let him sing psalms.' As Jerome saith. The christian weaver at his

loom may sing David's psalms. We may sing to ourselves for our

solace and edification. But the duty pressed here is singing in com-

]3any and consort with others ; singing eavroi'i, to ourselves, is in whole

■congregations. In the Colossians, chap. iii. 16, it is, ' Teaching and

admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs.'

We are often pressed to this : Ps. cxlix. 1,2,' Praise ye the Lord ;

sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of

his saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him : let the children

of Sion be joyful in their king ; ' Ps. xxix. 9, ' And in his temple doth

€very one speak of his glory ; ' Ps. xcv. 1-3, ' Oh, come let us sing unto

the Lord ; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful

noise unto him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great

king above all gods.' Which place is the more to be regarded, be-

cause it describeth the whole gospel worship, as the apostle himself

interpreteth it, Heb. iii. ; and there it is put among the ordinary duties

of the sabbath ; solemn prayer, ver. 6, 7 ; hearing of the word, ver. 8.

But first he mentioneth thanksgiving in singing psalms to God with a

loud voice ; so that you have an account of the usual christian sabbath,

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hearing and preaching the word, solemn prayer and thanksgiving.

Now to join with a humble and faithful people in the holy communion

and in worship and praise, how pleasant is it ! All the pleasures of

the carnal life are not comparable to it. Surely, if there be anything

pleasant in the world to a gracious heart, it is the praises of God that

flow from a believing and loving soul, that is full of the sense of the

mercy and goodness and excellencies of the Lord. The unanimous

conjunction of such souls in praising God in their assemblies is the

heaven that we have upon earth.

Fifthly, I observe, it is such a duty here pressed, the great end of

which is the glory of God, and the subordinate end our mutual edifica-

tion ; for we are ' to make melody to the Lord,' and ' to sing with grace

in our hearts to the Lord ; ' and we are also ' to speak to one another ; '

which in the parallel place is explained to be ' teaching and admonish-

ing one another in psalms and hymns,' &c. It is not meant of teaching

from the psalms, but teaching in the psalms ; while we are singings

we are teaching one another the tenor of the doctrine of godliness.

Therefore if we would judge of the performance of this duty, all

means must be measured by their respect unto the end, which is the

glory of God. The more of the Spirit we have, the more we are excited

to set forth his praises, and thereby quicken our delight and heighten

our esteem of God : Ps. civ. 33, 34, ' I will sing unto the Lord as long

I live ; I will sing praises to my God while I have a being. My

meditation of him shall be sweet ; I will be glad in the Lord.' Jo}'

beginneth and terminateth the duty. It is from delight in God that

singing of psalms is so pleasant to us ; and the more we sing, the

more we delight in God. So for the other end, spiritual instruction ;

for we learn thereby to love, fear, and trust in God, and to humble

ourselves if we be defective in any of these graces, and cannot speak

to God with that confidence which his holy ones have done before us,

especially now grace is more liberally dispensed in the new testament.

II. Having thus stated the duty as it is here recommended to us, I

shall here prove — (1.) That it is a clear and unquestionable duty ; (2.)

That it is a delectable duty ; (3.) That it is a very profitable duty.

1. It is a clear and unquestionable duty ; for the heathens look upon

it as a fit worship for their gods to sing hymns of praise to them. If

you think that this kind of arguing will not hold concerning the true

God, who valueth not compliments, but loveth what is like him, I

answer —

[1.] That God will not only be objectively praised, but actively

praised, by ascriptions of honour to him : Ps. 1, 23, ' He that offeretli

praise glorifieth me.' God counteth it a glory when his people speak

good of his name. And it is a means to make us like him, for

the impression of what we esteem and love is soon left upon the heart.

[2.] In the old testament it is often called for, and sorted with duties

that are of perpetual and immutable obligation. When sacrifice is

rejected, prayer and praise is still reserved as the worship which God

will still keep up in tlie church : Ps. 1. 13-15, ' Will I cat the flesh of

bulls, or drink the blood of goats ? Ofier unto God thanksgiving ;

and pay thy vows unto the Most High : and call upon me in the day

of trouble ; I will deliver thee ; ' Ps. c. 2, ' Serve the Lord with glad-

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ness ; come before his presence with singing.' Now delighting in God

is an essential fundamental duty.

[3.] In the new testament we are bidden again to sing psalms, as in

the text, and Colossians iii. 16. And we are confirmed therein by the

practice of Christ and his apostles : Mat. xxvi. 30, ' And when they

had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.' So of

Paul and Silas : Acts xvi. 25, ' And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed

and sung praises to God.' And the consent of the churches of Christ.

Pliny in his letter to Trajan mentioneth the christians' liymnos anfelu-

canos, their morning songs, which they sung to Christ as God, as an

usual practice in their solemn worship ; and Justin Martyr, v/xvovi

KoX '7rpoaev-)(a<i rot ©e^ dvaTre/xTrofiev, that they did send up hymns

and prayers to God ; all which proveth it a clear and unquestionable

duty.

2. It is a delectable ordinance, that rather tendeth to cheering and

refreshing than to toil : Ps. cxlvii. 1, ' Praise ye the Lord, for it is

good to sing praises unto our God ; for it is pleasant, and praise is

comely.' There is no part of God's worship that carrieth more motives

with it in its own bosom ; so no part to which we are more indisposed,

or want stirring up. All the motives and encouragements to any work

do there concur ; it is ' good,' it is ' pleasant,' it is ' comely.' It is

good or profitable ; for all God's praises are the believer's advantage,

and the grounds of his hope and joy. It is pleasant, full of sweet

comfort and refreshing. And it is comely, or honourable, to be heralds

to proclaim the Lord's glory, or be employed in the work of angels.

The angels, according to the opinion of the ancient Hebrews, do every

day sing praises to God, and that in the morning, which they gather

thence, because the angel said to Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 26, ' Let me go,

for the day breaketh ; ' which the Targum of Jerusalem thus explaineth.

Let me go, for the pillar of the morning ascendeth, and behold the

hour approacheth when the angels are to sing. However that be, we

are sure that the angels bless God, and do always laud his holy name.

Usually when they are sent down to us, they come upon that errand :

Luke ii. 13, 14, ' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude

of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the

highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.' And upon other

occasions we find them blessing God and lauding his holy name ; they

apprehend more of God's excellency and perfection in himself and in

his works than we do, and are more sensible of his benefits than we

are. Now if this be tlie work of angels, the highest and greatest of

them, surely it should be more prized by us, or made not such a cold

business as usually we make it, but a pleasant work ; for the object of

it is God, our exceeding joy ; and we praise him by a redeemer,

'through whom we have received the atonement,' Kom. v. 11. And

the very external act is by singing, the usual vent of our joy.

3. It is a profitable ordinance.

[1.] It subdueth the lusts and passions of the flesh by diversion, or

directing us to a purer and safer delight. Much of the strength of the

sin lieth in the sensual inclination, or the inordinate love of pleasure.

Now if we can find sublime and chaste delight elsewhere, it taketli us

off from the unlawful pleasures of the flesh. The context intimatetb

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this, \* Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit,' &c. ; James

V. 13, 'Is any among you aflfiicted? let him pray: is any merry? let

liim sing psahus.' Spiritual joy is the best cure of carnal, for we keep

our joy pure, and our delights are safe and healtliful.

[2.] It inspireth us with fortitude, courage, and constancy in wrest-

ling for the truth ; for singing of psalms is our exultation in God, or

our making our boast of him in defiance of all worldly powers that

can hurt us ; as Paul and Silas when whipped and imprisoned, and

many of the martyrs, raised their courage by singing of psalms.

[3.] It is profitable, as the psalm not only holdeth forth what the

word read doth, but it stayeth and fixeth the heart upon the sweet and

lively meditation of what we sing.

Use 1. Let us make conscience of this duty, not only of the matter,

but the manner of it, that it may not be carried on in a dead-hearted

fashion, or as a cursory exercise. To thi's end I shall press two things

— (1.) Keep up a delight in God ; (2.) Be filled with the Spirit.

1. Keep up a holy delight in God, for singing is the vent of our joy ;

and therefore, unless delight be always kept up, thoughts of God and

of the life to come will be unwelcome and unpleasant thoughts. They

that joy in the Lord delight most in singing, because everything that

bringeth God to remembrance is sweet and acceptable to them ; to

others the service is but cold and heartless.

2. Be filled with the Spirit. Take heed 3^ou do not give the Com-

forter occasion to remove from you, for then all is uncomfortable : ' I

remembered God, and I was troubled,' Ps. Ixxvii. 3. But especially

look after these standing effects of the Spirit, ' faith, hope, and love.'

Faith ; till we believe God's being and providence, and our redemption

by Jesus Christ, they are not delightful matters to us, whatever they

be in themselves. Carnal delight is the joy of sense, but spiritual

delight is the joy of faith. The joy of sense is in the creature, but the

joy of faith is in God ; the joy of sense is in present things, the joy of

faith in future things ; the joy of sense is in the good of the body, the

joy of faith in the soul's good, that it be renewed and reconciled to God ;

the joy of sense is in the blessings that flow in the channel of common

I^rovidence, increase of estate, and provisions for the flesh ; the joy of

faith is in the covenant and promises of God : Ps. cxix. Ill, ' Thy

testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever, for they are the rejoic-

ing of my heart.\* So also for love ; when we love God, we love every-

thing that is related to him. Love is nothing else but the complacency

and well-pleasedness of our mind in God as our chief est good : Ps. xvi.

5, 6, \* The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup ;

thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant

places ; yea, I have a goodly heritage.' We value and esteem him

above all worldly things, therefore we are affected with what is spoken

or siung of God himself or his ways, how to enter into his peace with

joy, how to please and obey him, or promote his glory. Lastly, for

hope ; we fetch our great solaces from the world to come. As heaven

is the place of our full delight, so the foresight and foretaste of it is the

liighest delight that is here on earth to be attained ; therefore we must

often go to heaven for renewed matter of delight : Kom. v. 2, ' By

whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.

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and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' If you come prepared with

such a spirit, it will be a cheerful, a profitable thing to sing psalms.

Use 2. To show us what a good God we serve, who hath made our

delight a great part of our work. God is much for his people's pleasure

and holy joy. Many think it is against the will of God that they

should rejoice ; you are not only at liberty that you may, but under a

necessity of duty that you must ever rejoice in God. To this end con-

sider what matter he hath provided for our joy in himself and our

redemption by Christ ; and one of the Spirit's offices is to be our com-

forter, and one of the duties of religion is singing of psalms, which is

appointed as a help to this purpose.

Use 3. To show how much we overlook our profit when we deal

slightly in this ordinance. It is a means, as other duties are, not a

task ; and a means to make our lives both holy and comfortable ; there-

fore let us not contemn it. The same graces which are necessary for

other parts of worship, which we make greater reckoning of, are

necessary here also.

SERMON XXV.

Giving thanks ahcays for all things unto God and tJie Father, in the

name of our Lord Jesus Christ. — Eph. v. 20.

Here is the second effect of being filled with the Spirit, and it is of

great affinity with the former ; for it showeth also what is the great

matter, end, and use of christian singing.

In the words observe —

1. The duty, ' Giving thanks.'

2. The circumstances of the duty —

[l.J The time, 'Always.'

[2.] The matter, for what, ' For all things.'

[3.] The object to whom this religious worship is to be given, 'To

God and the Father.'

[4.] The manner, or means by whom, ' In the name of our Lord

Jesus Christ.'

Doct. That thanksgiving to God is a great and necessary duty becom-

ing all christians.

1. I shall open this duty as it is here set forth.

2. How necessary and becoming christians this is.

I. To open the duty. Here is —

First, The substance, or act of it, ' Giving thanks.' Praise relateth

to God's excellencies, thanksgiving to God's benefits. There is a two-

fold thanksgiving — (1.) By way of celebration or commemoration, when

we speak of God's mercies one to another ; (2.) By way of invocation,

adoration, or worship, when we express them to God himself.

1. A thanksgiving by way of commemoration, when we communicate

to others what experience we have had of God : Ps. xxii. 22, ' I will

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declare thy name, unto my brethren ; in the midst of the congregatiort

will I praise thee.' The name of God is that by which he is made

known in his word or works. As we are to propagate to others what

knowledge we get of God by his word, so also what we have fonnd of

him in his works, how God hath made known his name to us by acts

of grace and mercy : Ps. Ixvi. 16, ' Come and hear, all ye that fear the

Lord, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul' This is one

part of the communion of saints, to call upon others to praise God with

us, as one bird sets the whole flock a chirping. We are usually barren,

vain, foolish in our communications with one another. This celebra-

tion and commemoration should be our cure and solace : Eph. v. 4,

dXka /xaXkov ivxapi(TTia, ' But rather giving of thanks.' Speaking to

each other of God's goodness is a christian's mirth, and a choice remedy

against foolish talking, jesting, and other sins. To put down idle and

sinful talk, he prescribeth giving of thanks.

2. There is thanksgiving by way of adoration, or direct address to God

himself. This is a special part of christian worship, therefore the

whole is expressed by it : 1 Cor. xiv. 16, 'Else when thou shalt bless

with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned

say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what

thou sayest ? ' where the whole christian worship is expressed by 'bless-

ing with the spirit,' or ' giving of thanks.' And thence God is said to

' inhabit the praises of Israel,' Ps. xxii. 3, because he is often magnified

and praised by his church : the praises of Israel, that is the subject of

it. Yea, it is doctrinally declared by God himself : Ps. 1. 23, ' He that

offereth praise glorifieth me.' The Lord taketli it as an honour tO'

himself when we praise him for his excellencies or bless him for his

benefits. This thanksgiving is an acknowledgment of benefits received

to the praise of the bestower. There is included in it partly notice and

observation of what God hath done for us. The contrary is taxed, Isa.

i. 3, ' The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib ; but

Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.' The brute beasts

know such as feed them and make much of them, but men take na

notice of what great things God hath done for them : Hosea ii. 8, ' For

she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multi-

plied her silver and gold.' Little notice is taken of God's kindness

in the world. And partly too an esteem of the benefits received ; for

we cannot give thanks for what we value and prize not. Solomon

gave cities to Hiram, but they pleased him not ; and therefore he

called them Cabul, that is, displeasing or dirty, 1 Kings ix. 12, 13,

because they stood in low and moorish places. So God vouchsafeth

many mercies, but most men are discontented with their portion ; the

mercies of God please them not : Mai. i. 2, ' I have loved you, saith

the Lord ; yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us ? ' What love is it

to be restored to bare hills and mountains, or to be brought home to a

wasted land, where they were to begin the world again ? On the

contrary, they that esteem the effects of God's love will bless him, and

praise him : Ps. Ixiii. 3, ' Because thy loving-kindness is better than

life, my lips shall praise thee.' They that are affected with mercies

received cannot but be affectioned towards the God of their mercies,,

and therefore will speak good of his name. And partly actual acknow-

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ledgment ; they excite and stir up their hearts to give Grod the glory

these mercies call for : Ps. ciii. 1,2,' Bless the Lord, my soul ; and

all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, my soul,

and forget not all his benefits.' This acknowledgment, if it be serious,

will excite and urge them to make some recompense, as to consider

what they may do for God : Ps. cxvi. 12, ' What shall I render unto

the Lord for all his benefits towards me ? ' And it was Hezekiah's

fault, 2 Chron. xxxii. 25, compared with Isa. xxxviii. 9, when he had

been sick, and was recovered of his sickness, that 'he rendered not

according to the benefit done him.' Therefore unless this acknowledg-

ment doth excite us and urge us to honour, please, serve, and glorify

God, it is not right. They do anew devote themselves to him upon

every eminent mercy.

Secondly, The circumstances of the duty.

1. Of time, ' Always.'

But how is this possible, that we should be without intermission in

the actual exercise of this duty ?

[1.] We must always have a heart prepared and disposed to give

thanks ; for the words arise from the heart if we be serious ; therefore

the heart must be so purified and prepared that we may be ever ready

to give thanks to God : Ps. Ivii. 7, ' My heart is fixed, God, my

heart is fixed ; I will sing and give praise.' When the heart is pre-

pared the work is easy. Now we must never lose our thankful frame.

A sense of God's favour must ever be kept fresh upon our hearts;

though we are not always blessing God, yet we must ever be prepared

to bless God.

[2.] We must not omit the proper occasions, but must do it fre-

quently and constantly. Some mercies are so general and beneficial,

that they should be remembered every day ; as the great blessings of

the gospel, Christ, and the new covenant : Heb. xiii. 15, 'By him

therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is,

the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.' He had spoken

before of Christ as a sin-offering. And besides, God is adding new

mercies continually to those which we had before, and so giveth new

matter of praise and thanksgiving : Ps. Ixviii. 19, ' Blessed be the

Lord, who daily loadeth us with his benefits, even the God of our

salvation ; ' Lam. iii. 22, 23, ' It is of the Lord's mercy we are not con-

sumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning ;

great is thy faithfulness ; ' that is, daily renewed. There is no time in

which we receive not some benefit from God. Now upon all occasions

we should acknowledge the great and fatherly mercies of God through,

our Lord Jesus Christ.

[3.] ' Always,' that is, in all conditions, both in adversity and

prosperity ; in whatsoever estate we are or may be, it can never be so

ill with a christian but he hath cause to give thanks to God. Job

blesseth for taking as well as giving : Job i. 21, ' The Lord gave, and

the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord.' Choicer

mercies are continued to us than those taken away from us, for we

have God still, and an interest in the covenant. So we are bidden,

Isa. xxiv. 15, ' Wherefore glorify ye theLord in the fires, even the name

of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea ; ' that is, in the fires

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of tribulation. If we walk in the fires, and have the Son of God to be

with us, we have no cause to despond.

2. The matter for which we are to give thanks, ' For all things.'

The same extent of the matter we may see in a parallel place : 1 Thes.

V. 18, ' In ever3'thing give thanks.' Only what is here propounded

collectively, ' For all things,' is there propounded distributively, ' In

every thing.'

[1.] The universal particle comprehendeth all his benefits ; not one

of them should be overlooked or forgotten : Ps. ciii. 2, ' Bless the Lord,

O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.' But how is it possible to

remember them ? There is an habitual remembrance and an actual

commemoration.

(1.) An habitual remembrance is necessary for all God's acts of

mercy, not only for the more eminent and signal acts of providence,

but for every daily kindness we receive from him. An habitual

remembrance is wlien we are possessed with a greater sense of God's

love, and an esteem of him because of his never-failing compassions.

The more fuel is added to the fire, the more the flame increaseth ; so

every mercy is so far taken notice of as to increase our love to God and

trust and dependence upon him, and the cheerfulness of our obedience

to him. We love him more and serve him better because of his daily

kindness to us.

(2.) An actual commemoration of every single mercy is impossible.

We must live over a life as long again to repeat the mercies of our

former lives. Yet, as much as may be, we should be express and

particular ; for particulars are most affective. We must help ourselves

by two things — (1.) By a frequent reckoning ; look into thy bill, what

owest thou ? Ps. cxxxix. 17, 18, ' How precious also are thy thoughts

imto me, God ! how great is the sum of them ! If I should count

them, they are more in number than the sand : when I awake, I am

still with thee.' Innumerable are the mercies of God ; the oftener we

come to audit, the better. (2.) The other help is, since we cannot

recall the several and single acts of God's mercy, yet to recall the several

kinds and sorts of them, which the psalmist called reckoning them up

in order : Ps. xl. 5, ' Many, Lord my God, are thy wonderful works

which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward : they

cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee ; if I would declare and speak

of them, they are more than can be numbered.' To speak of them in

lieap, when we cannot speak of them in tale, as a painter representeth

a crowd in a little table by a cluster of heads. But then, secondly,

those that are eminent, like red letters in the calendar of our lives.

It is God's end in giving them : Ps. cxi. 4, ' He hath made his wonder-

ful works to be remembered.' And it is charged as a great crime upon

liis peo})le that ' they soon forgot his works,' Ps. cvi. 13 ; that is, his

eminent and signal deliverances. These are masterpieces of providence

great helps to relieve faith, and never be forgotten by us.

[2.] This universal particle comprehendeth all kinds of mercies,

spiritual and temporal mercies.

(1.) Common and temporal mercies. These should not be lost in

the throng, for he that is not faithful in a little will not be faithful in

much. As he that doth not make conscience of small sins will fall into

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greater, so he that is not thankful for the smaller mercies disposeth

himself to a stupid carelessness and insensibility of the greatest mercies :

Luke xvi. 11, ' If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous

mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches ? ' A suspected

leaky vessel we try with water first, and then with wine. Besides,

they all came from the same love, the greater and smaller mercies :

Ps. cxxxvi. 25, 'Who giveth food to all flesh, for his mercy endureth

for ever.' The same reason is rendered all along for daily mercies, as

well as those mighty ones. Besides, nothing should be contemned

where nothing is deserved : Lam. iii. 22, ' It is of the Lord's mercy

that we are not consumed.' We are unworthy of the air we breathe in,

as well as of the great mercies of the covenant : Gen. xxxii. 10, ' I am

not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which

thou hast showed to thy servant ; for Avith my staff I passed over this

Jordan, and now I am become two bands.' Therefore, Deut. viii. 10,

' When thou hast eaten and are full, then thou shalt bless the Lord

thy God for the good land which he hath given thee ; ' Deut. ix. 4,

'Speak not thou in -thy heart. For my righteousness the Lord hath

brought me in to possess this land.' Besides, a small remembrance

from a great prince is esteemed a great favour : Ps. cxiii. 6, ' Who

humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the

earth.' Again, common mercies come from special love, and are

sanctified and blessed to us when received with thanksgiving : 1 Tim.

iv. 3-5, ' And commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath

created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and

know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be

refused, if it be received with thanksgiving ; for it is sanctified by tho

word of God and prayer.' We take them out of God's hand, and usa

them for his glory. We have Christ's example, which should be noted,

because thanksgiving at meals is grown out of fashion. Now we read,

John vi. 11, 'And Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given

thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that

were set down.' Our ordinary refreshings are great mercies, and God

should be acknowledged in them ; though they be but coarse fare, wo

must bless God for it, as well as for choice dainties : ' Five barley-loaves,

and two small fishes,' ver. 9. Men sit down and rise up from their

meals like brute beasts ; and we are forced to contend with the godless

and unbelieving world about the plainest duties. So in ver. 23, ' How-

beit there came other boats from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where

they did eat bread, after the Lord had given thanks.' He doth not

only remember the miracle, but the Lord's thanksgiving and blessing.

Well, then, God must be owned in every mercy.

(2.) Spiritual mercies. Certainly we are to bless God for spiritual

and eternal benefits more than for those which are bodily and temporal;

for our thankfulness ariseth from the esteem we have of the mercies

which we give thanks for. Now we ought most to esteem and value these

benefits as being the choice fruits of God's special love to us : Eph. i.

3, ' Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath

blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.'

And these mercies render us most acceptable to God : Eph. i. 6, ' To

the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted

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in the beloved.' Jesus Christ came from heaven to pm'chase them for

lis, and his Spirit worketh them in us ; surely we should be most

aflfected with these. Other mercies may be overvalued, especially as

we look upon them as provision for the flesh, and so our very thank-

fulness may be a snare ; and though religion tips our tongues, our

lusts are secretly gratified and pleased, while God is endeared to us,

not as giving pardon and life by Christ, but food and plenty of worldly

increase.

(3.) Ordinary mercies and extraordinary. Ordinary mercies are our

constant diet : Ps. Ixviii. 19, ' Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth

us with his benefits, even the God of our salvation.' Extraordinaiy

mercies are our cordials in a fainting fit : Ps. Ixxvii. 10, ' I said. This is

my infirmity ; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the

Most High ; ' the wonderful experiences we have had of God.

(4.) Positive mercies and privative mercies. Positive mercies : Ps.

Ixxxiv. 11, 'For the Lord God is a sun and a shield; the Lord will

give grace and glory : no good thing will he withhold from them that

walk uprightly.' Freedom from all the sins and dangers we might

liave fallen into. Privative mercies, because so many miserable objects

as we meet with in the world, so many grounds of thanksgiving have

we that we are not as they. Did we know how busy the devil is to

hurt us, were it not for the sense of God's providence round about us,

we would be more thankful to God. Positive mercies are observed,

because these come to our notice and view ; we know what we have

received : we do not know how many dangers God hath prevented ;

but we may know how he hath stored our houses with blessings.

(.5.) Our personal mercies, and other men's mercies. No question

but we are to give thanks for our own personal mercies, as being most

nearly concerned in them. We are also to give thanks for others : 2

Cor. i. 11, ' You also helping together by prayer for us ; that for the

gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons, thanks may be

given by many on our behalf.' God's children rejoice in one another's

jn-osperity, and are interested in one another's mercies, as if they were

their own : Phil. ii. 27, ' For indeed he was sick nigh unto death, but

God had mercy on him ; and not on him only, but on me also.'

Epaphroditus was recovered, and Paul gave thanks to God : Ps. cxlii.

7, ' The righteous shall compass me about, for thou shalt deal boun-

tifully with me.' When one is delivered, all the rest are glad of it.

The more any partake of spiritual life, the stronger is spiritual

sympathy ; they mourn and rejoice with others, as by mutual prayers,

so by mutual praises. God would knit our hearts in spiritual love to

one another : Ps. xxxiv. 3, ' magnify the Lord with me, and let us

exalt his name together.'

(6.) Public mercies and private mercies. The cabin is of no stead

when the ship is lost. In the peace of the nations wherein we are

embarked we have peace. The children of God are wont to be affected

with the good or ill of Sion above their private loss and benefit.

When well at ease, Nehemiah and Daniel mourned because it went ill

with the church. Especially when both are bad ; as that woman, 1 Sam.

iv. 19, when she heard her father and husband were dead, and the ark

of God was taken, she would not be comforted, but died. When it is

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ill with them, yet well with the church ; they rejoice as Paul rejoiced

that Christ was preached, Phil. i. 18. But when it is well with both,

then they rejoice : Ps. cxxviii. 6, ' Yea, thou shalt see thy children's

children, and peace upon Israel.'

(7.) Mercies in hand and mercies in hope. That argueth a strong

faith, affectionately to praise God for mercies in hope as well as mercies

in hand : Ps. xxxi. 19, ' Oh, how great is thy goodness, which thou hast

laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that

trust in thee, before the sons of men ! ' Abraham, when he had not a

foot in the land of Canaan, built an altar and offered thank-offerings

to Grod Gen. xiii. 18 ; so God's children ' rejoice in hope of the glory

of God,' Kom. v. 2 ; 1 Peter i. 8, ' Whom having not seen ye love ; in

whoru, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy

unspeakable and full of glory.'

(8.) Bless God for things prosperous and things adverse. I know

it is a question whether we are to give thanks to God for afflictions,

for poverty as well as wealth, for sickness as well as health, for death as

well as life.

A71S. 1. Simply we cannot give thanks for afflictions as afflictions,

no more than we can pray for them ; for evil as evil cannot be matter

of thanksgiving ; it is in itself matter not of joy, but of grief : Heb.

xii. 11, ' No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but

grievous.' Thankfulness is the effect of joy ; how then can we be said

to give thanks for things prosperous and adverse ?

2. Though we do not simply give thanks for the evil, yet we may

give thanks for the good that is mixed with them ; that is to say — (1.)

For the mixture : Job ii. 10, ' Shall we receive good at the hands of

God, and shall not we receive evil?' Ahstulit, sed et 2^rucs dedit.

He taketh away opportunities of service, but it is a mercy that he con-

tinued them so long. (2.) For the mitigation ; it might have been

worse : Ezra ix. 13, ' And after all this is come upon us for our evil

deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast pun-

ished us less than our iniquities deserve ; ' Lam. iii. 39, ' Wherefore

doth a living man complain ? ' a man on this side hell. (3.) For the

fruit and profit ; if it be not good in itself, it turneth to good : Kom.

viii. 28, ' All things shall work together for good to them that love

God ;' Ps. cxix. 71, ' It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that

I might learn thy statutes ; ' Ps. xciv. 12, ' Blessed is the man whom

thou chastenest, Lord, and teachest him out of thy law.' It is well

that God doth not give us over to a reprobate sense, and will not let

us sleep in our sins ; there is a blessing hid in the cross. (4.) For

the final issue, that God may be glorified : 1 Peter iv. 14, 'On their

part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified ; ' and we

rewarded : Mat. v. 12, ' Eejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is

your reward in heaven ; for so persecuted they the prophets which were

before you.' Thus they rejoice and give thanks. Some kind of suf-

ferings are an honour: Acts v. 41, 'And they departed from the

presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to

:suffer shame for his name.'

3. The object to whom this religious worship is to be tendered, ' To

•God and the Father ; ' so Col. iii, 17, 'And whatsoever ye do in word

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or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God,

and the Father by him.' God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

and in him our God and Father. Tlie meaning is, to God who is the

Father, from whom all good things are derived : James i. 17, ' Every good

and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father

of lights.' There is decursus hencficiorum, et recursus gi'atiarum. All

is derived from God to us, and all is directed and referred by us to

God, and both by Christ : 1 Cor. viii. 6, ' But unto us there is but one

God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him ; and one

Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.' To

whom we pray, to him must we give the praise. We ]n-ay to God ;

some sacrifice to their own drag : Hab. i. 16, ' They sacrifice unto their

net, and burn incense to their drag; because by them their portion is

fat, and their meat plenteous.' Not only are our prosperities and suc-

cesses from God, but if we think a good thought or do a good work,

it is still of God ; and therefore he must have all the glory : Rom. i.

8, ' First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all.' Some

give thanks to saints and angels ; no glory must be diverted from God,

to whom we pray. We have the Spirit in prayer inclining us to God

only : Eom. viii. 15, ' We have received the Spirit of adoption, where-

by we cry, Abba, Father ; ' Gal. iv. 6, ' And because ye are sons, God

hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba,

Father.' Therefore the glory must solidly and in whole be ascribed

to him. Some cannot come to God as a Father but by Christ : Eph.

ii. 18, ' For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the

Father.'

4. The manner or means, ' In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.\*

Why must thanksgiving be made in Christ's name ?

(1.) Because there is more of God discovered in Christ than else-

where : 2 Cor. iv. 6, ' For God, who commanded the light to shine out

of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the

knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' If Christ

had not come into the world, we had never known the wonders of his

love, mercy, and grace, which are now discovered to us in raising us

from sin and misery to life and happiness. Now his <pt\av6po)7ria,

mankindness, appeared : Titus iii. 4, ' But after that the kindness and

love of God our Saviour toward man appeared.' The angels had the

pre-eminence in the creation. There was (jaXayyeXla, his love to

angels seen, as being made nobler substances, enjoying the immediate

presence of God ; but in redemption there is (fnXavOpcoTna, his love

to man. In creation man was made like God, but in redemption God

was made like man.

(2.) Christ is the only mediator to convey blessings to us and our

services to God ; for he is our high priest and intercessor. As our

high priest he procured all our mercies for us by his oblation ; and by

his intercession he conveyeth them to us : Heb. viii. 2, ' He is a

minister of the sanctuary,' tmv dyiwv Xenovpycr^. He maketh our

thanksgivings acceptable by presenting them to God as a sacrifice

pleasing to him by virtue of his merit : 1 Peter ii. 5, ' Ye also as

living stones are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer

up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ' As we sue

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out mercy in his name, so we give thanks in his name ; he is the

mediator of our praises as well as our prayers. Without Christ

nothing is acceptable to God ; our persons out of Christ are odious to-

God, and God is terrible to us.

(3.) He hath required this duty from us : 1 Thes, v. 18, ' In every-

thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning

you.' The great duty of the gospel is thankfulness, which enliveneth

all the rest ; for the gospel is made up of mercies, and thei'efore called

a benefit : 1 Tim. vi. 20, ' Because they are faithful and beloved, par-

takers of the benefit.' A great expression of God's love to sinners in-

Christ: 2 Cor. ix. 15, 'Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.'

It is such a law as is mercy. A rule of duty calleth for obedience, but

a law that is a remedy and a benefit — a precious remedy, an unspeak-

able benefit — calleth for gratitude and thankfulness.

(4.) Because all our mercies come to us as the fruit of Christ's

death, as wrapped in his bowels, as swimming in his blood, as the fruit

of his purchase. Lev. iii. 5, their peace-offering or thank-offering

was laid on the top of the burn t- offer img. Till we are reconciled to

God by the death of Christ, nothing we do is acceptable to him.

II. How necessary, profitable, and becoming christians this duty is\*

1. How necessary a duty it is appeareth —

[1.] By the light of nature and God's express will in his word. It

is evident by the light of nature. Ingratitude is counted an unnatural

sin: 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3, ' Disobedient to parents, unthankful, unho^)^ with-

out natural affections.' This holdeth as to ingratitude to God, for

nature teacheth men to promise praise when they beg mercies : Hosea

xiv. 2, ' Keceive us graciously, and so we will render the calves of our

lips.' This is our promise to God, and it is God's paction with us :

Ps. 1. 15, ' And call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee>

and thou shalt glorify me.' Therefore it is unjust to detain this honour

and glory from him.

[2.] By his express will revealed in the scripture : 1 Thes. v. 18,

'In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus

concerning you.' This should be to christians instead of all reasons,

intuitu voluntatis ; upon the first sight of God's will they should obey.

It is not only ' his will,' but ' his will in Christ.' In the new way of

government by a redeemer, thankfulness is most suited to the frame of

the gospel, and is the main principle of that obedience it calleth for at

our hands. The evangelical covenant require tli thankfulness for the

mercy provided for us in Christ, as the great duty which includeth all

other duties.

2. How necessary a duty it is appeareth by the great profit that

Cometh of it.

[1.] To keep us always in a remembrance of God, and that invisible

hand that reacheth out all our supplies to us. The stupid carnal world

looketh to the next hand, but thankfulness bringeth God into sight and

remembrance. There are two notions that keep religion alive in the

world — that God in a way of justice is the author of all the evil wo

suffer : Amos iii. 6, ' Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath

not done it ? ' and that in a way of mercy God is the author of all the

good we enjoy : James i. 17, ' Every good gift and every perfect gift

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is from above, and cometli down from the Father of lights ; ' Acts x'w.

17, ' Nevertheless he left not himself without a witness, in that he did

good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our

hearts with food and gladness.' All the comfort, protection, peace,

and plenty that we have come of God. This humiliation and thanks-

giving keep up the notice and remembrance of God in the world.

The world had never fallen into atheism and idolatry if these two

principles had been well minded.

[2.] The observation and acknowledgment of his benefits breedeth

in us a love to God : 1 John iv. 19, ' We love him, because he loved us

first ; ' Ps. cxvi. 1, ' I will love the Lord, because he hath heard the

voice of my supplications ; ' Luke vii. 47, ' She loved much, because

much was forgiven her.' Our thankfulness then must needs excite our

love to God, for the more solemnly we remember his love to us, the

more we will love him again.

[3.] It doth encourage our hope. God hath given great things to

us, and hath promised greater. Now by remembering what is past,

we are the more invited to expect what is to come : 2 Cor. i. 10, ' Who

delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver ; in whom we

trust that he will jet deliver us ; ' 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18, 'Notwithstanding

the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, that by me the preach-

ing might be fully known, and that all the gentiles might hear ; and

I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion: and the Lord shall

deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his

heavenly kingdom;' Eom. v. 10, 'For if when we were enemies, we

were reconciled to God by the death of his Son ; much more being

reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.'

3. How necessary a duty it is appeareth because it prevents many

sins.

[1.] Hardness of heart and security in enjoying the blessings of

God's common providence : to the unthankful they prove occasions to

the flesh ; so their table is made a snare to them : Ps. Ixix. 22, ' Let

their table become a snare before them ; and that which should have

been for their welfare, let it become a trap.' But by thanksgiving the

creature is sanctified: 1 Tim. iv. 4, 'For every creature of God is good,

and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving ; ' for in

thanksgiving we distinctly remember the author and end of these

mercies.

[2.] It suppresseth murmuring, or that querulous, fretting, impatient

humour which venteth itself even in our prayers and complaints, and

sourcth all our comforts. Murmuring is the scum of discontent, by

which we entertain crosses with anger and blessings with disdain. It

is very incident to man, who is a querulous creature. Now in thanks-

giving we see how much more cause we have to give thanks than

complain ; this fretting humour is cured when we see how much

we are bound to bless God. In murmuring we overlook our mercies,

and in thanksgiving our discontent. When we have received so

much good, shall we take it ill if the Lord exercise us with a little

calamity ? So much undeserved good, shall we take it ill if we feel a

little deserved evil ? Job ii. 10, ' What ! shall we receive good at the

hand of God, and shall we not receive evil ? '

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[3.] It preventeth distrust and carking cares : Phil. iv. 6, ' Be care-

ful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with

thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Acknow-

ledge what Grod hath done for you already, and you will the less doubt

of his goodness for the future.

[4.] It cureth spiritual pride when we consider who is to be praised

for all the good that is in us. They that have more than others are more

indebted to grace : 1 Cor. iv. 7, ' But who maketh thee to differ from

another ? ' And what hast thou that thou didst not receive ? Now if

thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received

it ? ' We have it from God and for God, not for our own glory and

ostentation. God will be angry if we rob him of the glory of it ; Acts

xii. 23, Herod was smitten because he gave not God the glory.

Use 1. Is it such a duty ? Then take heed of impediments and

•enemies to thankfulness.

1. A proud heart. They delight in their own praises ; an humble

heart delightetli in the praise of God : Gen. xxxii. 1 0, ' I am not worthy

of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast

showed to thy servant ; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan,

and now I am become two bands ; ' 2 Sam. vii. 18, 19, ' And he said,

Who am I, Lord God ? and what is my house, that thou hast brought

me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, Lord

God ; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while

to come ; and is this the manner of men, Lord God ? ' The proud

think themselves worthy of more, and therefore speak diminutively of

all they have : It is but thus and thus.

2. A fleshly mind, which looketh to the pleasing of the flesh, and

forgets God : James iv. 3, ' Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss,

that you may consume it upon your lusts.'

Use 2. Is our thanksgiving right ?

1. If the heart be brought near to God by every mercy we receive

from him : Ps. xcvi. 8, ' Give the Lord the glory of his name.'

2. If it breed a great delight in God : Ps. xxxvii. 4, ' Delight thyself

in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.'

3. If it be a cheerful thankful obedience : Rom. xii. 1, \* I beseech

3'ou therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your

bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reason-

able service ; ' John xiv. 15, \* If you love me, keep my commandments.'

SERMON XXYL

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. — Eph. v. 21.

The apostle had laid down the common duties which belong to all

christians ; now he cometh to special duties which belong to us as we

are clothed with particular relations ; and he beginneth that discourse

with a general exhortation, that concerns both superiors and inferiors,

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before he cometh to state the duty of each to other, ' Submitting your-

selves one to another in the fear of God.'

In the words observe —

1. The connection or dependence ; for the construction is continued

from that clause, ' Being filled with the Spirit,' and it is as applicable

to this branch as any of the other ; as, for instance, ' Be filled with the

Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual

songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. ' Anil

again, ' Be filled with the Spirit, giving thanks always for all things to

God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.' So here,

' Be filled with the Spirit, submitting yourselves one to another in the

fear of God.' The construction is the same. The Spirit's influence is

necessary for the duties of our relations, as well as the duties of worship.

I observe it the rather, because as the apostle beginneth, so he endeth

this discourse : Eph. vi. 10, ' Finally, my brethren, be strong in the

Lord, and in the power of his might.' Our corrupt hearts incline U8

to much unsuitable carriage in our relations. Satan, that envieth the

felicity of mankind, opposeth the comfort we have in them ; but yet

the glory of God is much concerned in a due family converse. There-

fore a plentiful measure of the Spirit is necessary, that we may carry

it well in our relations.

2. The substance of the duty, ' Submitting yourselves one to an-

other.' The exhortation is to mutual submission, keeping the order

set by God. The business is how this should be understood. Must

the husband submit to the wife, as well as the wife to the husband ; the

father to the children, the master to the servant, and all be levelled

without superiority and government by the law of Christ ?

I answer — Certainly Christianity doth not abolish civil distinctions ;

therefore —

[1.] Some think this exhortation only concerneth inferiors, pressing

them to yield obedience to whom it is due, in subordination to God,

as the wife to the husband, the children to the parents, servants to

their masters.

[2.] Others better, that this general exhortation concerneth the

duties both of superiors and inferiors, and that submission is taken

generally for any duty that we are bound to perform to one another

for mutual good and advantage. And this interpretation I approve of

for these reasons. (1.) Because this sense runneth most smoothly and

without forcing. (2.) Because it suiteth with many other scriptures,

as I shall show you by and by. (3.) Since all grant this is the preface

to the following exhortation, and therein superiors are exhorted as well

as inferiors to their proper duties, this should be extended to both.

He beginneth indeed with the duty of inferiors, as being most tedious

and difficult, but he layeth a charge upon both faithfully to perform

their duties to each other; for we all owe a service of love one to

another, and must endeavour to do good in our several places and

capacities.

3. The manner of performance, ' In the fear of God ; ' that is, so as

they would approve themselves to God, who is the author of all order

in every community and society of mankind ; and to him we must give

an account as our proper judge : 1 Peter i. 17, \* And if ye call on the

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Father, who without respect of persons judge th every man according

to his work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.' They that

ohey ' only for wrath, and not for conscience' sake,' Eom. xiii. 5, do

not fulfil this precept for fear of God, hut for fear of men. To obey

for conscience' sake is to ohey for fear of God.

Doct. That mutual condescension to one another in the duties of

our places and relations doth very much become those who are filled

with the Spirit.

1. I shall inquire wherein this mutual condescension doth consist.

2. What graces are necessary to it.

3. That this is an unquestionable duty both in superiors and in-

feriors.

I. Wherein this mutual condescension doth consist ?

I answer — It may be considered with respect to ecclesiastical, or

civil, or economical power.

1. With respect to ecclesiastical power, whicli must be determined

by the nature of that community for which it serveth. They are a

voluntary people : Ps. ex. 3, ' Thy people shall be willing in the day of

thy power.' And yield up themselves to be guided to everlasting

happiness by such helps and means as God hath instituted : 2 Cor.

viii. 5, ' But first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the

will of God.' They covenanted with God to obey him, so also to sub-

mit to the institutions of his family. Now here there are teachers and

taught, governors and governed. There are some that have the

inspection of others, and they must be obeyed in that kind of govern-

ment which belongeth to souls dedicated to God, which is directive

rather than authoritative, and managed by a council rather than a

court. And here there must be a mutual condescension both in

governors and governed, for in both there is mutual service.

[1.] The governors are but ministers, servants of God for the com-

fort of the faithful : 1 Cor. iv. 1, ' Let a man so account of us as the

ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.' They have

an honourable office in the family, but still they are ministers and

servants ; and they are to feed the flock, not as lords over God's

lieritage, but as directors or guides, by word and example. They

should not affect dominion over the Lord's people, but walk holily and

humbly, guiding them in a tender and condescending way to their

everlasting estate ; rather persuading them to the receiving and

embracing the gospel than forcing and compelling them to it. And

therefore the exercise of their office on their part should not be

€lomination, but ministration and service : Mat. xx, 25-27, ' And they

that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so

among you ; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your

minister: and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your

servant.' They most please the Lord who serve the souls of men, and

promote the work of the Lord in their conversion to God. It is an

office of burden and humility ; for all the power of the church is a

power of eminent charity. ' Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me ?

Feed my sheep,' John xxi. 15-17.

[2.] The governed must meekly submit themselves to these institu-

tions of Christ, and directions given them for eternal life, how contrary

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soever they be to our lusts, interests, and carnal prejudices : Heb.

xiii. 17, ' Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your-

selves ; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account,

that they may do it with joy, and not with grief ; for that is unprofit-

able for you/ Their task is great ; now you should make it as easy

and pleasing as you can, that they may have comfort in the discharge

of their office to you. They should submit, and you should submit ;

the church doth live in peace by mutual condescension, when every

one becometh a mutual servant to another.

2. There is political or civil power, principally greatness and

authority in the civil state. This is the Lord's ordinance, and must be

submitted to for God's sake : 1 Peter ii. 13, 14, \* Submit yourselves to

every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake ; whether it be to the king

as supreme ; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for

the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.'

That is, there is an obligation of conscience upon us to submit, whether

to the supreme or subordinate magistrate. And though all kind of

honour is due to them, yet they also lie under a higher Lord, and nuist

stoop to the duties required of God to those that are governed by

tliem : Eom. xiii. 4, ' For he is the minister of God to thee for good.'

They are servants to God, though not to their people ; as angels are

ministering spirits, not only to us, but to God. Thus you see\_ the

scripture flattereth not superiors, but ranketh them among the subjects

of the eternal God ; their creator is their judge ; and that great power

which they have is a great servitude, and those who command are

bound to obey ; God hath so tied us to one another, that every one is

to do his part to promote the common good.

3. There is economical power ; that of the husband, parent, master.

There are duties which belong to these relations. The wife is to be

subject to the husband, but the husband is to love and cherish the wife

as his own body. The parents are to govern their children, yet not to

provoke them to wrath, but to educate them in the fear of the Lord,

The master is to command his servants, but yet to remember they are

the Lord's freemen : 1 Cor. vii. 22, ' For he that is called in the Lord,

being a servant, is the Lord's freeman : likewise also he that is called,

being free, is Christ's servant.' Well, then, this submission is by dis-

charging the duties we owe to each relation.

But why is this called submission ?

[1.] Because superiors have a debt of duty upon them, as well as

inferiors, which in some cases is hard to perform. Magistrates are to

defend and protect their people, and therein many times run great

hazards, and are exposed to great cares and difficulties. Pastors are

to guide and instruct the flock, to warn, reprove, exhort them, and

know the state of the flock by frequent visiting of them. Parents are to

educate their children, and bring them up in the nurture and admoni-

tion of the Lord. Husbands (1 Peter iii. 7) are 'to dwell with the

wife according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the

weaker vessel, as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers

be not hindered.' This submission on the superior's part lieth in the faith-

ful and loving discharge of their duty to the meanest within their charge;

as the magistrate to administer justice equally to all people, high and

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low ; the pastor to dispense his duty to rich and poor : James ii. 1,

\* My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect

of persons.' The husband is to cherish the wife in all conditions, sick

and well ; masters to stoop to do good to the meanest of their servants,

and not rule them according to passion and will ; they have souls to

save or lose as well as the best of the family, and therefore they are to

take care of all of them, that they may serve the Lord, they and all

their household ; their outward condition doth no way hinder our duty

to them. Here all are put upon the same level : James i. 9, 10, ' Let

the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted ; but the rich

in that he is made low.'

[2.] Because this duty calleth upon us for the meanest services for

the common good ; as when a magistrate defendeth the poor against

the mighty, and disdaineth not to appear for his meanest subjects :

Job xxxi. 34, ' Did I fear a great multitude ? or did the contempt of

families terrify me, that I kept silence, and went not out of door?'

When the meanest had right on their side, he would own them in it,

and had courage and fortitude to bear out their cause, though never so

great multitudes opposed them ; neither did the fear of inconveniences,

contempt, or calumnies, hinder him to appear for their right. So when

ministers visit the meanest, and are ready to repair to them, and pray

for them, and take all manner of pains to help them in their spiritual

estate. So for masters, when they are careful to help their poor ser-

vants in their sickness, and provide for them to the best of their

power.

[3.] With all patience to bear their infirmities. It may be they are

weak, froward, and know not their duty. The apostle telleth us, Kom.

XV. 1, ' We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the

weak, and not to please ourselves.' They that know the nature and

extent of christian liberty ought to relieve others that do not so well

understand it, and should not too rigorously stand on their own

knowledge. So governors are to bear with the infirmities of those

under their authority, yea, with their sinful weakness when overtaken

in a fault ; not to be severe : Gal. vi. 1, ' Brethren, if a man be over-

taken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit

of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.' Now this

is a submitting, or a condescension.

[4.] As to equals, there is a submitting ourselves one to another':

Bom. xii. 10, ' Be kindly afi'ectioned one to another, with brotherly

love, in honour preferring one another ; ' Phil. ii. 3, ' Let nothing be

done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each

esteem other better than themselves.' We are better acquainted with

ourselves than others ; we want some perfection and accomplishment

God hath given to them. We ought to speak of our own gifts with

modesty, of theirs with charity ; to be severe at home, where we can

examine and sift all circumstances, but charitable abroad, where a

modest superficial view of things doth best, without a jealous inquiry.

[5.] We are to speak to one another by way of instruction and reproof:

Col. iii. 16, 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom,

teaching and admonishing one another ; ' Lev. xix. 17, ' Thou shalt not

hate thy brother in thy heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neigh-

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bour, and not suffer sin upon him.' Now it is a submission to take it

well : Ps. cxli. 5, ' Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness ;

and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil/ Now our yielding

to private admonition is an argument of our condescension, and sub-

mitting ourselves to one another. But the business is —

Whether an inferior may reprove a superior ?

I answer — It is not a work of mastery, but of christian charity, which

lieth upon all ; and when it is modestly managed, it is lawful. The

reproof of a superior is an act of justice, of an inferior an act of charity,

that we may not sulTer evil upon a brother. Naaman's servants reproved

their master, but with great reverence : 2 Kings v. 13, ' My father, if

the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have

done it ? How much rather then when he saith to thee, wash and be

clean ? ' Now when this is wisely and prudently managed, the elder

should take it well from the younger : Job xxxii, 4, ' Now Elihu had

■waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he.' Master

from the servant, as Naaman did, and magistrates from their subjects,

and all superiors from their inferiors,

II. The graces which are necessary foi- this, to submit ourselves one

to another. It is required that we be filled with the Spirit. But I

answer —

1. Love, which is the cement of human society ; for where love

reigneth, there will be mutual service and submission : Gal. v. 13, ' But

by love serve one another ; ' Eom. xii. 10, ' Be kindly afFectioned one

to another, with brotherly love.^ Christians should be made up of per-

fect kindness. Where there is love in superiors and inferiors, they will

respect each other's good and profit ; and so all christians, none excepted,

will be servants one to another ; as being members of the same body,

they ought not to live to themselves only, but promote the good of the

body, and every member thereof : 1 Cor. xii. 27, ' Now ye are the body

of Christ, and members in particular.' In their place and calling every

one will do his part, and therefore love sweeteneth all things, and will

make us stoop, though to serve the meanest person in the world.

2. Humility, which is opposite to fastidiousness, disdain, and con-

tempt : 1 Peter v. 5, ' Ye all of you be subject one to another and be

clothed with humility ; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace

to the humble.\* As occasion serveth we should humble ourselves to

perform the meanest offices to our brethren. Proud lofty spirits look

upon every duty towards their neigbour as below them ; they think it

is a vile debasing a man's self ; pride and arrogancy cannot endure any

such subjection. Now humility is required of all, of whatsoever age,

estate, and condition, of the highest as well as the meanest, like a spire,

minimus in summo, when at highest, casts the least shadow ; and laden

boughs hang the head.

3. ' The fear of God,' that is in the text. Now this ev ^o/3a) Qeov,

\* in the fear of God ' —

[1.] Noteth the impulsive cause, that obedience to this precept flow-

eth from this cause. It is done in conscience to his command, and then

it is acceptable to God. In singleness of heart fearing God. Nothing

is sincerely done toward God and men but what is done in conscience

to his command, and with respect to his glory ; therefore inferiors must

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obey their superiors ia all lawful things upon God's command, and

superiors must condescend to all duties toward their inferiors upon

God's command : Gen. xlii. 18, 'I fear God,' saith Joseph, and there-

fore he durst not oppress his brethren.

[2.] The fear of God is the rule and measure of this submission.

As it influenceth, so it limiteth it : ' Submit to one another,' but usque

ad aras, where it entrencheth not upon our duty, not doing anything

to please men, which is forbidden by the law of God : Acts v. 29, ' Then

Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God

rather than men.' Therefore the fear of God must regulate the acts of

this condescension in good and lawful things, not to flatter and serve

our neighbour in his iniquity, but only to please others so far as is con-

sistent with the fear of God.

[3.] The fear of God is necessary, and a great help to this duty.

(1.) Partly to tame that natural fierceness that is in the heart of man,

that we may not refuse the yoke ; as Nabal was ' such a son of Belial,

that a man could not speak to him,' 1 Sam. xxv. 17. Some are so

harsh and churlish, that they will not admit any debate of the cause,

or stand so stiffly on their right that they will not bate an ace, say they.

Put is this becoming the fear of God, or that lenity which christians

should use one to another ?

(2.) To check our pride, that we may not be ashamed to serve our

neighbour in love. It may be they are vile, and of low esteem in the

world ; but they serve a great God, therefore offend them not ; Mat.

xviii. 10, ' Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones ; for I

say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of

my Father which is in heaven.' The meanest of God's servants are

above our contempt ; therefore do not neglect the good and advantage

■of any, the meanest person. The angels of God are their guardians

upon earth, yet have continual frequent recourses to God's glorious

presence, to make requests or complaints on their behalf. Therefore

those that are so high in God's favour, though little in their own and

the world's account, ought not to be despised by you.

(3.) To bridle and curb excess of power. There is a curb and bridle

upon the beasts, though they excel men in strength and power, and so

they are contained in their subjection and obedience to man : Gen. ix. 2,

\* The fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of

the earth,' that they may not harm you. So is the fear of God a re-

straint upon man. Nehemiah ' did not eat the bread of the governors,

because he feared God,' Neli. v. 15. So Job despised not the cause of

his servants, because he and his servants were equally subject to God :

Job xxxi. 14, \* What then shall I do when God riseth up ? and when

he visiteth, what shall I answer him ? '

III. I am now to prove that this is an unquestionable duty.

1. It is required in scripture : Gal. v, 13, ' By love serve one another.'

Py God's providence some are masters, some are servants ; but by God's

injunction all are to serve one another in love : 1 Peter v. 5, ' Likewise

ye younger submit yourselves unto the elder ; yea, all of you be subject

one to another.' So that besides the subjection of inferiors, there is a

mutual submission and subjection required of all christians, whereby

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tliey are bound to stoop and do good to others, even to them of the

lowest degree.

2. I prove it by example. I shall first produce the example of our

Lord Jesus Christ : John xiii. 3-5, ' Jesus knowing that the Father

had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God,

and went to God ; he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments ;

and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poured water into

a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the

towel wherewith he was girded ; ' that is to say, Jesus knowing the

dignity of his person, and that he was the eternal Son of God, and wa&

about to return to his glory, to take possession of all power in heaven

and earth, after the manner of a servant or waiter of the meanest

quality, in all humility sets himself to wash and wipe the feet of his

own disciples. By the magnificence of the preface, a man would think

he had been about to work some great miracle, or give some notable

instance or demonstration of his divine power, but the only instance to

be seen was that of humility and love. We keep &tate and stand upon

our terms, think it much below us to do any mean office of kindness

and love to inferiors ; but Christ would exercise the greatest humility

when he had the highest thoughts of his own glory ; to take down our

pride, and to show us that greatness should not hinder us from conde-

scending to the necessities of the meanest people. None is too high to

do good, and to humble himself when he may profit others. Well,

then, should we not submit ourselves one to another, when Christ hath

given us such an example, and urged it upon us for our imitation :

John xiii. 13-15, ' Ye call me master, and Lord : and ye say well ; for

so I am. If I then, your Lord and master, have washed your feet, ye

also ought to wash one another's feet ; for I have given you an example,

that you should do as I have done to you.' My next example shall be

of the apostle Paul : 1 Cor. ix. 19, ' For though I be free from all men,

yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.'

This was the condescension of this blessed apostle ; though obliged to

none, he made himself a servant to all. Bondmen and slaves were

wholly in the power of their masters, without giving them any wages

or reward ; to this he alludeth. Paul was a free man, yet he made

himself their slave and servant to gain them to Christ, without any

respect to his own profit. My next instance shall be of Job : chap,

xxxi. 13, 'If I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my

maid-servant, when they contended with me.' Though servants and

bond-slaves had no power to enter into judgment with their masters, yet

he gave them free liberty to plead their cause against him ; that is, he

would hear their complaints of his carriage towards them, and did

endeavour to satisfy them, as justice and equity did require ; and

used no kind of insolency tow^ards them that were his inferiors, even

his own servants.

3. Now I shall give you the reasons of this duty.

[1.] To prevent contempt. Human nature is incapable of bearing

it. Whatsoever rank we are in, we should not despise others, but

acknowledge the gifts of God in them. Therefore, to prevent this con-

tempt and disrespect that is usually in men's hearts towards inferiors

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(and is a sore trial to them), God requireth that we should submit

ourselves to one another. I remember it is said, Prov. xiv. 31, ' He

that oppresseth the poor reproachetli his maker ; but he that honoureth

him hath mercy on the poor.' There is a double sort of men there

represented, some that oppress the poor, and some that have mercy on

the poor. They oppress that despise them, contemn them, deny them

their right ; these add affliction to affliction, and so reproach God, who

puts men into this condition. On tlie other side, they have mercy on

the poor that relieve them, that have the courage and the heart to

perform their duty to them, giving them food, raiment, counsel, pro-

tection ; this man honoureth God, acknowledgeth the dominion of his

providence, that God might have put him into the same condition

Again, Prov. xvii. 5, ' Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his maker.'

God maketh poor and rich. The heathens counted things struck by

thunder sacred. It is God that hath distributed the world into hills

and valleys, who hath also made the condition of one man to differ from

another. Once more, Prov. xviii. 3, ' When the wicked cometh, thea

cometh also contempt ; and with ignominy, reproach ;' that is to say,

they have a wicked and naughty heart that are apt to contemn their

neighbours and neglect offices of love to them, and there is nothing so

bad but they will do and say against them.

[2.] Because there are none living whom God alloweth only to live

to themselves. We are all bound to promote the common good. Now

because the duties of inferiors are burdensome, God hath required, by

way of recompense, and in a kind of equity, that others should live to

us as we live to them. As the apostle saith, 2 Cor. viii. 3, ' For I mean

not that other men be eased and you burdened.' So that duties of

inferiors are better performed, and superiority and authority is sweetened

to tliem when it is beneficial.

[3.] Submitting ourselves to one another is required for a supply

of mutual necessities. We lack something that the meanest have ; if

they have strength for labour, others have wisdom and conduct for

government. There must be a contemperation ; if some are fitted to

serve, those that have wealth should bless God that he hath put them

into such an able condition to hire their service ; if some have wisdom

to contrive, others have elocution to recommend a good design ; both

must serve one another in love. Traffic and commerce is maintained

in the world by several commodities of each country's growth. So

society and communion among mankind is kept up by variety of gifts;

one is for labour and service, another hath wisdom, another wealth,

another courage and valour, and all for the good of the whole,

[4.] Because of equality ; the equity of this mutual submission is

built upon a double equality — (1.) The actual equality of all men by

nature ; (2.) The possible equality in the course of God's providence.

(1.) The actual equality of all men by nature. All are made by the

same God : Acts xvii. 26, ' And hath made of one blood all nations of

men ; ' Neh. v. 5, ' Our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, and their

children as our children ;' Mai. ii. 10, ' Have we not all one Father?

hath not one God created us ? ' If some be superiors, and otherC

inferiors, yet all are equal by nature : Job xxxi. 15, ' Did not he that

made me in the womb make him ? and did not one fashion us in tlie

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womb ? God is the framer of all mankind, the small as well as the

great, and that equally in the same kind and in the same way, what-

ever difFerence of state there he afterward. Now when God exalts men,

they should be mindful of this, if set afar above others by the Lord's

grace ; therefoie they should not bear it high against the meanest ; they

are their own flesh.

(2.) A possible equality in the course of God's providence : Heb. xiii.

3, \* Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them ; and them

which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.' Before

we go out of the body there may be strange changes. As the Shuna-

mite, who told the prophet, 2 Kings iv. 13, ' She dwelt among her own

people,' and therefore thought she had no need of the prophet ; yet

within a while she had need of the prophet's man, when she came and

cried to the king for her house and for her land, 2 Kings viii. 5. Well,

then, this mutual submission is necessary for us ; not only as we are

christians, but as we are men.

[5.] We have one Lord to whom we must be accountable : Job xxxi.

14, ' What then shall I do when God riseth up ? and when he visiteth,

what shall I answer him ? ' There is a religious account besides a

natural. Though some are set higher than others, yet God is infinitely

high above them all : Eccles. v. 8, ' For he that is higher than the

highest, regardeth ; and there be higher than they.' Now those that

know this will tremble to do wrong to the least.

Use 1. To show how much the christian religion befriendeth human

societies ; for we owe duties one to another in our several stations. It

is neither injurious to princes nor subjects, but it commandeth every

one to do good according to his calling.

2, Where the fear of God is rooted in the heart of any, it will make

him tender and careful of his duty to man, and from a right principle

and motive, and in a right manner, and to a right end.

SERMON XXVIL

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Eph. v. 22.

There is a general complaint of people's faultiness in their relation ;

they have been so long untrue to God, that now they are grown unfaith-

ful to one another. It concerneth us to stop this growing mischief

Ministers should not be accessory to this common depravation of

manners by their silence. Let us warn them of their duty, whatever

cometh of it; and therefore, having continued my discourse on the

several verses of this chapter hitherto, I would not dare to break it off

here. The apostle having laid down general duties which belong to

all christians, he cometh to particular precepts that concern the well

ordering of domestical society. Every complete family consists of three

pair of relations — husband, wife ; parents, children ; masters and ser-

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vants. The first relation, between husband and wife, is the chiefest,

which is the foundation of the rest ; therefore he beginneth with them.

And first with the duty of the wife, because it is more easy to perform

the duty of love than subjection. To love is sweet, but to obey tedious.

Besides, by the obedience of the wife the husband is the sooner induced

to love her. The submission of the inferior is a strong motive to the

superior to do his part. Therefore he begins with the wife, and saith,

'Wives submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord.'

In the words there are —

1. The duty of the wife, ' Wives, submit yourselves.'

2. The persons to whom it is to be performed, ' To your owa,

husbands.'

3. The manner how, ' As unto the Lord.'

1. For the duty, ' Submit yourselves.' Subjection in the general on

God's part noteth the subordination of one creature to another accord-

ing to his wise disposal, as the imperfect to the more perfect, and this

for the good of both ; for it is so ordered, that in all relations comfort

and duty shall go togetlier. On our part it is a ready inclination to

obey this order set by God ; for every creature must know his place,

and be content with the order wherein God hath set him. According

to this order, submission is required of the wife towards her husband ;

for though she is not to be subject as children to their parents, much,

less as servants to thfeir masters ; no, this subjection is more free and

ingenuous ; for there is a greater co-ordination between husband and

wife than other relations. There is a av^vjla, they draw as fellows

in the same yoke ; yet subject she must be ; for there can be no order

kept in the family unless all the rest be subject to the father of the

family. Therefore this authority which the husband hath over the

wife is such as is necessary to the order of the family, and the safe and

prudent management of affairs herein, and also their comfortable

cohabitation with each other; and so this subjection is no more than

is convenient, equitable, and just.

2. The persons, ' To your own husbands.' This is as often repeated

as the precept is repeated, and is mentioned partly to note loyalty and

chastity. She is to submit, not to the adulterer, but such as they are

bound to by their own choice and conjugal covenant. And partly to

prevent tyranny. She is to be subject to her own husband, not to the

strange woman introduced into the family to usurp the rights of

marriage.

3. The manner how it is to be done, ' As unto the Lord.' By the

Lord is meant Christ; and the particle as is a note of similitude, not

of equality ; for the husband's authority is not equal with that ol

Christ. This clause importeth many things.

[1.] The regulation of the duty ; it must be done willingly and sin-

cerely, resembling that submission which is performed to Christ, whose

image, in his government over the church, the Imsband beareth in his

superiority over the wife. God hath power to dispose of his own crea-

tures as he pleaseth, and as he is obeyed by the servant in the person

of his master : Eph. vi. 5, ' Be obedient to your masters as unto Christ ; \*

and again, ver. 7, ' Doing service to the Lord ' ; so he is obeyed by the

"wife in the person of the husband, who therein is his image : 1 Cor.

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XI. 3, ' I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ,

and tlie head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God ; '

that is to say, Christ in respect of his office of mediator, is under God,

but above all men ; so the man being under Christ, is above all women.

Well, then, as we should be obedient unto Christ willingly, heartily,

and sincerely, so must the woman be obedient to her husband, who is

an emblem of his superiority and power.

[2.] It may import the enforcement, the reason and motive of this

iluty, because Christ hath commanded it ; and by virtue of the law of

Christ all wives must be subject to their husbands ; which doth not

disannul, but confirm God's institution, for his precepts are not priva-

tive, but accumulative. It is good to see how this duty hath been

enforced, first as natural, then as penal, lastly, as comfortable. First,

as natural, by the law of nature : 1 Cor. xiv. 34, ' The women are to

be in obedience, as also saitli the law.' Where, besides God's positive

precept, the apostle urgeth the law of nature, ' they ought,' ' as also

saith the law.' Secondly, it hath been urged as penal : Gen. iii. 16,

when the woman had sinned, ' Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and

he shall rule over thee.' If there be anything grievous in it, it was

introduced by sin. Therefore if this subjection be not so free as before

the fall, but joined with sorrow and difficulty, they must remember

what occasioned it. Then, lastl}^ it is urged as comfortable, as required

by the law of Christ, and resembling the communion between Christ

and the church ; for so it is spoken of everywhere in this chapter.

Well, then, the woman is first to subject herself to Christ, and in love

to him to subject herself to her husband.

[3] ' As unto the Lord ' implieth a limitation ; this subjection must

be in all things which belong to the lawful authority and superiority

of the husband ; for so it seemeth to be expressed, Col. iii. 18, ' Wives,

submit yourselves to your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.' Alt

fitting obedience must be yielded to him, so far as Christ hath given

the husband power over the wife.

[4.] It importeth Christ's acceptance of this duty. He interpreteth

this subjection and obedience as given to himself, and the contrary as

rebellion against himself; for it is service done to Christ : which may

give the woman comfort against all unkindnesses, and unthankful

returns from her husband. She is obedient, but the husband frownrd ;

but Christ will recompense this dutiful submission, though the husband

do not.

Doct. That wives must reckon it their unquestionable duty to be

subject to their husbands.

Let me show you — (1.) Wherein this subjection consisteth ; (2.)

The reasons and grounds of it.

I, Wherein it consisteth. To speak briefly of it, this subjection

lieth in two things — in reverence and obedience.

1. In reverence, which is both inward and outward.

[1.] The inward, in a due esteem of the husband, which is the

ground of all love and submission. So it is said, Eph. v. 33, ' Let the

woman reverence her husband.' If for nothing else, yet in a humble

acknowledgment of his right by God's ordinance ; for esteem is not

only due to personal qualifications, but to the eminent dignity wherein

Ver. 22.] ser:\ions upon ephesians v. 439

God hath placed any creature with whom we have commerco ; and if

we cannot acknowledge them for any worth in them, yet we must ac-

knowledge God in them, who hath put his image of superiority upon

them, that we may the better discharge our duties to them.

[2.] Outward reverence is both in word and deed. First, in word,

by a reverent speaking of them and to them ; for the Holy Ghost

taketh notice of this : 1 Peter iii. 6, ' Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham,

calling him lord.' Sarah testifieth her obedience and dutiful carriage

to her husband by her respectful language to him and of him. The

Lord taketh notice of the least act of sincere obedience to his commands,

even when it is mixed with many sinful failings. The whole passage

from whence this is taken savoured of unbelief: Gen. xviii. 12, 'After

I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also ? '

There is nothing commendable but that one word which expresseth her

reverence of her husband, and yet she is commended as one of the holy

women trusting in God ; and from thence the apostle inferreth how

much women should give reverence to their wicked and infidel

husbands, for that is the case in hand. Secondly, in deed ; their

behaviour towards them should be far from all irreverence and con-

tempt ; as it is taken notice of as a wicked practice in Michal, that her

husband was despised in her eyes when he testified his religious joy

by, dancing before the ark ; and therefore God smote her with barren-

ness till the day of her death, 2 Sam. vi. 20, with 23. She upbraids

him, and mocketh him : ' How glorious was the king of Israel to-day ! '

as if he had behaved himself not like a king, but one of the rascal

multitude. Mark, it is said in the 16th verse that first 'she despised

him in her heart,' and then taunts at him, and uttereth her contempt

by scornful and proud upbraiding. When their love is stabbed at the

heart, the outward carriage will not be dutiful, but contemptuous and

scornful. But doth God pass by this breach of matrimonial duty ? No ;

she procured from God a sore punishment ; she continued barren to the

day of her death, and her crime is registered with the black coal of

infamy to all posterity.

2. Obedience ; that is showed in many things.

[1.] In studying to please rather than to be pleased ; for the apostle

telleth us that ' she that is married careth for the things of this

world, that she may please her husband,' 1 Cor. vii. 34 ; that is,

counts it part of her calling to take her part and care of domestical

iiffairs, that she may be pleasing and acceptable to her husband.

[2.] By fulfilling his commands in all things lawful, and not con-

trary to her duty to God : Titus ii. 5, ' Let wives be obedient to their

own husbands.' And this not with a grudging, discontented sullenness ;

as Zipporah, in circumcising her son, cast the foreskin at Moses' feet,

saying, ' Surely a bloody husband art thou to me,' Exod. iv. 25, by way

of angry upbraiding him, that such severity must be exercised on her

son ; at least that is the meaning our translation seemeth to hold forth.

But with readiness and willingness, as a duty to be performed as unto

God, who will be served not by constraint, but with a ready mind ; and

therefore they must obey not out of necessity, but conscionably, and

with all cheerfulness. Instances of this we have in holy women who

trusted in God ; as Sarah followed Abraham when he went into a

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strange country, and was partaker with him of the blessings there,

Gen, xii. 5 ; and in entertaining the angels, Gen. xviii. 6. When

Abraham said unto Sarah, ' Make ready quickly three measures of fine

meal, and knead it quickly, and make cakes upon the hearth ' ; we

find no disputing and gainsaying of these commands, but a ready

obedience is presupposed, which all good women should imitate.

[3.] By submitting her will to her husband's content, and her de-

sires to his approbation and allowance: Gen. iii. 16, ' Thy desire shall

be to thy husband,' that is, subject to him, 'and he shall bear rule

over thee.' This is one clause in the woman's censure after the trans-

gression ; and we can neither make God's laws straiter nor larger

than they are, and therefore the woman must be content with the duty-

God hath imposed on her.

[4.] In patience under his rebukes. So the apostle : 1 Tim. ii. 12,

' But I suffer not a woman to teach, and to usurp authority over the

man, but to be in silence.' The apostle givetli directions there con-

cerning the woman's public and domestical carriage. As to her public

carriage, ' I suffer her not to speak in the church,' ovSe avOevrelv apSp6<f,

that is the word ; not to carry it as if her will were authentic, or the

rule of the family, but, in opposition to both, she is to be ' in silence ; '

as not to teach in the church, so at home to be obedient without re^

plying or countermanding. And that is the reason why a meek and

quiet spirit is so much commended as an ornament of a gracious

Avoman : 1 Peter iii. 4, ' The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which

in the sight of God is of great price.' Meekness and quietness is

chiefly exercised in bridling our passions, when anything falleth out

cross and contrary to our desires and expectations, and we eschew all

needless contradiction and expressions of malcontentedness. Now this

is not only gaining upon the husband, but is very acceptable to God, who

delighteth in the graces he hath wrought in his own people. But now,

on the contrary, a humorous moroseness and impatiency is very dis-

pleasing unto God and man, and destructive of family society : Prov.

xiii. 19, \*A contentious wife is a continual dropping.' As the coming

in of the rain in a ruinous house doth founder it, and rot it more and

more, and nothing can be preserved from hurt by reason of it, so there

is no safety nor comfort in cohabitation with those of that temper. So

again, Prov. xxvii. 15, 16, \* A continual dropping in a rainy day, and a

contentious woman, are alike. Whosoever hitleth her, hideth the wind,

and the ointment of his right hand which bewrayeth itself ; ' that is,

a brawling woman is so fierce, that a man can no more tame her tlian

shut up the wind in the hollow of his fist, nor hide the smell of a fra-

grant ointment when he hath it in his hand ; so ready they are to show

their petulancy upon all occasions.

[5.] By being a comfort and a help to him : Gen. ii. 18, ' It is not

good that man should be alone ; I will make him a help meet for him.'

The woman is to be a help, not a hindrance ; not the governor, for the

right is originally in the man, but a help in government, to ease him

in part of his burden and cares ; a help every way, for the comfort of

society, for assistance in governing the family, for the increasing and

for the propagation and continuance of posterity ; for these uses was

the woman created, and intended by God, though by sin afterward she

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became a snare to him. Well, then, this is her office and duty of

Kervice still, which by God she is deputed unto. She is to be a help

before him, that is, to minister unto him ; as when they sought a wife

for David : 1 Kings i. 2, ' One that may stand before the king.' Now

this is the duty of all good wives : Frov. xxxi. 12, ' She will do him

good, not evil, all the days of her life ; ' that is, she studieth to do-

good to her husband, and to prevent the evil that may come unto him ;

whereas foolish wives pluck down the house they should build up,

Prov. xiv. 1, proving moths in their husband's estates by their idleness

and wastefulness ; thorns in their sides, vexing those whom they should

comfort ; snares, by perverting those whom they should draw to God

and quicken in godliness, corrupting the cliildren and family whom

they should instruct. In short, this we learn by this point, that the-

woman is not man's guide, but his help ; and those abilities which God

hath given her are for obedience, not for government ; the man being

ruler and governor, but the wife is his helper and partner in the cares

of the family. Assistance is her business, not chief command.

[6.] In not disposing servants or the estate without the husband's

leave or consent. Servants : when Sarah thought herself wronged or

despised by Hagar, yet she puts her not away till she had sought the

husband's permission, and made her complaint to him : Gen. xvi. 6^

' Behold, thy maid is in thy hand ; ' before she could do nothing to her.

But now as to the disposing of the estate there is a greater difficulty.

Certain it is she may not take wastefully of her husband's substance to

spend at her pleasure ; but she is not utterly barred of works of mercy ;

for this duty lietli upon all : ' To communicate and distribute forget

not.' And it is said of the good wife, Prov, xxxi. 20, ' She stretcheth

forth her hands to the poor ; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the

needy,' She hath not only some small pittance to give to the poor, but

a larger bounty for the needy and deeply necessitous ; therefore it m

said, ' She reacheth out her hands ; ' that is, distributeth to them in a

more plentiful measure. And we read, Luke viii, 3, that ' Joanna the

wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others,

ministered unto him of their substance ; ' that is, supplied him with

necessaries. Our Lord Jesus could have given them more than he

received, but he would leave an example, Now whence this stream

of bounty should be fed, whether of that which is personally their

own and reserved in marriage, or by express leave and consent

of the husband, as the Shunamite sought her husband's consent to

entertain the prophet, 2 Kings iv. 8-10, or by general consent,

when his heart trusts in her, and he referreth things to her dis-

cretion, or she being bound to show mercy as well as the husband,

she has not so far a joint interest in the estate to convert some of it

discreetly and wisely to holy and charitable uses ; whether from one or

all these, I will not now dispute. The discussion might do more hurt

than good, because of the unseasonableness and the calumnies of evil-

minded persons.

II. The grounds and reasons,

1. The law of nature written by God's own finger in the hearts of

men. We read of those who were heathens, that they enacted a law

and decree : Esther i, 20, 22, ' That every man should bear rule iu his-

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own house ; and that all the women should give honour to the husband,

both great and small ; ' and that upon the queen's not vouchsafing to

come to the king when he sent for her, they thought it an example of

an evil taint, and pernicious to their household power. Indeed both

anciently and to this very day, great is the power of the husbands over

their wives in Persia. Now shall heathens see that which christians

do not ?

2. God's ordination, which a holy heart dareth not disobey. Now

God hath expressly commanded it in his word in the text ; so Col. iii.

18, ' Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the

Lord ; ' Titus ii. 5, ' To be obedient to their own husbands ; ' 1 Peter

iii. 1, ' Likewise ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands.' And

where not ? A gracious heart will say, If God hath required me to be

subject, I will be subject. They dare not enlarge themselves where

God hath straitened them. The sight of God's will is instead of all

reasons ; as for their duty in general : 1 Thes. iv. 3, ' For this is the

will of God, even 3'our sanctification ; ' so for this particular duty of

obedience to superiors : 1 Peter ii. 15, ' So is the will of God, that ye

should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.' Well, then, if God,

who hath the power of disposing of his creatures, and who is to be obeyed

in the person of the husband, hath connnanded this, this silenceth all

debates and mutterings to the contrary.

3. The natural imperfection of the woman. The apostle calleth her

\* the weaker vessel, ' 1 Peter iii. 7. Abilities of mind are not ordinarily

so strong in her as in the man ; and they have fewer opportunities than

man hath for perfecting their natural parts ; and they are not so able

to provide for themselves, modesty not permitting them to go up and

down in the world. Therefore though God would have them copart-

ners with the man in the good things of this life, yet he hath entrusted

the government in the hands of the man,

4. The manner and order of the creation. The woman was made

after man, out of man, and for man. God formed man first, and then

the woman out of him, and for man's good. This reason is urged by

the apostle: 1 Tim. ii. 13, 'For Adam was first formed, then Eve ;' 1

Cor. xi. 8, 9, 'For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the

man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for

the man.' This noteth her subordination and dependence on him :

\* After man ; ' therefore man must be superior.

You will say then, The birds and beasts should be preferred, for they

were created before either.

Ans. The apostle speaketh of the same kind, not of diverse ; but

\* of man,^ and not he of her. . Therefore even in innocency was she sub-

ject to Adam, though then without grief and molestation: 'For man,'

as appears from the end of the creation of the woman, which was to be

a help and comfort to him ; for whatever serveth to any end is lesser

than the end for which it serveth.

5. From the woman's being first in the transgression; for this is a

part of the sentence. Gen. iii. IG, ' He shall bear rule over thee.' There

is little reason that the course settled in the creation should be changed

after the fall ; for the woman was first seduced, and then draweth her

husband into the fellowship of the sin. Therefore God in effect telleth

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her, Since thou canst not rule thyself, meet it is that thou shouldst he

put under the rule and power of another. Tlie apostle deduceth this

subjection from the same ground : 1 Tim. ii. 14, ' But Adam was not

-deceived, but the woman being deceived, was first in the transgression ; '

that is, Adam was not first deceived, but Eve ; she was first cheated

by the serpent, and so a cause and beginning of ruin on all mankind;

therefore it is equal ever afterwards that the woman should obey the

man, because the man perished by hearkening to the wife : her honour

was first lost.

6. The inconveniences that would ensue if this subjection were taken

away. There must be order in every society, witiiout which there

foUoweth division, and thereupon confusion ; and a house divided can-

not stand. Now the fittest to govern the family is the husband, who

is the most worthy, being created after the image of God, and the

woman after the image of the man. We see pax est tranquillitas

ordinis ; trouble the order of nature, and presently great inconveniences

follow, thunders, earthquakes, inundations ; so disturb the order of due

subjection in a family, and then nothing but strife, clamours, mutuaJl

jealousies.

Use 1. Is reproof to several sorts.

1. Of all those frothy and profane wits who scoff at women's subjec-

tion, and make it a matter of unsavoury mirth. See how misbecoming

chiistians this is, partly as it is a duty required by God. Should any

of God's laws be made matter of laughter and derision to us ? This is

to make mock of sin, which is the guise of atheistical fools, Prov. xiv.

9 ; for if we scofi' at the law that forbiddeth it, we make the transgres-

sion a mere matter of laughter. I am sure it weakeneth our reverence

of God's precepts. Partly as it is a great duty which enforceth all the

rest. For our easier and shorter direction, the scripture compriseth all

the duty of the wife in one word, ' submission ; ' as all the duty of the

husband in the word ' love.' And what God intended for a help, shall

we turn it into matter of laughter ? Let the woman submit to her

husband, and she will not stick at other duties ; as, let the husband

love his wife, and all family converse will be easy. Now should we

sti'ike at all conjugal duties, and stab them at the heart, as they do

that weaken that reverence which belongeth to the fundamental duties,

by making matter of sport of them ? Once more, the occasion on which

God revived this precept should intimate graver thoughts ; for it was

upon the woman's being first in the transgression which was the foun-

tain of all our miseries. Now the remembrance of the fall of our first

parents should check all profane and unsavoury mirth, rather than

feed it.

2. It reproveth those that dispute against it by manifold cavils ; but

no reasoning must be allowed against a plain and known duty. There-

fore, to prevent these disputes, let me lay down two conclusions —

[1.] On the wife's part; no privilege of birth, parts, breeding, can

exempt her from it. If she be a wife, whatever she be, she must be

in subjection to her own husband. We cannot dispense with God's

ordinance. She still ought to look upon her husband as one placed by

God in a degree of superiority above her ; and the law of nature, and the

ordinance of God, and her own covenant, bind her to submission and

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dutifulness to liim. God hath not said, Such women shall be subject,

and such not, but speaketh to all indefinitely : ' Wives, submit your-

selves to your own husbands.' If any have peculiar gifts of wisdom

and prudence, it is to make them the more serviceable, and to cover

and supply their husband's defects ; as Abigail did Nabal's.

[2.] On the husband's part ; no personal infirmity, no frowardness of

nature, no error in religion (1 Cor. vii. 13), deprives him of it. The

Imsband's wickedness and disobedience to the gospel doth not lessen

the relation, or vacate the duty belonging thereunto. No ; rather the

conscientious party is more strictly tied to a faithful discharge of their

duty, to gain upon the other party. The relation is only loosened in

case of adultery, and lawful divorce thereupon, Mat. v. 32, or wilful

desertion, 1 Cor. vii. 15. In other cases you must bear your burden.

If you object, They are unfit ; you should not have chosen such to rule

you ; but having chosen them, you must assist them the best you can

in a dutiful, not a masterly way.

3. It reproveth them that have no reason to allege but their own

imperious and peevish humour causeth them to live discontentedly and

disobediently in this relation ; they stand in no awe of their husbands,

and will not be subject. These live in plain rebellion and defiance of

God's ordinance ; and they should bethink themselves how it will stand

with the profession they make of being christians, or what account they

shall give in the judgment, when they are to pass their doom and trial,

how they have glorified God in this relation ; what they have done as

wives for his honour.

4. It reproveth those husbands that by their own default lose their

authority and dignity, and are themselves causes that their own power

is lessened and diminished, either by their intemperance, behaving

themselves as beasts rather than men, that they are altogether unfit

to judge what is meet and good for the family ; so that if the prudent

wife did not contribute her assistance, all would go to ruin ; or by their

faulty easiness, giving way to evil ; as Adam permitted himself to be

seduced by his wife, and Jezebel's overruling her husband Ahab in

the matter of Naboth's vineyard, which proved both the ruin of her,

and her husband, and the whole family, 1 Kings xxi. 7, 22-24. It is

true the husband is to govern not by fear, but by love. He is the

image of Christ in governing his church, and the wife is not a slave,

but a meet help ; but this love should not be a snare to him. And it

is true the wife should not be despised, for God saith to Abraham,

\* Hearken to the voice of Sarah.' But there is a difference between

hearkening to good counsel, and swallowing a temptation, and being

driven to evil by the woman's imperiousness.

Use 2, Is to exhort wives to submit to their own husbands.

Here I shall take notice — (1.) Of tte impediments; (2.) The

motives.

1. The impediments.

[1.] Pride. When they think of their own birth, beauty, wisdom,

beyond what is meet, and so take upon them more than they ought,

contemning the husband's authority ; but they should remember their

duty dependeth not upon their birth, beauty, portion, but God's

ordinance. On this is founded the husband's authority, and subjec-

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tion of the wife, which neither can nor ought to be abrogated and

changed by these accidental things. They should also consider that

pride is no great sign of their worth, and these are soonest blown up,

and it is conceit rather than solid worth, and that this motive of pride

is from the devil to draw them into rebellion against God.

[2.] A defect of true love ; for love maketh all services easy and

cordial : Gen. xxiv. 20, ' Jacob's seven years seemed to him but a few

days;' Ps. cxix. 167, 'My soul hath kept thy testimonies, and I love

them exceedingly.' And it is so to a woman also ; she that loveth

will study to please, for love will always mind us of our duty. There-

fore parents should not force their children to marry whom they do

not love : Gen. xxiv. 57, 58, ' We will call the damsel, and inquire at

her mouth.' Let them also take care of themselves, that they do not

for honour or riches make choice of such husbands as they cannot

love ; and after marriage let them avoid all, even the lightest, causes of

offence. Things glued together may be easily disjointed. God must

be sought to keep up this love ; especially let it not be weakened by

impure and straggling thoughts.

[3.] Affectation of vanity ; for a vain woman will never attend to

these household duties which belong to conjugal subjection, but will

either be gadding abroad to see and to be seen, affecting great pomp of

living, as costly array, vanity of fashions, and other things than will

stand with the profit of the family. The vain woman is described, Prov.

vii. 12, ' Now she is without, now she is in the street, waiting in every

corner.' Now they that are sick of vanities care neither for husband,

children, nor family ; and therefore let women watch against this evil.

The apostle directeth them to adorn themselves in modest apparel,

with shamefacedness and sobriety, 2 Tim. ii. 9.

[4.] Want of self-denial. Self-denial, as it maketh churches and

ikingdoms happy, so it maketh families happy, when every one in their

place is willing to bear a part of the burden ; this maketh us fit to

serve one another ; as the apostle : 1 Cor. x. 33, ' As I please all men

in all things, not seeking mine own things, but the profit of many,

that they may be saved.' So mutatis mutandis, proportionably should

the christian wife say. When we can deny self-will and self-ends, no

duties will be burdensome to us. Now self-denial is so essential to

Christianity, and, though it be troublesome to the flesh, bringeth such

comfort and peace into our consciences, that no good christian should

be without it ; especially the woman, who by her state of life is not

ordinarily exposed to public hazards, should not be without this cha-

racter of Christ's disciples, self-denial.

2. Motives.

[1.] It is easier and safer to obey than to prescribe and direct, and

more felicity is found in obedience than in commands ; and in the event

it is found more safe ; as Zipporah, by obeying her husband in circum-

cising the child, saved his life, Exod. iv. 26.

[2.] It is better to give the husband occasion of thanksgiving than

of complaining : James v. 9, ' Grudge not one against another, lest ye

be condemned,' fjurj arevd^ere ; especially in superiors : Heb. xiii. 7,

'Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for

they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may

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do it with joy, and not with j^rief : for that is unprofitable for you/

So in other relations God expecteth honour : Prov. xviii. 22, ' Whoso

findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour from the

Lord ; ' Prov. xix. 14, 'Houses and riches are the inheritance of our

fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.'

[3.] Your own peace, that your ' prayers may not be interrupted,'

1 Peter iii. 7.

[4.] Honour to God. (L) It takes away the reproach of the gospel :

Titus ii. 5, ' Obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God h&

not blasphemed ; ' that christian religion may not be thought to im-

pose anything contrary to moral virtues. (2.) That gainsayers may

be won to God: 1 Peter iii. 1, ' Ye wives be in subjection to your

own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they also may without the

word be won by the conversation of the wives.'

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J^or the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of

the church ; and he is the saviour of the hody. — Eph. v. 23.

The words contain a reason of the foregoing precept, both of the

matter and manner of the duty. Why subject to their ' own husbands ? '

Why, ' as unto the Lord ? ' The reason is taken from the resemblance

which the husband carrieth in family government to Christ.

In them observe three things — (1.) What the husband is to the wife ;

(2.) What Christ is to the church ; (3.) The resemblance between the

one and the other, ' Even as Christ.' There is a similitude, though not

an exact equality in the case.

In handling of this scripture, we must first speak of Christ's relation

to his church, and then of the husband's relation to the wife ; for first

we must consider the pattern before we can state the resemblance.

In the pattern two relations are mentioned ; ' Christ is the head of

the church, and lie is the saviour of the body.' These titles which are

given to Christ I shall speak of — (1.) Conjunctly; (2.) Separately and

apart.

1. Conjunctly. Christ is both head and saviour ; he is a head to

rul'e and govern his people, and a saviour to help, succour, and protect

them. The word head showeth the power wherewith he is invested ta

command, direct, and order the church. And the other word, saviour,

implieth our benefit, and the good that we have by his government.

He is such a saviour that lie is also a head ; such a head that he is

also a saviour. It is obvious and easy to observe, in Christ's style and

title, a mixture of words that imply power and sovereignty and also

goodness and mercy ; some that intimate privilege to us, others that

bespeak duty and obedience ; as Acts ii. 36, ' Therefore let all the house

of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom

ye have crucified^ both lord and Christ.' He is Lord, supreme

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governor, as well as Christ, an anointed saviour ; not only a saviour

to bless, but a lord to rule and command. As he saveth his people

from sin and misery, so he will also govern them. And on the other

side, Christ's dominion over the church doth tend unto, and is exer-

cised in bringing about, the church's salvation. So Acts v. 31, ' Whom

God hath raised up to be prince and saviour.' Still the compound

notion and mixed representation of Christ's offices is offered to our

serious consideration ; for these two must not be divided, head and

saviour, prince and saviour, lord and Christ.

[1.] To prevent mistakes and dangerous errors incident to mankind.

Some on the one side look upon Ciirist as a lawgiver only, and not

as a saviour, and so do not evangelise, but legalise Jesus ; as the

Samaritans had a temple, but they had no ark or mercy-seat ; they

turn Christianity into a mere legislation, while they cry up the rule of the

gospel and the example of Christ, but depreciate his merit and satis-

faction, do not represent Christ as a fountain of grace. On the other

side, some catch at comforts, but neglect Christ as head and lord.

Surely a libertine yokeless spirit is very natural to us : Ps. xii. 4, ' We

have said with our tongue. We will prevail, our lips are our own ; who

is lord over us ? ' The carnal world sticketh at Christ's authority.

Nolumus liunc regnare: Luke xix. 14, ' We will not have this man

to rule over us.' If he will come as a saviour, he shall be welcome ;

he may have customers enough for his benefits, for pardon and glory ;

but men cannot endure to hear of his laws and restraints, that he will

be sovereign and chief : Ps. ii. 3, Disrumpamus lora, ' Let us break his

bonds, and cast away his cords, say they.' The far greatest part of

the world is turned libertine, if not in opinion, yet in practice ; they

would not be under command, and checked in their licentious course

of living. They would have Christ as a saviour to bless them, but

not as a head to rule and govern them, to require repentance, morti-

fication, and strict walking, and such duties as the world looketh upon

as hai'sh and severe. He must join both together, for Christ is the

' author of eternal salvation to them only who obey him.'

[2.] To make our faith more sincere and entire. It is not a sincere

and entire faith, unless we receive Christ with thankfulness and love,

as our dearest Lord and saviour, and with our dependence upon his

merits, and there be gained a hearty consent of subjection to him as

our sovereign Lord and head. We must take him to be what God

hath appointed him to be, and accordingly be affected. Men love

privileges, but disclaim duties ; yet the consent of subjection is of the

essence of faith. I remember the prophet saith, Hosea x. 11, 'And

Ephraim is as an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn ;

but I have passed over upon her fair neck : I will make Ephraim to

ride ; Judah shall plongh, and Jacob shall break the clods.' It was their

fashion to thresh their corn by treading it. Now the mouth of the ox

that trod out the corn was not to be muzzled. Ephraim liked that

work well enough, yet conld not endure to harrow and break the clods.

Now it is not a regular faith, unless you give Christ the pre-eminence in

your hearts, as well as apply his benefits. Where Christ is a saviour

he must be a head too. If he save you, neither sin nor Satan must

lord it over you. He cureth the distempers of the heart as well as

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healetli the wounds of the conscience ; and must recover and jwssess

the heart as chief lord, as well as redeem us from wrath. Would

you so divide these two offices, that Christ must redeem you, and

JSatan govern you ? No ; Christ will do both or none. In short, these

two notions do help one another ; his being a saviour doth sweeten

our obedience and subjection to him ; and when we look upon him as

a lord, requiring such things at our hands, we must not neglect him

as a saviour and fountain of grace. To take the law out of the hand

of a mediator is very comfortable.

[3.] To help us in the matter in hand, namely, to conceive of the

husband's power over the wife. It is an authority mixed with love ;

not magisterial and imperious, but a loving government. It is

imperium henignum, a governing in love ; not tyrannical and rigorous,

but loving, gentle, and amiable ; such as a wife may look upon as a

mercy to herself, as well as a dignity to her husband. The authority

must not be so managed as that the love should disappear ; nor the

love so shown as to disown the authority ; as in Christ there is a

mixed relation of head and saviour, his government is to do good to

the body.

2. I come now to handle these titles severally, and I begin with that

of a head, and observe —

Doct. That Jesus Christ is the church's head.

I. So it is said, Bph. i. 21, ' He is head over all things to the church.'

He is over all things, but head to the church ; the sovereign of the

world, but in special relation to his people, as the head to the body :

Col. i. 10, ' He is the head of the body, the church.' It is a simili-

tude, but let us see what it importeth.

1. Oneness of nature between him and the church ; for head and

members suit. It was a monstrous image that was represented to

Nebuchadnezzar in a dream, where ' the head was gold, the breast and

arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, and the legs and feet, part

of iron and part of clay,' Dan. ii. 32, 33. In every regular body there

is a proportion and conformity, and so it is in the mystical body of

Christ ; because the brethren took part of flesh and blood, he took part

of the same, Heb. ii. 14. The church hath such a head as carrieth

conformity with the rest of the members. He and we have one flesh ;

and so the godhead, that was at such a distance from us, is brought

down in our nature that it might be nearer at hand, and within the reach

of our commerce. The same godhead is a fountain of grace, but not

a fountain sealed. In our natures it is a fountain opened, and ever-

flowing and overflowing for our comfort and use.

2. It implieth an eminency ; for the head is the most eminent part

of the body. As it is the noblest, so nature hath placed it nearest

heaven. The very situation doth in a manner oblige the other parts

to show their reverence. So Christ is the head of the church, infinitely

of much more worth than the church, as being the only-begotten Son

of God. Not man only, to carry a conformity with up, but God also,

that he might be a fountain of life and grace to us : Ps. xlv. 11, 'He

is thy God ; worship thou him.' Christ reigneth in heaven with his

Father, and from thence vieweth all the necessities of the body, and

sendeth forth those influences which are needful to every particular

member.

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3. The head is the most illustrious throne of the soul ; not only the

seat of nerves and senses, but of the memory and understanding ; so

there is in Christ a fulness of perfection, enabling him to do all the

duties of a head to such a great and necessitous body as the church is :

Col. ii. 3, ' In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.'

They are in our head for the use of the body.

4. It implies authority and power to govern. His excellency giveth

him fitness, but authority, right to rule and govern the church ; to

appoint officers, and to make laws that shall universally bind all his

people. Christ pleadeth this right when he sendeth abroad his officers

and ambassadors to proselyte the world, and to require them in his name

to repent and believe the gospel : Mat. xxviii. 18, 19, ' All power is

given to me in heaven and earth ; go therefore and teach all nations/

He giveth them a commission to make disciples among all nations.

The power of disposing all things concerning the church is originally

in Christ.

5. It implieth a strict union between him and the church, such as is

between the head and members in the natural body ; which union is

brought about externally by confederation, or visible owning the cove-

nant, and professing faith in Christ Jesus our Lord : Ps. 1. 5, ' Gather

my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me

by sacrifice ; ' and Acts viii. 37, ' See here is water ; what doth hinder me

to be baptized ? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart,

thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ

is the Son of God.' Internally by the Spirit of Christ converting us to

God : Kom. viii, 9, 11, ' If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he

is none of his. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the

dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall

quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.'

6. Thence there resulteth a communication of influences ; either —

[1.] Of common gifts to the ministers of the visible church, accord-

ing to that part which they sustain in the body : Eph. iv. 7, ' But to

every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of

Christ.' A common christian is to be discerned by common grace ; for

there is a superficial Christianity as well as a real Christianity, disciples

in name, as well as disciples in deed. All that profess the faith, and

are by visible covenanting adopted into Christ's family, are under a

visible administration of the covenant of grace ; and he giveth to

common christians these gifts of the Spirit which he giveth not to the

heathen world ; as knowledge of the mysteries of godliness, abilities of

utterance and speech about heavenly things, yea, some affection to these

heavenly and spiritual things : Heb. vi. 4, 5, ' For it is impossible for

those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift,

and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the

good word of God, and the powers of the world to come ; ' and the

stony ground received the word with joy, Mat. xiii. 20. But either

this vanisheth by impatiency of the cross, or is overmastered by sensual

inclinations. If it continueth, the affection is weakened by the cares,

riches, and pleasures of this life, so that it bringeth nothing to perfec-

tion, Luke viii. 13, 14. This doth not prove us true christians, or really

in God's special favour, but only visible and professing christians.

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[2.] Saving grace or spiritual life, and all those saving benefits which

are given to the regenerate or real LeHevers by the Spirit : 1 John iii.

24, ' And hereby we know that he abidetli in us by the Spirit given-

unto us.' They have life, and growth, and strength, and saving

influence from him, or from the sanctifying Spirit, that produceth and

worketh in them life : Gal. ii. 20, ' The life that I live in the flesh, I

live by the faith of the Son of God.' Growth : Col. ii. 19, 'And not

holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having

nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase

of God.' Strength : Eph. iii. 16,' That he would grant you, according

to the riches of his gloiy, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit

in the inner man.' This is undeniable ; without him we can da

nothing, John xv. 5. Through him all things, Phil. iv. 12. Nothing

savingly, but all things acceptably.

7. It implies sympathy with his members ; there is none of them

hurt but it redoundeth to him : Acts ix. 6, ' Saul, Saul, why persecutest

thou me?' All the injuries done to the body affect the head; the

tongue will cry out when the toe is trod upon, You hurt me. So such

a near conjunction is there between Christ and his members, that the

wrong done to them is done to him ; as, on the other side, the wrong

done to Christ is done to the members of the mystical body : Ps. Ixix.

9, ' The reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon me.'

As nature causeth all members to expose themselves for the preserva-

tion of the head, so the head is not unconcerned in the afiiictions of his

people ; their aflSictions are the afflictions of Christ : Heb. xi. 26,

' Esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures

of Egypt.' All that write maxims of policy acknowledge that the

prince, being the head of the state, is united with his subjects, and

their interests are common ; he that offendeth the subjects wrongeth

the prince. This was the reason that Seneca sometimes made use of

to sweeten the cruel humour of the emperor Nero, and to instil

clemency into the heart of that bloody prince, that he was head of the

commonwealth, and that in pardoning others he was pitiful to himself,

and in favouring his subjects he was kind to himself. And if we-

believe him, for a time Nero profited by his advice. If there came an

offender before him in the flower of his youth, he pardoned him upon

the account of the extravagancy of youth ; if stricken in years, he

pardoned his grey hairs, and left death the charge of execution ; if he

came of a good house, he respected his birth, and balanced the crime-

of the person with the services of his ancestors ; if of an obscure family^

he contemned the offenders, whose example could not prejudice the

commonwealth ; but if nothing else occurred, he pardoned him, and

spared himself in the person of the delinquent, considering that lie was

head of all the people, and suffered by their loss. I have brought this

to show you how reasonable it is to conceive that Jesus Christ, who is

really united to all his members, and who liveth in them by his S[)irit,

and they in him by faith, should be sensible of the indignities and

wrongs done unto them. Surely he that liveth in the faithful suffereth

in all his members.

Use 1. If Christ be head of the church —

1. Then there is no other that can usurp and take this honour upon-

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him. None can be the head of the church to whom the church is not a

body. I ground this argument on the saying of the apostle, Eph. i.

22, 23, ' And gave him to be head over all things to the church,

which is his body/ If the church cannot be said to be the pope's

body, the pope cannot be said to be the church's head.

2. None can be a political governing head to the church universal

but he who is a mediatorial head, of vital influence to them. I know

the papists distinguish of these things, and ascribe one to the pope, and

the other to Christ ; but the scripture alloweth not this wall of parti-

tion. None can be the one but he must be the other. Whenever it

speaketh of a political governing head, it speaketh also of a vital

influential head : Eph. iv. 15, 16, ' May grow up into him in all things,

which is the head, even Christ ; from whom the whole body fitly

joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth,

according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketli

increase of the body, unto the edifying itself in love.' Of this, and no

other kind of head, doth the scripture speak.

3. A ministerial, universal head, that shall give law to all other

churches and christian societies ; and if they depend not on him, shall

be excluded from the privileges of a christian church. This is, as to

matter of right, sacrilege ; for this honour is too great for any man,

and Christ hath appointed no such head, and therefore it is a manifest

usurpation of his royal prerogatives to set up such a head to control

his authority without him. And as to matter of fact, it is impossible,

the chui'ch being scattered throughout all parts of the known world,

which can have no commerce with such a head in matters essential to

its government and edification.

Use 2. Let us make conscience of those duties which this relation

bindeth us unto ; for if Christ be our head, we must subject ourselves

to him, and live by his laws. We preach him a lord : 2 Cor. iv. 5,

'For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.' And our

business is to cry up Christ's lordship and sovereign dominion over

souls : Col. ii. 6, ' As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk

ye in him.'

1. You must consent to his lordship. God hath appointed him, and

the church hath appointed him, Hosea i. 11. God by authority, and

the church by consent. We voluntarily acknowledge his dignity, and

submit unto him.

2. This consent must be verified by our constant practice ; for Christ

is to be owned, not only in word, but in deed also : Luke vi. 46,

' Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say ? '

It was a mockage when they cried, ' Hail, king of the Jews,' and spat

upon him and buffeted him. Christ will not accept of empty and

superficial compliments.

3. This practice and obedience must be such as will become so great

a Lord : Col. i. 10, ' Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing ; ' that

is, the Lord Christ. We must love him, and serve him, and please

him in all things ; not in a few only, which are not so cross to our

minds and wills, but give up an entire universal obedience to all his laws,

which are equitable and good, and enforced by the highest motives,

and that with the uttermost of our power and strength.

4. You must obey him, not only in his own proper remedial laws, such

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as faith and repentance, which concern our recovery, Acts xx. 21, but

grow complete in all the will of God. Without repentance our case

is not conipassionable ; without faith we do not own our Redeemer, by

whom we have so great a benefit ; but also the whole moral law of

God falleth with great authority on our consciences. Christ saith

expressly, Mat. vii. 21, 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord,

shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of

my Father which is in heaven.' The reason is, because the kingdom

of the Mediator is subordinate to the kingdom of God ; and this new

right of empire is cumulative, not privative ; beneficial to us indeed,

but not destructive of our duty to God.

5. We must not only mind the fundamental laws of entering into his

kingdom, but all the rules and statutes which he appointed for the

ordering of his house and family. Christ, that came to repeal the law

of Moses, did set up ordinances whereby his church might be kept

pure. All his laws concerning these must not be slighted ; for his

institutions do best preserve his honour in the world. Great chai-ges

are left : 1 Tim. v. 2, ' I charge thee, before God and the Lord Jesus

Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things ; ' 1 Tim.

vi. 14, ' Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the

appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Use 3. Is comfort to those that are in so near a relation to Christ.

He is not only a governing head, but a quickening head ; giveth life,

and strength, and growth : Eph. i. 22, ' He filleth all in all' He is

not only a commanding head, but a compassionate head ; is very tender

of the members of his mystical body, sensible of the wrong done to

him : Zech. ii. 8, \* He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.'

Injuries or benefits done to them redound to him : Mat. xxv. 45,

' Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least

of these, ye did it not unto me.' He not only requireth work, but

giveth a recompense ; we shall fare as he did, and enter into his glory :

John xii. 26, ' If any man serve me, let him follow me ; and where I

am, there also shall my servant be : if any man serve me, him will

my Father honour.'

II. I come now to handle the second title, ' He is the saviour of the

body.' He must do the part of a saviour as well as a head ; and his

dominion over the church is exercised in procuring her good and

salvation.

Here I shall show you — (1.) The nature of this salvation; (2.) The

manner, or the several ways by which Christ doth accomplish it.

First, The nature of it will be known by several distinctions.

1. The notion of a saviour is doubly applied — First, to him that

preserveth that which is already made, that it may not perish and

return into nothing, or to him that recovereth a thing that is lost out

of a state of perdition. In the first sense it is taken Ps. xxxvi. G,

\* Thou savest man and beast ; ' 1 Tim. iv. 10, ' God is the saviour of

all men, especially of them that believe.' There it is taken for the

protection of God's daily providence, which the beasts are capable of

as well as men, though it extendeth also to the highest angels, who are

still preserved in their first estate by the goodness of God. Thus

would Adam have been saved if he had kept himself in a state of

innocency. The second acceptation is for the recovery of a thing lost ;

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thus a pli3'sician saveth a man, not by preventing the disease, but by

curing it, when otherwise it woukl be mortal ; or as a shepherd saveth

a sheep that snatcheth it out of the mouth of the wolf or lion. As a

prince that rescueth his captive subjects, and saveth them out of the

hands of the enemy, so properly Jesus Christ is our Saviour ; for ' he

seeketh and saveth that which is lost/ Luke xix. 10. Our salvation

is a recovery and restoration ; we were by nature lost, and there is no

way of recovery but by Christ.

2. That salvation is positive and privative. We generally take it

in a privative sense and notion. If a person be delivered from an

evil likely to befall him, we count him saved. So it is taken Luke i.

71, ' That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand

of all that hate us.' There it importeth freedom from misery. But

this would not content and satisfy Christ ; he would also make us

everlastingly happy : John iii. 17, ' God sent not his Son into the

world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might

be saved ; ' where it hath a positive sense. So 1 Peter i. 5, ' Ye are

kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation ; ' meaning

thereby not only our deliverance from sin and misery, but our intro-

duction into glory ; as the Lord told Abraham, Gen. xv. 1, ' 1 am thy

shield, and exceeding great reward.'

3. Salvation is either temporal or eternal.

[1.] Temporal salvation, when we are saved from the dangers inci-

dent to the present life. In this notion it is taken 1 Peter iii. 20,

' Wherein eight souls were saved by water ; ' which can be meant of

no other than temporal salvation, for cursed Ham was one of them ;

therefore it is meant of safety from the outward judgment, I cannot

say but that sometimes we have temporal preservation by the death

of Christ. All our common mercies are the fruit of his mediatorial

satisfaction. The world would not have stood so long as it doth, nor

the wicked enjoy so many forfeited mercies, but in consideration of

the death of Christ. But the great salvation which the gospel holdeth

forth unto us is eternal salvation, Heb. v. 9, that body and soul may

be eternally safe in those blessed mansions which he hath prepared

for us. Freedom from the evils of the present life is ascribed to Christ.

We need not build a temple, as the heathens did, Dem saluti, to the

goddess of safety ; when they were saved and delivered from dangers

in their temples, they did offer sacrifices called salvation-offerings.

No ; ' Salvation belongeth unto the Lord,' Ps. iii. 8. Christians are

taught to direct their praises and thanksgivings to a better object :

Ps. Ixviii. 19, 20, ' Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with his

benefits, even the God of our salvation. He that is our God is the

God of salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues of death.'

[2.] However, we have a better salvation to wait for besides the

mercies of daily providence, even the enjoyment of God and Christ to

all eternity ; this is salvation, and this is blessedness. This is the end

of our faith, 1 Peter i. 5. Better we had never been born if we have

not an interest in this salvation. Alas ! when the pageantry of this

world is over, what will it benefit us to have had a little pleasure,

honour, or greatness in this life ? to be preserved from temporal

dangers, when we are reserved to wrath and judgment to come ? No ;

the eternal salvation is that from whence our Saviour is chiefly denomi-

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nated, and that we are to endeavour for and look after throughout our

whole lives.

4. Eternal salvation is either begun or consummate. Salvation

begun is attributed to the grace vouchsafed to us in this life ; as the

grace of justification or sanctification.

[1.] Justification : Eph. ii. 8, 'By grace ye are saved through faith,

not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.' He speaketh of justification,

which is principally by faith, and that salvation which is obtained in

this life as soon as we are accepted in Christ and freed from the guilt

of sin. So 2 Tim. i. 9, ' Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy

calling ; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose

and grace, which he hath given us in Christ Jesus before the world

began.' Then we are put in the way of salvation when we are adopted

and taken into God's family.

[2.] Sanctification is the other branch of this begun salvation, and

indeed a principal branch : Mat. i. 21, ' His name shall be called Jesus,

for he shall save his people from their sins.' He hath his name and

his ofiice for that use ; he doth not only save his people from trouble

and temporal misery ; yea, not only from hell and damnation, but

from their sins ; not only from the evil after sin, or malum naturale,

which is contrary to our interest and happiness, but from malum

morale, the evil of sin, which is contrary to God's honour and the

subjection we owe to him. Christ came to save us from this mainly ;

which is to be noted against one sort of men, who place our salvation

only in privileges and freedom from wrath and obligation to punish-

ment, and scarce allow sanctification the place of an evidence. Oh,

no ! The chief part of Christ's salvation, and the great work and

blessing of the Mediator, is to save us from our sins : Acts iii. 26,

' God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning

away every one of you from his iniquity.' On the other hand, many

expect pardon and heaven from Christ, and that he doth procure our

peace with God, but then think that we are left to work out all the

rest ourselves, and so lessen his sanctifying influence, as if it were not

go necessary. See Titus iii. 5, ' He saved us by the washing of re-

generation, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.' It is a great ])art

of his work to accomplish in us the things he requireth of us. That

is salvation, to save us from the power of sin as well as the guilt of sin.

Hitherto we have spoken of salvation begun ; the consummate and

complete salvation is that in heaven, which is the chief good of the

creature, and the mark we are to aim at ; that which is always in

the eye and hope of the godly ; yea, which convinced men do so

anxiously inquire after : ' What sliall I do to be saved ? ' Acts xvi. 30.

It is a state of perfect holiness and perfect blessedness ; and woe unto

lis if we should despise and neglect it : Heb. ii. 3, ' How shall we

escape if we neglect so great salvation ? ' It is salvation, gi-eat salva-

tion, and so great salvation. Those that delight in their lusts, and

despise it, what do they do but choose hell for their lusts' sake, and

cast off heaven because they will not walk in the way, nor take the

pains to get thither, and so wilfully deprive themselves of that life

and happiness offered to them ?

5. There is a typical saviour and a real Saviour. The people of

God of old were mostly acquainted with the typical salvation. Their

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hell was Egypt, their heaven was Canaan ; and therefore Moses was

their saviour, because he brought them out of Egypt, and Joshua their

saviour, because he led them into Canaan ; and their judges were

saviours, because they rescued them out of the hands of their temporal

enemies : Neh. ix. 27, ' In the time of their trouble, when they cried

uuto thee, thou heardest them from heaven ; and according to thy

manifold mercies, thou gavest them saviours who saved them out of

the hand of their enemies.' But now the Saviour of the new testament

was another manner of saviour, Heb. ii. 10. Jesus doth not free us

from Egypt, but from wrath to come : 1 Thes. i. 12, ' To wait for his

Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which

delivered us from the wrath to come.' He doth not vanquish Anakims,

but the devil ; to deliver us from the hurt and fear of him : Heb. ii.

14, ' That through death he might destroy him that had the power of

death, that is, the devil.' He doth not only lead us into Canaan, but

into heaven, into a better land of promise.

6. There are some inferior helps or subordinate instruments which

are called saviours ; but the Saviour, or the original author of all

salvation, is Christ. In temporal deliverances there are instruments

whicli God raiseth up to favour his people and manage their cause against

their enemies ; as Obad. ver. 21, ' Saviours shall come up on mount

Sion to judge the mount of Esau.' But now, as to spiritual and

eternal salvation, Christ hath his apostles and messengers, who instru-

mentally save the elect : 1 Tim. iv. 16, ' Thou shalt both save thyself,

and those that hear thee.' They are the instituted means, the occasion :

Phil. i. 19, ' I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your

prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.' But now as to

the original author, or principal cause of salvation, to Christ only, he

is aiTioc, Heb v. 9, the cause ; we translate it ' the author of salva-

tion.' So Acts iv. 12, ' Neither is there salvation in any other.' So

there are no other saviours but Christ only, either total, partial, or

collateral. Not total ; for none is like Christ, who is both God and

man, and so a fit mediator : 1 Tim. ii. 5, ' There is one God, and one

Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.' Not partial;

for Christ saveth to the uttermost : Heb. vii. 25, ' Wherefore he is able

also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing

he ever liveth to make intercession for them.' We need not seek our

salvation elsewhere ; our salvation cannot be so divided that part

should be sought of one and part of another, for then a man might be

in part saved and in part damned, if one concur and the other doth

not. Nor collateral ; for in the work of reconciliation with God Christ

stands alone ; no other cause can be admitted to bear a part, or make

his merit more full As to the grace of impetration, it is clear there

is no intercessor ; his arm alone wrought salvation for us, Isa. lix. 16.

But as to the grace of application, he employeth subordinate instru-

ments ; having laid the foundation by his death, by his word and

Spirit he maketh us capable of salvation, and giveth us a right to it.

But the institution is his, the blessing is from him ; therefore, properly

speaking, though ministers save, the word saveth, and baptism saveth,

3'et he is the Saviour.

.Secondly, The manner, or the ways and means by which Christ doth

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accompHsli this salvation for us. Briefly three ways — scdisfactione,

merito, et efficacia.

1. By way of satisfaction, because he saveth us from the guilt of

sin, the curse of the law, and the eternal wrath of God, which are the

lets and hindrances of our salvation, and could not otherwise be

removed by us. So we are said to be saved by his blood : Eom. v.

9, ' Much more then, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved

from wrath through him.' His blood was given as a ransom and

atonement to God's justice. He did not only suffer in honum nostrum,

for our good ; but loco et vice nostri, in our stead. He was made sin,

made a curse for us, and suffered what we should have suffered if we

had been dealt with in our own persons. This being an act of perfect

obedience, the Father was satisfied.

2. By his merit, because he procureth to us the favour of God, and

a right to all those blessings which are bestowed on the children of

God. Christ's death is to be considered not only as a satisfaction for

the breach of the old covenant, but as a merit by which the blessings

of the new are procured for us, Heb. ix. 1,5. He doth not only redeem

us from the curse of the law, but also doth purchase for us the favour

and image of God, and eternal happiness, which is consequent there-

upon : 1 Thes. v. 9, 10, ' For God hath not appointed us unto wrath,

but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that

whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.' Life

was purchased, as well as death, and the curse disannulled.

3. By way of efficacy and power, because by his Spirit he doth

effect and work in us all those things wliich belong to salvation. In

scripture we are sometimes said to be saved by the death of Christ, and

sometimes by the life of Christ ; as Kom. v. 10, that is, by the satis-

faction and merit of his humiliation, and by the power of his exaltation.

He redeemed us before, and by his power he doth efi'ectually apply it.

This power is necessary with respect to the party to be saved, and

the enemies of our salvation.

[1.] With respect to the party to be saved, which is man, who by a

foolish obstinacy is apt to turn back upon his own mercy ; and there

needeth the power of God to gain his consent, as well as the merit and sat-

isfaction of Christ to reconcile God unto us. There is a mighty power

necessary to batter down our unbelief and obstinacy of heart, which is

a wall of partition that divideth between God and us, as well as his right-

eous law which was broken by us ; and therefore Christ is said to save

us by a strong hand. Col. i. 13, and Kom. xi. 26, ' There shall come out

of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.'

[2.] In regard of the enemies of our salvation, the devil, the world,

and the flesh, whose assaults are so daily and assiduous, and the baits

presented so pleasing to our flesh, that the power of God is engaged

for our salvation : 1 Peter i. ,5, ' Who are kept by the power of God

unto salvation.' To keep alive and maintain God's interest in our

souls, nothing else, and nothing less can do it.

Use 1. Let us come to Christ for salvation if he be a saviour ; for

this is his office. All men would be saved, why then is there na

more resort and recourse to Christ ? This title is not a title of terror

and diead, but of hope and comfort. The gospel was appointed to give

us notice of it : 1 John. iv. 14, ' We have seen, and do testify, that the-

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Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.' "Well, then, your

first work is to see your necessity because of your sin and misery ; for

it is an awakening sense of our misery that maketh us prize our remedy.

The news of a saviour is welcome to the lost sinner that is in danger

of being damned in soul and body for ever. It is with every one of

us as it was with Lot in Sodom, fire and brimstone were ready to con-

sume the city ; God sends an angel in mercy to him to pull him out.

Gen. xix, 12, but he lingered and was loath to depart, ver. 16. Thus

it is with every one of us ; we are all by nature children of wrath, Eph.

ii. 3, deserving the eternal wrath of God, which in a little time will be

poured out upon us. Oh, let us not refuse our remedy, and neglect the

help tendered !

2. Let us believe the truth of this salvation, and how worthy it is of

our deepest thoughts : 1 Tim. i. 15, ' This is a true and faithful saying,

and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came to save sinners.'

It is not a cunning and well-devised fable ; nature will tell you there

is a God, and scripture that Christ is the Son of God, and the Saviour

of the world ; and you have no reason to doubt of it, but to receive

the gospel as a true word, considering what was foretold, how Christ

demonstrated and evidenced himself to be what he gave out himself

to be : Acts v. 31, 32, 'Him hath God exalted to be prince and saviour,

to give repentance and remission of sins ; and we are his witnesses of

these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to-

them that obey him.'

3. Embrace this salvation in Christ's own way and upon his own

terms ; submit to his sanctifying work, that salvation may be begun in

you ; submit to his healing methods and terms, and entirely consent

to his obedience : Heb. v. 8, 'Though he were a son, yet learned he

obedience by the things which he suffered ; and being made perfect,

he became the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him.'

4. Leave not this way till you have the evidence in yourselves :

1 John V. 8, 10, ' There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit,

and the water, and the blood ; and these three agree in one. He that

believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.' Oh, then,

give yourselves to Christ, that you may be saved by him ; and leave

not waiting on Christ till your hearts can rejoice in him as your Lord

and Saviour.

SEEMON XXIX.

Therefore as the church is subject to Christ, so let the luives he to their-

own husbands in every thing. — Eph. v. 24.

Here the apostle inferreth the conclusion from the foregoing argument.

In the proposal of this conclusion two things are considerable —

1. The manner how this subjection is to be performed, 'As tb©-

church is subject to Christ.'

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2. The extent ; unlimited, ' In everything ; ' that is, in everything

that is lawful and belonging to her duty. Certainly those things

which hinder our due subjection to God and Christ are excepted ; as

the aposlle in another case, 1 Cor. xv. 29, \* When he hath put all

things under him, it is manifest that he is excepted that hath put all

things under him.' There are cases excepted by a superior law. In

Luke xiv. 26, it is said, ' If a man hate not father and mother, wife

and children, he cannot be my disciple.' We still go on with the

pattern. The point is tliis —

JDoct. That those that belong to Christ as his people do willingly

and sincerely subject themselves to his government.

I speak of the regenerate and true members of the church. Others

are subject to him outwardly ; they sincerely.

1. Let us state the nature of the subjection of the church to Christ.

2. Give the reasons of it.

In stating the subjection to Christ, we must consider — (1.) The

foundation ; (2.) The nature ; (3.) The properties of it.

First, The foundation is Christ's authority. The primitive sovereign

is God ; the sovereign by derivation is Christ the mediator, in his

manhood united to the second person of the godhead. He is Lord,

not as creator but redeemer, which kind of authority accrueth to him

lay his own merit and purchase : Kom. xiv. 9, ' For to this end Christ

both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the

dead and living.' It was the fruit and consequent of the humiliation

of the Son of God. And also by God's grant : Acts ii. 36, ' Therefore

let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made this same

Jesus both Lord and Christ ; ' made, that is, appointed or ordained.

Concerning it observe two things —

1. It is superadded to the former sovereignty and dominion, which

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost had as creator. This new dominion and

sovereignty is not destructive of the former, but accumulative. It did

uot abolish God's right by the creation, for that continued still, and

will continue whilst man receiveth his being from God, and the con-

tinuance of his being by providential preservation. This therefore is

superadded to the former by the new title of a redeemer: Kev. v. 12,

\* Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and

wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' This

authority is derivative, and cannot be supreme, but subordinate. Though

Christ's office as head of the church be the greatest and highest that

€ver was, above all angels and creatures, next to God, therefore Christ's

place upon his investiture and solemn inauguration was at the right

hand of the eternal throne of God, yet it is derived from God, and

referred to him. Derived from God ; for this power was given to him :

JVIat. xxviii. 18, ' All power is given to me in heaven and earth.' A

power to make new laws, which shall be the rule of man's duty and

God's judgment. And it is referred and subordinated to God : Phil,

ii. 11, 'Tiiat every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to

the glory of God the Father.' The supreme right of governing is still

in God, and subjection to him is not vacated, but reserved and estab-

lished on more comfortable terms.

2. This authority and dominion which the Kedeemer is possessed of

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is comfortable and beneficial to us ; and the end and effect of it was

our cure and recovery. God had a full right to govern us, which could

not be disannulled by man's sin ; and it was so great that it cannot be

greater : but it was not comfortable to us fallen and alienated from

Ood ; for it was such a riglit as a prince hath over his rebels to punish

them. We renounced God's service, and forfeited that interest which

we had in his gracious government. Therefore was this new interest

set on foot to save and recover us to God, that his right in us and over

us might be comfortable to us ; therefore Christ's government and

■authority is spoken of in scriptures as medicinal and restorative, such

as conduceth to make peace between God and man, that we may again

€njoy his favour : Acts x. 36, ' The word which God sent to the chil-

■dren of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.'

Also to reduce men to the obedience of God : Acts v. 31, ' Him hath

<jod exalted with his right hand, to be a prince and saviour, to give

repentance and remission of sins.' This new Lord hath made a new

law of grace, which is propounded as a remedy for the recovering and

restoring of the lapsed world of mankind to the grace and favour of

■God, and their duty and obedience to him, granting thereby free pardon

and right to blessedness to all that sincerely repent and believe in him ;

which consideration doth mightily enforce obedience, because it is a

beneficial law we are under.

Secondly, The nature of this subjection. It consisteth of two things —

(1.) Our willing and hearty consent to become subjects to Christ ;

(2.) Our actual obedience to his commands.

1. Our willing and hearty consent to become subjects to Christ.

This is the same with our being christians, when we yield up ourselves

to Christ to become his people : 2 Cor. viii. 5, ' But first gave their

•ownselves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God ; ' Rom. vi. 13,

\* Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness

unto sin ; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from

the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.'

When the will consenteth, they are christians. And it is solemnly

done in baptism, when God is taken to be our God, and we give up

ourselves to be his people ; and when Christ is taken to be our saviour,

we give up ourselves to be his members and redeemed ones, and we

take him as our chief governor, giving up ourselves to be his subjects.

Mark the phrases : Exod. xx. 3, ' Thou shalt have no other gods before

me.' John v. 12, ' He that hath the Son hath life,' It importeth

accepting, receiving, owning Christ as our Lord and redeemer. What

the having God for our God doth imply, that having Christ for our

Lord and redeemer doth imply also ; that implieth subjection and

-dependence, so doth this ; so that this subjection is necessary to Chris-

tianity itself, or our entering into the covenant of grace.

2. Actual obedience is the fruit of it ; and it implieth the strict and

ready performance of all commanded duties, for therein we show the

reality of our consent : Rom. vi, 16, ' Know ye not that to whom ye

yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey,

whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness ? '

Mark, he doth say. His servants ye are whom ye obey ; not whom

you consent to obey : certainly that is our lord and master upon

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whom we bestow our service, time, and obedience. God's servants

are so, not only by consent or open profession and express covenant,

but it is verified and made good by a constant continual obedience.

They do not only make covenant, but keep covenant with God. Be-

sides consent, there is practice, or strict obedience to all the duties

required of them.

Thirdly, The properties of this subjection and obedience.

1. It is a willing subjection and obedience: Ps. ex. 3, 'Thy people

shall be a willing people in the day of thy power,' They voluntarily

submit themselves to the Son of God as their prophet, lord, and

sovereign. There is a passive subjection and a voluntary submission.

A passive subjection ; so all creatures at all times are under the power

of the Son of God and our redeemer ; and amongst the rest, the devils

themselves, though revolters and rebels, are not exempted from this

dominion ; be hath a ministry and service for them to do, as well as

the good angels : Phil. ii. 10, ' That at the name of Jesus every knee

should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under

the earth.' But then, by voluntary submission, those only are subjects,

and admitted into his kingdom, who wholly and willingly give up them-

selves to God their redeemer, that they may be saved on his own terms,

and in the way that God hath appointed. The devil and wicked men

are his subjects against their wills ; whether they will or no they are

subject to him ; but all Christ's people are his by their own consent,

to be guided and ordered by him. And as the subjection is voluntary,

so is the obedience and service, which is the fruit thereof. It is not

enough compulsorily to render Christ some unwilling services, but

their obedience must be willing, ready, pleasant : 1 John v. 3, ' For

this is the love of God, that we keep bis commandments, and his com-

mandments are not grievous.' It must be done not only out of a

sense of his authority, but out of love to him. Many may do what he

commandeth, but they had rather leave it undone ; they have no

delight in the work ; this doth not become subjection to Christ. A

beggar is glad of your alms whether you give it with a good or ill will,

because he needeth it ; but Christ hath no need of you and your service.

We give it to him, not because he needeth it, but because he deserveth

and requireth it ; and so it must be voluntarily, not by constraint or

fear, but love.

2. It is a thankful subjection and obedience. The design of God

in the work of redemption was to lay a foundation of the highest

thankfulness ; therefore the obedience to our redeemer must be a

thankful obedience. A mere law, as a law, requireth obedience ; but

a benefit, as a benefit, requireth thankfulness. Therefore the gospel,

which is called ' a law of faith,' Kom. iii. 27, requireth obedience ;

and as it is a benefit (1 Tim. vi. 2, ' Partakers of the benefit'), the

greatest that can be given to mankind, requireth thankfulness. Join

both notions together, and then you will see it is a thankful obedience

we are called unto. Thankfulness doth not discharge us of obed-

ience, but constrain us to it most powerfully and sweetly. The first

subjection is an act of gratitude, as well as an acknowledgment of

Christ's sovereignty and power : Eora. xii. 1, ' I beseech you therefore,

brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living

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sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.'

Christ was made a sin-offering and we a thank-offering. Our constant

obedience is a thankful return of God's love : 1 John iv. 19, ' We love

him, because he first loved us ; ' 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, ' For the love of

Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all,

then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live

should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died

for them, and rose again.' Love is at the bottom of all our duties.

Duties are best sweetened by love.

3. This subjection must be constant unto the death: Kev. ii. 10, 'Be

thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' Faith-

fulness relateth either to a trust committed, and so we are to use all the

gifts given us by God to his glory. With respect to God's free giving,

they are dona Dei, gifts of God freely bestowed. With respect to our

receiving or using, so they are talenta nostra, talents put into our hands

faithfully to be employed by us for his use and service. As when money

is given to a beggar, we expect nothing from him, but when money is

delivered to a factor, we expect a faithful improvement of it ; so, ' Be

thou faithful to the death ; ' still employ your time and strength for

God. Some are thankful for a gift, but unfaithful in a talent. Or else

faithfulness relateth to a covenant made with Christ, or our troth

plighted to him in baptism ; so, \* Be faithful ; ' that is, stand to your

baptismal vow and engagement. A breach of God's law, as a law,

is disobedience ; but a breach of his covenant is treachery, or a viola-

tion of our faith so solemnly engaged to him. Lastly, the word implieth

trials ; it is easy to be good in the absence of temptations ; but we are

not said to be faithful till we are thoroughly put to trial. When we cast

off our fidelity to Christ, either for some great earthly hope, or shrink

out of some great fear, we are not faithful to Christ. Now no other

term is assigned but death ; for then our trial is over, and till then we

must keep up our subjection to him whatever it costs us ; for we must

not measure our obedience to him by temporal accidents. No ; his

will must be our constant law and rule, not our own interests ; and we

must deny ourselves to please Christ or else we may be said to be good

for a while, but not faithful when we are put to it.

4. Our subjection must be dutiful, and with great reverence. We

serve a lord that is not to be dallied withal, and therefore we must not

serve him by the by, and with a little superficial service, or such as the

flesh can well spare, but with all our soul, might, and strength : Heb.

xii. 28, 29, ' Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be

moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with

reverence and godly fear : for our God is a consuming fire.' Mark

how he inferreth the duty from our receiving the kingdom ; that is,

our submitting to the power and laws of this new sovereign, God the

redeemer. There are some that refuse the kingdom : Luke xix. 14,

' We will not have this man to reign over us.' Others receive the king-

dom ; that is, submit themselves to Christ as their king and lawgiver

by a voluntary submission to him ; which is either a duty : John i. 12,

\* To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the

sons of God;' or^a benefit: Col. i. 13, 14, 'Who hath delivered us

from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of

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his dear Son : in whom we have redemption through his blood, the for-

giveness of sins.' Now these that have thus received the kingdom, what

are they to be and do ? To serve him with reverence and godly fear.

Having submitted to his power, they must actually obey his laws, and

that with great care and exactness. A boldness in sinning and a cold-

ness in duty is a great depreciation of his majesty ; and the reason is^

because no terror is comparable to his frowns, no comfort comparable

to his smiles, or a sense of his love. The former the apostle meaneth,

for our God is a ' consuming fire.' Some corruption remaineth in the-

faithful, and we need holy fear to guard our love ; and therefore there

must be a constant care to please him ; such a walking as Christ may

accept, and we may not lose the comfort of the grace of the new

covenant.

5. Our subjection must be universal and unlimited, having respect

to all his commandments, Ps. cxix. 6, and Col. iv. 12, \* Epaphras, who

is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring

fervently for you, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the

will of God.' It is not enough to do some things required by Christ,

but the church must be regulated by him in all things. It was a say-

ing of Csdvin, Si dimidio Chrisli contenti essemus, facile ti^ansiger emus

omnia — If we would be contented with a little of Christ, we should

soon despatch our business. The world will yield to a little of Christ ;

they will prize his name when they neglect his office ; they will

embrace the outward form of his religion when they hate the power ;

they will value and esteem and desire his benefits, but they despise

his laws ; they will attend upon external duties, but neglect private or

inward acts of grace ; they will seem to acknowledge the general

duties, but as to particulars questioned or assaulted in the age they

live in, they desire to be excused ; but a gracious heart reverenceth

everything that carrieth the stamp of Christ upon it, and in every-

thing desires to submit to him. I confess, where men are not con-

vinced of particular duties they may be accepted of God, where

they are faithful in the general and unquestionable duties ; but we

cannot say so of them who blind their eyes out of malice and

prejudice.

II. I shall give the reasons of it ; though they be evident already in

stating the nature of this subjection, yet I shall add more.

1. Because obedience is the best impression or stamp of our religion

upon us. In the christian religion Christ is set forth, not only as our

lord and ruler, of sovereign authority, but also a perfect pattern and

example commended to our imitation. This reason is urged by the

apostle : Heb. v. 8, 9, 'Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience

by the things he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the

author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.' Christ's

submission to his Father iu the hardest duties, and his obeying him at

the dearest rates, is made one ground why obedience is required of us,

that head and members may be all of a piece : Phil. ii. 8, ' He became

obedient to the death, even the death of the cross.' Though he was-

God, equal with the Father, and so above all law given to man, yet did

he take upon him the yoke of obedience, and submitted not only to the

same laws that we are governed by, but also to the special law of a

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mediator, to undergo a shameful, painful, and accursed death. That

which was most remarkable in his sufferings, and in the whole course

of his life, was obedience. Now this is true religion, to imitate what

we worship, and to obey Christ as Christ obeyed God. What better

expression of gratitude can we show to him who was consecrated

through grievous afflictions, and unknown pains and sufferings, to

the end that he might be our faithful and compassionate high priest?

This doctrine laid to our hearts will bring forth the like obedience and

affection towards him that he showed to the Father for our sakes.

2. This obedience is the qualification of those that shall have bene-

fit by Christ. That is evident in the same chapter : ver. 9, ' He is

the author of eternal salvation to those that obey him.' On the con-

trary, vengeance is threatened on those ' that obey not the gospel,' 2

Thes. i. 8.

But you will say, If this be so, then what is become of faith and re-

pentance, which everywhere in scripture are said to give us title to the

privileges of the gospel ?

I answer — Obedience is sometimes taken largely, and sometimes-

strictl}^

[1.] Largely, as comprehending both faith and repentance, and other

duties required of us in the gospel ; and so faitli and repentance is a

part of obedience, as well as those other duties that God by that narae

hath commanded; for God, that hath commanded us to live holily, hath

required of us also to repent and believe in Christ ; and so repentance is

obedience and faitli obedience. Faith is so called in many places : Eom.

X. 16, ' But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith,

Lord, who hath believed our report?' So Kom. i. 5, 'We have re-

ceived apostleship for the obedience of faith among all nations;' Kom.

xvi. 26, 'The mysteries of the gospel are made manifest for the obedi-

ence of faith ; ' that is, that we may submit ourselves to God through.

Christ. So Acts vi. 7, 'Many of the priests were obedient to the faith ; '

that is, entertained the belief of the gospel. So repentance is obedience ;

for often impenitency is opposed to obedience : Isa. i. 19, 20, ' If ye be

willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land : but if ye refuse

and be rebellious, ye shall be devoured with the sword ; for the mouth

of the Lord hath spoken it.' Thus it is taken largely.

[2.] Strictly, as it is distinct from faith and repentance ; and so we

say that our right to the privileges of the gospel is begun by faith and

repentance, and continued by new obedience. Yea, we say further, that

obedience may be taken either for the first consent and purpose of sub-

jection to Christ ; and so it is the same with faith and repentance, or

entering into covenant with God ; or it may be taken for our actual

performance of the duties required by Christ, and so it is a fruit of

faith and repentance.

(1.) The consent of obedience is implied in the nature of faith and

repentance ; as in the marriage covenant we consent to the duties

belonging to that relation. That it is implied in the nature of repent-

ance is plain, because it is a turning from sin to God. Now none are

turned to God in heart but those that are ready and willing to obey

him. For faith, take it for assent to the doctrine of the gospel, it is

the sum of things to be believed and done. We believe the command-

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ments, as well as the mysteries of salvation : Ps. cxix. 66, \* Teach me

good judgment and knowledge, for I have believed thy commandments ; '

that is, we believe that they are of God, and require our obedience.

Now though laws are not presently obeyed because we believe them to

be the king's laws, yet that belief is a sense of our obligation to obey.

Consider the gospel in the form of a covenant: Acts ii. 41, 'They

received the word gladly.' Now the word and covenant of God offereth

privileges for our happiness, and requireth duty for our work ; we

assent both to the one and the other, and so subjection is implied.

Take it for our acceptance of Christ ; so we receive him as Lord as well

as saviour : Col. ii. 6, ' As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so

■walk in him.' With a hearty consent of subjection to him, as well as

to enjoy the privileges and immunities of his kingdom. Take it for our

dependence and reliance on God's mercy ; still they are joined : Ps.

cxix. 166, ' Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy com-

mandments.' It is presumption to look for a thing in a way wherein

God will never grant it. A man that sinneth away his peace can have

no more confidence in Christ tlian one that goreth and woundeth him-

self can expect to be without pain.

(2.) Take it for actual obedience ; without it naked faith is of little

use to seal and confirm our great privileges to us. Therefore, saith

the apostle, \* Can faith save him ? ' James ii. 14 ; that is, naked faith,

destitute of obedience. Therefore when the scripture saith, ' Believe,

and thou shalt be saved,' the meaning is, believe so as faith may pro-

duce its proper fruit ; as he that is to entertain a king will make reck-

oning of his train. There is no getting rid of doubts and fears till

faith produce this subjection to Christ.

Use. To persuade all to subject yourselves to Christ, if you would

not be such members of the church as a wooden leg is of the body, but

firm and living members.

1. Consider whom it is we call you to obey : Jesus Christ, who —

[1.] Hath sovereign authority to command, as he gave good evidence

in the days of his flesh ; for the whole course of nature obeyed him :

Mat, viii. 27, ' What manner of man is this, that even the winds and

seas obey him ? ' These are creatures that seem less liable to check

and control, yet they retreat at his rebuke, and lay down their proud

blasts and waves. The angels are all at his beck ; the good angels

ministered to him in his lowest estate. If we expect to be like them

for privileges, we sliould be like them for duties also. The bad angels :

Mark i. 27, ' For with authority commandeth he even the unclean

spirits, and they obey him.' Now shall winds and seas, angels and

devils, obey Christ, and shall man refuse his empire and sovereignty ?

Oh, yield up yourselves to the Lord, and stand out no longer.

[2.] This Jesus is 3'our saviour, and shall he not be your Lord ?

He that obeyed even to the death for your sakes that you might be

made righteous, Rom. v. 19, bore tliat wrath that was due to his i)eople

for their disobedience, let him command what he will, you should not

grudge at it.

[3.] It is Christ who hath set us so perfect a copy, and first obeyed him-

self, and put his own neck under the yoke, that we might obey him the

more patiently. Now would Christ come down from heaven to set us a

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pattern, lie that was God's equal would be his subject, and will you

refuse the obedience to which Christ himself hath submitted ? He

became a living precept to us, religion exemplified, a visible commen-

tary upon God's laws. Now the disciple is not above his lord, John

xiii. 14. Christ hath performed all that was enjoined him to do and

•suffer ; therefore let us imitate him in his humility, self-denial, cheer-

fulness, and delight to do the will of God.

2. Consider wherein we are to obey him ; in things just and equal.

He doth not burden us with needless laws, which have no respect to

our good and safety. Besides the great remedial laws of faith and

repentance, which are necessary to our recovery to God, what hath -he

required of us but ' to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this pre-

sent world ? ' Titus ii. 12. Soberly with respect to ourselves. He

that liveth holily hath much the sweeter life than he that liveth

sensually, and walloweth in all uncleanness and excess. Kighteously

with respect to our neighbours, without which the world would be a

den of thieves, or a public stage whereon to act all manner of villany,

and we could have no security of anything we have. We would have

others live justly and peaceably with us, and what more just and equal

than to do so ourselves, to give every one his due, and supply them

that need ? So godly, loving God, trusting in God, delighting ourselves

in God, and worshipping him according to his own order, and enter-

taining a constant communion with him by prayer and praise. These

duties bring their own pleasure and sweetness along with them. Now,

as Naaman's servant reasoned, 2 Kings v. 13, ' If the prophet had bid

thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it ? how much

rather when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean ? ' So in this case ;

when such necessary things are required of us, should not we seriously

set about them ?

3. Consider why this obedience is required. Christ doth not rule

us for our hurt and ruin, but for our conduct.^ His conduct and

government is to lead us to eternal life, and when you disobey him, you

forsake your own happiness. The pilot governeth the ship to bring it

to its haven, the physician governeth his patient to procure his health,

the father governeth the children for their better education, the husband

governeth the wife for her benefit ; so doth Christ govern the church,

that he may make it a glorious church. It is for your happiness : Isa.

i 19, ' If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; '

Exod. xix. 5, ' Now therefore if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep

my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all

people.' In short, obey him, and he will give you his Spirit : Acts v.

32, ' So also is the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them that

obey him.' Obey him, and he will give you peace of conscience: Mat.

xi. 29, ' Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and you shall find rest

to your souls.' Obey him, and he will give you glory and eternal sal-

vation : Eom. ii. 7, ' To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing,

seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life.'

Use 2. To persuade the people of God to live in a more perfect and

exact obedience to his will.

1. It is more perfidious for you to disobey him, that have given up

yourselves by a serious covenant made with God, renouncing sin, and

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devoting yourselves to the will of God : 1 Peter i. 14, ' As obedient

children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in

your ignorance ; ' 1 Peter iv. 2, ' That he no longer should live the rest

of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.'

This covenant and promise of obedience you have often renewed at

sacraments and at other times, and shall all these bonds and cords be

too weak to hold you to your duty ?

2. You have received the sanctifying Spirit, and begun this work :

1 Peter i. 22, ' Seeing ye have purified your hearts to tlie obedience of

the truth.' He is become a principle of life to you, and therefore it is

more unnatural for you to sin : 1 John iii. 9, ' Whosoever is born

of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he

cannot sin, because he is born of God.' Others offer violence to their

duty, but you to your nature.

3. You make a profession of being in relation to Christ as your

Lord, and therefore you should live in a strict obedience to his holy

will : Luke vi. 46, ' Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things

which I say ? '

4. You know what the will of God is more than others, and therefore,

if you disobey it, you will be beaten with many stripes : Luke xii, 47,

48, ' And that servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not

himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many

stripes ; but he that did not know, shall be beaten with few stripes.'

5. You have found him a saviour ; and therefore you should not

stick to obey him as a lord. You have tasted of his mercy, and hov/

gracious he is, 1 Peter ii. 3, not only in your first conversion, when he

called you and passed by others, but in his daily rewarding bounty,

having found the comforts and benefits that attend a course of obedi-

ence : Ps. cxix. 165, ' Great peace have they that love thy law,' There-

fore you should be more eminent in serving the Lord. Upon all these

considerations you should more watch against sin, and be more exact

in the service of Christ.

We have seen the pattern ; Christ the pattern of the husband's pre-

eminence, the church the pattern of the wife's subjection. Now it is

easy to accommodate these things.

First, The husband is the head of the wife.

1. As the head is more eminent than the rest of the members of the

body, so there is an eminency and superiority in the husband because

of his sex : 1 Cor. xi. 3, \* The head of the woman is the man, and the

head of the man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God.' Man is

superior in dignity and authority, as the head is above the body.

2. As the head hath power over the body to rule it and direct it, so

it noteth his authority and power of government.

3. As the head is the seat of the senses and understanding, so the

husband should be furnished with some complete measure of knowledge

and prudence : 1 Peter iii. 7, 'Likewise ye husbands dwell with them

according to knowledge,' as a man of knowledge, that they may not

only be able to know their own duty, but instruct their wives : \* Let

them ask their husbands at home,' 1 Cor. xiv. 35 ; and he is called

\* the guide of her youth.'

4. The husband hath such a power over the wife as the head hath

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over the members. We must not forget the near connection that is

between head and members ; that the wife is his own flesh ; tlie

authority is so mutual, that the wrong that is done to her is done to

himself.

Use 3. Direction to husbands.

1. They ought to resemble Christ, whose image they bear —

[1.] In other things as well as in point of superiority ; holiness,

self-denial, love, and all sorts of duty. Look, as it aggravateth the

faults of magistrates, dixi, dii estis, ' I have said ye are gods,' Ps.

Ixxxvi. 2. God hath put the image of his superiority upon them ; but

if those be not the image of his wisdom, purity, and holiness, they join

together the image of God and a beast, a drunken god and a wanton

god. So the husband is head of the wife; but if the husband be

ignorant, furious, frothy, incontinent, intemperate, little of Christ will

be seen in him.

[2.] In using and employing their dignity and power suitable to the

ends of their relation. Christ, that is the head of the church, is also

the saviour of the body. In some sense he treateth his mystical body

•with more kindness than the natural : Kom. xiv. 3, \* He pleased not

himself ; ' Heb. x. 5, 6, 'Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he

saith. Sacrifices and offerings thou wouldst not ; but a body thou hast

prepared me : in burnt-oiFerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had

no pleasure.' Therefore he gave his own natural body as a sacrifice :

ver. 10, 'We are sanctified through the body of Christ once offered

for all\*

2. If the husband, by being the head of the wife, bear Christ's image,

then this image must not be defaced nor despised.

[1.] Not be defaced by the husband by impertinent commands. If

they would have that submission and respect from inferiors, they must

carry their government prudently and lovingly. Then it is most a

similitude of Christ's authority over the church ; Christ doth not bur-

den his church with needless laws.

[2.] Not despised by the woman. All superiors have a piece of the

image of Christ put upon them, therefore they must not be contemned

by their inferiors, lest thereby they despise and contemn the image of

God. If Jacob could say, Gen. xxxiii. 10, ' I have seen thy face, as

though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me ; '

he saw God in his kindness and reconciliation ; so here.

Secondly, The wife's subjection, ' As the church is subject to Christ.\*

Where observe the manner — (1.) Negatively, not merely for their own

ease, peace, and credit, but in conscience of and respect to that dignity

God hath put on her husband. He hath placed him above her. (2 )

Positively.

1. It is a righteous subjection, not a slavish, but so as that her

authority may be kept up over her children and servants.

2. It must be a willing subjection, not grudging ; either obeying the

harder commands, or avoiding them with humility and reverence.

3. It is a dutiful subjection, for so is the church to Christ out of

gratitude, and this in a sweet loving way.

Now, for motives to stir you up to this duty, consider — (1.) It is

necessary; the same obligation which is upon the church to obey

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Christ lieth upon the woman to obey her husband. (2.) It is profit-

able ; as for the church to be subject to Christ, so for wives to be

subject to their husbands.

SERMON XXX.

Husbands, love your loives, even as Christ also loved the church, and

gave himself for it. — Eph. v. 25.

In all exhortations the balances must be kept equal, that we may not

too much depress one party and extol and lift up the other. Tliere-

fore in one scale the apostle puts the duty of the wife, in the other

the duty of the husband. We are very inquisitive what others should

be and do to us, but overlook what we ourselves should be and do to

others. The apostle is more just and equal. The inferiority of the

■wife to the husband must not be so pressed and urged as if the man

were under no relation to her, and owed her no duty and respect. No ;

religion provideth a recompense, that there may be an equality, and

establishes the duty of the husband to the wife, as well as the duty of

the wife to the husband, as a compensation of her submission. There

is on his part required love : ' Husbands, love j-our wives,' &c.

In the words we have —

1. A precept, ' Husbands, love your wives.' As the woman is

bound to obedience, so the man to love.

2. The reason, taken from Christ's example, 'Even as Christ also

loved the church, and gave himself for it.' Where take notice of two

things —

1.] The inward affection, he ' loved the church.'

2.J The outward effect and demonstration of it, he ' gave himself

for it.'

The text will give us occasion to speak of two things —

(1.) The love of the husband to the wife.

(2.) The love of Christ to the church. For the first, let us fix this

point —

Doct. That husbands must love their wives with a sincere and

tender love.

1. Let us state this love which is due from the husband to the

wife.

2. See by what reasons it may be enforced.

I. In stating and defining this love, I will take notice — (1.) Of the

general nature of it ; (2.) The degree ; (3.) The effects.

First, The general nature of love is the delectation and complacency

of the heart in the party loved, from whence followeth a desire of

their good, and a seeking and promoting of it to the uttermost of our

power. So the husband must love the wife, that his heart may cleave

to her, and take delight in her ; as it is said, Gen. xxxiv. 19, ' The

young man had a delight in Jacob's daughter.' Then when the heart

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is thus inclined, tbeir good is desired ; and not only so, but there is an

endeavour to the uttermost to procure it and bring it about ; this is

love, for love is seen by labour : Heb, vi. 10, ' God is not unrighteous

to forget your labour of love.' This love must be operative, as Christ

loved the church ; not in word, but in deed ; and therefore love

must incline them to do all the good they can, both in soul and body.

They must be as careful for their good, as Christ was of his church's

benefit.

Secondly, The degree.

1. There is a common love which belongeth to believers of either

sex, as brothers and sisters in Christ : John xiii. 34, \* A new com-

mandment give I unto you, that ye love one another ; as I have loved

you, that ye also love one another.' That love hath the same pattern,

but differeth from this ; for this is a special conjugal love, such as no

other may share in. One ingredient in this love is our communion in

the same faith, as they are all one in Christ whether male or female,

Gal. iii. 28. Though Christianity doth not abolish those distinctions

which are between master and servant, and the distinction of the one

sex above the other, yet they all have the same communion in the

merits and grace of Christ. They make up one mystical spiritual

body, whereof Christ is the head and husband, as being heirs of the

same grace of life, 1 Peter iii. 7. Because of their equality in partak-

ing in spiritual and eternal privileges, the wife is no less dear to God

than themselves are. But this is another kind of love, because of

their marriage covenant and bond, whereby they bind themselves to

love one another with such a love that none else may share in it :

Hosea iii. 3, ' Thou shalt not be for another man, so also will I be for

thee.'

2. It is alone, which in some respects exceedeth that we owe to our

parents and other near relations : Gen. ii. 24, ' Therefore shall a man

leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife.' The

bond of natural affection, which bindeth fast parents and children, is

wonderful strong and near ; it is an adamantine chain, more strong

than iron. We see this love and natural affection is very great and

forcible, even in dumb creatures, which are led thereunto by instinct

of nature ; and if it should not be in men endued with reason, they

would be worse than beasts. Moses would have them stoned to death,

Deut. xxi. 21 : and Solomon saith of such unnatural children, that

'the ravens of the valleys shall pick out their eyes, and the young

eagles shall eat it,' Prov. xxx. 17 ; that is, they shall lie unburied.

But though this bond be so strong, yet God preferreth the bond of

marriage before it. They may leave father and mother, that is, be

divided from them in habitation and daily conversation, which is not

permitted to man and wife. Dutiful affection to parents is never to

cease, and upon all emergent occasions we must be helpful to them.

But for cleaving to one another, not only by a firm and constant

affection, but daily and pleasing converse, tliis is peculiar to this rela-

tion. Father and mother are nearest in respect of nature, of whom

we came, and whom we ought to serve ; but as to inseparable converse,

father and mother must be left for the wife's sake. Not that it is law-

ful for us to forsake our parents who brought us forth and bred us up.

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or to set light by them ; this is brutish disobedience. God's rule, non

extinguit affectum sed ordinal, doth not free us from our duty, but

dispose it aright. Kather forsake father and mother than forsake the

wife. It is God's will that the bond of love between married folks

should be perferred before all other bonds, that the knot of marriage

might be more surely knit, and the delight of love thence resulting

should be the greatest and most perfect.

3. It carrieth it higher yet. They ought to ' love their wives as

their own bodies ; for he that loveth his wife, loveth himself,' ver. 28.

There is an innocent self-love which is at the bottom of all our

labours : Prov. xvi. 26, ' He that laboureth, laboureth for himself ;

for his mouth craveth it of him ; ' that is, bodily necessities being

urgent upon us, require that we should be exercised in some honest

function, calling, or course of living, that we may have for the sustenta-

tion of the body, A man loveth his cliildren tcmquam aliquid sui,

as part of himself ; but he loveth his wife tanquam semet ipsum,EiS him-

self, for they twain are one flesh. How so ? Not only jictione juris,

in supposition or account of law, as a man and his wife are reputed

one person ; nor only one flesh by matrimonial conjunction, as 1 Cor.

vi. 16 ; nor only one flesh in their issue, in which the substance of both

parents concurreth to make up the body of the child ; but one flesh

by inseparable union, which during the lives of the married persons

cannot be dissolved but in case of adultery, and the malicious desertion

of the unbelieving party ; therefore a man is bound to love her as him-

self.

4. As Christ loved the church. The husband for his pattern of

conjugal love is referred to Christ, partly for the degree of his love, and

partly for the kind of it.

[l.J The degree. Christ expresseth that love to the church than

which greater cannot be expressed. The wonder of his condescending

love is the great argument of the gospel, and the great means to re-

concile the alienated and estranged world to God. Therefore if the

husband would have the wife obedient unto him as to the Lord, he

must love her as the Lord doth the church. It was a bold and blunt

speech of Luther, Nihil video in hoc C'hristo, nisi prodigalitatem

quandam amoris — I see nothing in Christ but a prodigality and excess

of love. This is that which we christians admire, and for which we

shall adore God and bless him to all eternity ; even for Christ, and

the great love wherewith he loved us. All this is commended to the

husband as his pattern of love and tenderness to the wife.

[2.] The kind of it. The degree would be enough pressed if the

apostle should say no more but ' He loved the church and gave him-

self for it;' but the kind is also intended, for he am})lifietli it in the

26th verse : ' He gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse

it, by the washing of water through the word.' Christ's love was a

sanctifying love. Surely when he was upon the cross he wanted not

wisdom, nor love, nor merit. Not wisdom to choose, nor love to in-

tend, nor merit to purchase the greatest blessings for us. Not wisdom

to choose ; for he that is the wisdom of the Father knoweth how to

value things according to their order and proportion ; and he thought

110 blessing greater or fitter for us than holiness, which is the glory of

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God, the beauty of God himself, for God is glorious in holiness, Exod.

XV. 11. Nor did he want love, for then he was in the exercise of" the

highest act and fervency of it: John xiii. 1, ' Having loved his own which

were in the world, he loved them unto the end ; ' Rom. v. 8, ' But God

commended his love toward us, in that while we were sinners, Christ died

for us.' And therefore surely he intended the highest benefits to us,

and most necessary for our happiness. Now he intended not greatness

and wealth, but conformity and likeness to God. Neither wanted he

merit and worth enough to procure of his Father the choicest blessings,

for it was the precious blood of him that was God : 1 Peter i. 18, 19,

' Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible

things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of

a lamb without blemish and without spot' What could be too dear

for the blood of God to purchase? Now that which Christ aimed at

was to sanctify and cleanse his people from sin, which doth not only

set forth the value of holiness, but doth teach husbands how to express

tlieir love to their wives, in being meet helps to them in the best things.

Nothing was better and greater in the eye of Christ to procure for us ;

which is a check and reproof to them that seek to gratify the flesh by

marriage, but not to improve this intimate converse and near friend-

ship for the great uses of Christianity.

5. Shall we go higher ? Indeed higher we cannot go, all things

considered ; but yet there is one expression to be taken notice of, and

that is in Prov. v. 19, 'Be thou ravished always with her love.' In

the margin it is, ' Err thou always in her love.' The Septuagint

renders it, ev rfj rdvrrj'i (f)i\la crv/ji7r€pi(f)ep6jji€vo<; 7roXX.o(jTo<; ear),

' Being encompassed with her love, thou shalt be overmuch in it.'

The law of God is holy, and alloweth not the least vitiosity, either by

way of defect or excess. All love of the creature must be guarded and

kept within rules. Yet I take notice that the expressions of scripture

do countenance an excess rather than a defect ; that is, as mimes

malum ; and I understand it with two references — (1.) Rather than be

defective, delight thyself with her, as a man useth to delight himself

in a thing that is lawful, and forgets himself in it. (2.) Rather than

to err in the love of a strange woman, ver. 20. I press it not beyond

its bounds, but I show what weight the scripture puts upon the hus-

band's love to the wife.

Thirdly, The effects of it.

1. Delight in her presence and company ; not suffering himself to

be separated from her for any long time, unless it be for necessary

cause. Abroad he is out of his sphere ; at home there is where he

should be. Though the married ought to bear one another's absence

for a while, yet it is not to be endured that a man should wilfully

consort with others rather than his wife. Christ never deserts his

church, but is always with her : Mat. xxviii. 20, ' And lo, I am with

you always to the end of the world.' This is the husband's pattern.

Cheerful converse or delight in her company as the necessary fruit of

his love : Prov. v. 18, 19, ' Rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let

her be as the loving hind, and pleasant roe ; let her breasts satisfy

thee at all times.' By these expressions he showeth how husband and

wife should take pleasure in each other, and take heed that there be

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no occasion of loathing and disdain. Those that find more pleasure in

converse abroad than at home certainly do not heartily love one another^

thongh no filthy and prohibited act should ensue from this liberty

which they take.

2. The second act or effect of love is, to direct and instruct in all

things that belong to this life and a better, for therefore he is called

' a head ; ' and the office of the head is to guide the body. The light

of nature taught heathens to instruct the wife in things concerning

this life, that they might be a help to them in family government ;

but the light of scripture calleth for a higher duty, to instruct her in

things of godliness and religion, that, worshipping God together in

this life, they may together enjoy him in the life to come : 1 Cor. xiv.

35, ' If they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home;'

1 Peter iii. 7, ' Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to

knowledge ; ' knowledge of duty, according to which a christian's life

and actions should be governed and ordered. A great deal of prudent

care and spiritual wisdom is to be used in conversing with them, that

they may instruct them in their duty toward God, which is the highest

and truest love,

3. In providing all things necessary for them that conduce to health,

food and raiment, and that according to the decency and decorum of

their estate ; for herein they imitate the care and providence of Christ,

who hatli provided all things for his spouse ; food for their souls, gar-

ments of salvation to cover their nakedness, healing grace to cure their

distempers. So must the husband do for his wife. Jacob said. Gen.

XXX. 30, ' Now when shall I provide for mine own house also ? ' We

must provide for our own house, otherwise we incur that censure,

1 Tim, V. 8, ' But if any provide not for his own, and especially those

of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.'

Certainly the wife must be comforted, cherished, and encouraged ; for

among our own she is chief Those beastly prodigals that never

provide for their families, but consume what is provided by the wife's

care, spending all they can come at in whoring, playing, eating, drink-

ing, never caring what becometh of wife and children, they neither

have the love of husbands, nor the faith of christians, nor the nature

of men, and are worse than the brute beasts ; they neither give their

wives honour, 1 Peter iii. 7, nor decent maintenance, which they are

obliged to, 1 Tim. v. 8.

4. In a care to preserve and defend her ; as Abraham had a care of

Sarah, Gen. xx., and David of his wives when they were taken captives,,

1 Sam. xxx. 4, 5. But it is endless to run into particulars.

II. Let us now see by what reasons this is enforced.

1. The order of the creation. We pleaded that before for the

woman's submission, that she was made out of man, after man, and for

man. We plead the same argument now for the husband's duty of

love to her ; for the apostle urgeth this in the same chapter, 1 Cor. xi.

11, 12. The former arguments were urged 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9, ' For the

man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man ; neither was the

man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.' Now let u&

see what he saith for the woman : ver. 11, 12, ' Nevertheless, neither is-

the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man ia

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the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also

by the woman, but all things of God.' The meaning is, though the

woman was made out of man, or framed or formed out of Adam's

rib, yet all the sons of Adam are born, conceived, and propagated by

women, and by man and woman united by God, from whom all things

are ; and therefore she ought to have her honour and love as well as

the man, being both created by God. Add hereunto, that Jesus Christ

hath honoured them in taking flesh of a womaU, and not of man,

therefore the man must not wax proud and insolent, nor the woman

be grieved ; or the husband must not abuse that superiority which

God hath given him over his wife by harsh domineering and bitter

carriage, but sweeten the yoke of subjection laid upon the wife by love.

2. It is a relation of love, instituted by God for that very end and

purpose.

[1.] Friendship is necessary for man, because he is ^wov ttoKltlkov,

a sociable creature, not made to live alone, but in company with others,

Solomon telleth us, Eccles. iv, 9-12, ' Two are better than one ; for if

they fall, the one will lift up his fellow ; but woe to him that is alone

when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up. Again,

if two lie together, then they have heat ; but how can one be warm

alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him ; and.

a threefold cord is not quickly broken.' The Egyptians in their

hieroglyphics express the unprofitableness of a solitary man by a single

millstone, which alone gi-indeth no corn, but with its fellow is very

serviceable. Thus God appointed men to live in society, that they may

be mutually helpful to one another.

[2.] Though man affects society, yet in our company we must use

choice. The good will best converse and suit with the good ; for love

and friendship is very much founded in suitableness. The godly have

special love to the godly : Ps. cxix. 63, ' I am a companion of them

that fear thee and keep thy precepts.'' Doves will not flock with the

ravens, and it is unnatural when divers kinds are intermixed.

[3.] Though there be a love to all that fear God, yet some must be

chosen for our intimacy. Our Lord Christ sanctified holy friendship :

Mat. xvii. 1, ' Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and

bringeth them up into a high mountain ; ' Mat. xxvi. 37, ' And he took

with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee.' And when he raised

Jairus's daughter, Luke viii. 51, 'He suffered no man to go in save

Peter, James, and Jolm, and the father and mother of the maiden.' They

were eKkeKTOiv iKXeKrorepoc, the most choice of those that he chose.

[4.] The truest friendship and love is inter honos, between tho.se

that are good. So John is especially called the disciple whom Jesus

loved, that is, above all the rest : John xiii. 23-25, ' Now there was

leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon

Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be

of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him,

Lord, who is it ? '

[5.] Of all persons, the two that love most sincerely are husband and

wife, who solemnly chose each other as a meet help in the Lord, that

they may bear a part in each other's burdens, and by the laws of God

and man do mutually give up themselves to each other to seek one

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another's good, and are so fast linked to each other that they cannot part.

Therefore surely there should be the highest love between them both ;

for they are brought together for this end.

[6.] Because women are ordinarily affectionate and passionate crea-

tures, apt to love much where nature and grace bindeth them ; and

man is, or is presumed to be, more governed by reason, therefore God

hath added the bond of conscience by his special law, that he should

make this return of sincere strong affection to his wife, that so their

converse may be more sweet, lives comfortable, burdens easy so long

as they live together. So that from the whole may be gathered that

this duty was instituted for the exercise of the highest and most

sincere affection that possibly can be, and between two mortal creatures

that have two distinct souls, but one common interest between them.

3. Reason will tell us how much the husband is bound to love her

that hath in a manner forsaken all the world, father, and mother, and

all her relations, to cleave to her husband, and to share with him in

all conditions until death, although she were free before the contract.

Surely common gratitude will suggest that a recompense of true affec-

tion is due to her for this ; otherwise men are unthankful, unhol}^ and

without natural affection, wliicli is the worst character can be given to

them.

4. The interest and comfort of the married estate will also persuade

it. While love is kept up, all things go on sweetly ; but as soon as

love faileth, presently everything is out of order and out of joint ; for

when once they begin to disaffect the persons of each other, all matri-

monial duties are stabbed at the heart. Therefore they should take

heed they do not slight, or loath, and wax weary of each other ; for

let anything of this prevail, and they will soon fail in other duties.

Thence come hatreds, strifes, endless brawling, divorces, and other

inconveniences, that make their lives burdensome, and their families

miserable.

Use 1. To reprove that which is contrary to this love, bittei'ness and

harshness of carriage : Col. iii. 19, ' Husbands, love your wives, and be

not bitter to them.' The gall was taken out of the sacrifices offered

to Juno, as Plutarch witnesseth. This is seen —

1. Partly in a froward disposition, when men are offended for light

causes or small provocations, and, like fine glasses, broken as soon as

touched. Husbands are to love their wives, and therefore not to be

bitter to them because there may fall out some lesser fault ; for ' love will

cover a multitude of faults,' 1 Peter iv. 8. The wife is to obey her

husband notwithstanding his manifold imperfections; the duty of

Eubjection ceaseth not for all that. So the husband is to love his wife :

both are full of infirmities. Christ loved the church notwithstanding

her many faults.

2. In sharp words and contumelious language, which leaveth such a

grudge and such averseness in the mind as is not easily forgiven. The

psalmist compareth bitter words to drawn swords, Ps. Iv. 21. Cer-

tainly such bitter speeches must needs destroy all love and breed an

unquiet life.

.3. Churlish deeds also show this bitterness.

[1.] When the husband taketh from her all command in the family,

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iiandling her rather like a slave than a consort and companion. She,

under her husband, is to look to the ways of her household, Prov. xxxi. 27,

and hath a power over the children and servants together with him.

[2.] Denying necessaries is another part of this bitter carriage, or

such things as belong to the decency of her estate ; for she is to share

with him in all good things, and her life is to be made comfortable to

her ; or else how can she know that he lovetli her when he dealeth

liardly and sparingly with her ? He is bound to give her honour, 1

Peter iii. 7.

3. The height of this bitterness is, when passion and anger pro-

ceedeth to blows. The husband and wife, by the conjugal covenant,

entered into the highest friendship, wherein disorders are not to be

corrected by blows, but counsels ; and blows are the fruits of furious

wrath, rather than a rational dislike of the offence ; fit for slaves, not

the wife of the bosom.

Use 2. To persuade to this love. Directions —

1. Choose one that is amiable, evils are best prevented by a prudent

choice, and errors in the first concoction are hardly mended in the

^^econd. Now the motive of our choice should not be only riches and

beauty, for these are fading things, and what is fading cannot be the

ground of a lasting love : Prov. xxxi. 30, ' Favour is deceitful, and

beauty is vain ; but a woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised.'

Beauty is but skin-deep, but godliness is rooted and increased by con-

tinuance.

2. Marry not till you be sure you can love entirely, for otherwise you

enter into a covenant with a mind disposed to break it. As in religion :

James i. 8, ' A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways ; ' so by

proportion in marriage, all your days you lie open to temptations.

3. Love will in time beget love, as fire kindleth fire : 1 John iv. 19,

' We love him, because he loved us first.'

4. Love not as bare husbands, but as christians ; partly because

this is to love as Christ. The love of Christ doth not only enforce the

duty as an argument, but direct the manner as a pattern. Christ's

love is holy as well as sincere and great. Partly because this will be

most effectual to continue peace, both because of God's blessing ; and

partly because to the civil bond there is added the conscience of our

duty to God ; and besides, holy spiritual love is most exemplary.

5. All offences must be studiously avoided, for these strike at the

fundamental duty, or cool your love ; and when that is gone, you are

chained to endless calamities. And then you must labour for a

humble, meek, and quiet spirit ; for when you open the floodgates to

pride and passion, which let in the waters of strife, that will over-

whelm all : Prov. xvii. 14, ' The beginning of strife is as when one

letteth out water ; therefore leave off contention before it be meddled

with.'

6. When God sends infirmities, then is a time to show love and

patience ; love to the diseased part}^ patience and submission to God,

who hath laid this burden upon you ; and in both your self-denial and

sincerity for this your trial ; and it will not want its reward. It is

odious to be weary of our relations because God hath laid his hand

upon them. True love is to be seen at all times, but especially in

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adversity : Prov. xvii. 17, 'A friend loveth at all times, and a brother

is born for adversity.' Make conscience of your duty, and God will

give you strength.

Secondly , Now I come to Christ's love; in which we have — (1.)

The person that loveth, viz., Christ. (2.) The persons loved, 'The

church.' (3.) The fruit of his love, ' He gave himself for it/ to a

painful and ignominious death. There are solemn notions by which

Christ's death is set forth — a ransom and a sacrifice.

1. A ransom : Mat. xx. 28, ' And gave his life a ransom for many,'

\vTpov dvrl TToXkcov, dvriXvTpov : 1 Tim. ii. 6, ' Who gave himself a

ransom for all.' Tiiis relateth to our misery, or captivity and bondage

under sin and death, and belongeth to Christ under the notion of a

surety.

2. As a sacrifice, a mediatorial sacrifice : Isa. liii. 10, ' When thou

shalt make his soul an offering for sin ; ' Eph. v. 2, ' As Christ also

hath loved us, and hath given himself for us a sacrifice to God for a

sweet-smelling savour.' This relateth to the appeasing and pro-

pitiating of God, and is done by Christ under the notion of a priest.

Now this giving himself for us is sometimes spoken of as an act of

obedience, sometimes as an act of love.

[1.] Of obedience, with respect to his Father's command : Kom.

V. 19, ' By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous ; ' and

Phil. iii. 8, ' He humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even

the death of the cross.'

[2.] It is an act of love : Gal. ii. 20, ' Who loved us, and gave him-

self for us ; ' Eom. v. 1, ' Because the love of God is shed abroad in

our hearts.' And so it is spoken of here.

Doct That the Lord Jesus did freely and willingly, out of his

great love, give himself to die for his people.

Great love it was, if we consider —

1. The giver, Jesus Christ, God over all, blessed for ever, to whom

nothing can accrue from us: Isa. liii. 11, \*It pleased the Lord to

bruise him ; he hath put him to grief. He shall see of the travail of

his soul, and be satisfied.' When he foresaw what it would cost, and

what he should give, he said, ' It is enough.'

2. The gift ; he gave himself : 1 Peter i. 18, \* We are not redeemed

with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the Son of God.'

3. ' For us,' whom he after calleth into a church : Rom. v. 6-8,.

' For when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for us.

For scarcely for a righteous man will one die ; yet peradventure for a

good man some would even dare to die. But herein God commended

his love to us, in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us.' Oh,

let us be blessing God for this love, and show our thankfulness both

in word and deed.

[1.] In word : Rev. v. 9, ' And they sang a new song, saying. Thou

art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof ; for thou

wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every

kindred, tongue, and peo})le, and nation.' The angels, who are th&

spectators, ever blessed God for it ; and shall not we, who be the

parties interested ?

[2.] In deed, by giving up ourselves to him : Rom. xii. 1, 'I

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beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present

your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your

reasonable service ; ' and Kev. xii. 11, ' They overcame him by the

blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and loved not

their lives to the death.' Let us not grudge at the loss of any of our

interests, so we may promote his glory.

SERMON XXXL

Tliat he might sanctify and cleanse it hy the luashing of water through

the ivord. — Eph. v. 26.

In the words we have — (1.) The end of Christ's sacrifice ; (2.) The

means and instruments by which he doth accomplish his end, which

are two, word and sacraments.

1. The end is expressed by two words, \* That he might sanctify

and cleanse it.' To sanctify implieth dedication to God ; to be cleansed,

to be purified from sin. A thing is then said to be sanctified when it

is separated from a common to a holy use : Heb. xiii. 12, ' Jesus also,

that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without

the gate.' And it is purified and cleansed when it is washed from

filthiness. Now that filthiness that maketh us odious to God is either

the guilt or the stain of sin ; and so this cleansing noteth both the

renovation of our natures and the justification of our persons: 1 Cor.

vi. 11, 'And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are

sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by

the Spirit of our God.' We are renewed by his Spirit, and we have

remission of sins through his blood. So Titus iii. 5-7, ' Not by works

of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he

saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the

Holy Ghost ; which he hath shed on us abundantly through Jesus

Christ our Saviour ; that, being justified by his grace, we should be

made heirs according to the hope of eternal life ; ' Heb. x. 22, ' Let us

draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our

hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with

pure water.'

2. The means, ' By the washing of water through the word ; '

wherein the apostle showeth how the virtue of Christ's death is

applied to us, by the ordinary means of grace. He instanceth in

two ordinances — baptism and the word. By the washing of water is

meant baptism : Titus iii, 5, ' By the washing of regeneration ; '

John iii. 5, ' Except a man be born of water, and the Spirit, he cannot

enter into the kingdom of God ; ' Acts xxii. 16, 'Arise, and be baptized,

and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' By the

word is not meant verhum consecratorium, but concionale ; not the

words of institution, or the sermon that may accompany baptism, but

the whole doctrine of the new covenant revealed in the gospel, which

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is a powerful means to promote sanctification. The word hath the

relation of a charter, and baptism of a seal or sign of the grace offered

and exhibited.

Now from these words I might observe —

First, The causes and means from which, and by which, the salva-

tion of a sinner is brought about.

1. At the bottom of all there is the love of God and of Christ,

which is the first mover of all that which is done for our recovery.

Christ loved the church ; now this love should ever be admired and

adored by us.

2. The procuring cause is the merit and satisfaction of Jesus Christ,

who gave himself for us as a ransom and propitiatory sacrifice, which

is the next ground of our comfort and confidence : 1 John i. 7, ' And

the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.'

3. After salvation is impetrated, it must be applied by fit means,

internal and external. Internal, which on God's part is the Holy

Spirit sanctifying and cleansing us from sin, and by his powerful

operation working in us those things which are necessary to the appli-

cation of the love of God and the participation of the satisfaction and

merits of Christ : Titus iii. 5, ' But according to his mercy he saved

us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost/

On our part faith : Acts xv. 9, ' Purifying their hearts by faith.' We,

believing the word of God revealing salvation by Christ, are cleansed

from sin.

4. Besides these internal means, there need external also, by which

the Spirit is conveyed, and our hearts are wrought upon in a congruous

way, which are the word and sacraments, that are the instruments by

which the Holy Ghost doth work and confirm faith in us. All which

showeth the necessary use of ordinances. Christ did not only purchase

grace, but grace to be given out this way ; by ' the washing of water

through the word.'

Secondly, These causes and means of salvation must not be separ-

ated one from another, nor confounded one with another.

1. Not separated one from another. We cannot rest upon the grace

of God without the satisfaction of Christ ; for how then shall we salve

the honour of his justice? Still this thought will occur, that God is a

just God, and breed in us the fears of death : Rom. i. 32, ' Who know-

ing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things, are

worthy of death.' Nor can we take comfort in the satisfaction of Christ

without true conversion to him ; that is, without the true mortification

of sin, and the life of holiness wrought in us by the ])ower of the Holy

Ghost: Mat. xviii. 3, 'Except ye be converted, and become as little

children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Neither can

we expect the operation of the Holy Ghost without the use of the word

working faith in us : John xv. 3, ' Now ye are clean through the word

which I have spoken unto you ;' John xvii. 17, ' Sanctify them through

thy truth ; thy word is truth.' And the gospel is the ministration of

the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 8. Nor must the word be used with the neglect

of sacraments, for that is to despise one of God's helps. And besides,

there is somewhat in sacraments beyond the word for our use and

benefit. They agree in this, that both concern faith ; that neither of

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them work but as accompanied with the divine grace. But they differ

in that the word belongeth to all : ' Go preach the gospel to every

creature.' But the sacraments are confined within the limits of the

church, and belong to those who have submitted to the Lord's cove=-

nant. The word begets faith, the sacraments increase it. If they

beget it, it is by accident, not by appointment, and by the help of the

word which doth accompany them. The word shineth by its own light,

neither doth it need the sacraments that it may be understood.

Sacraments cannot be understood without the word, for they are not

natural, but instituted signs ; not natural, as smoke is of fire, but in-

stituted, as a badge and cognisance is of such a dignity, order, and

profession. In short, the sacraments are a greater help to grace or

communion with Christ than the bare word, and have their special use

to show us how wonderfully condescending and exact God is to make

all sure to us, and to excite and bind every one in particular to

put in for a share in the grace offered to us, and also withal to

perform the duties required of us, and solemnly to invest us into a

right, and put us in possession of the blessedness promised to us ; there-

fore these must not be neglected or despised.

Once more, one sacrament must not be separated from another, as to

content ourselves with baptism without a religious and frequent use of

the Lord's supper, as many do ; for though the washing of water be

only mentioned, yet the other sacrament is also here implied. The one

sealeth our making covenant with God, the other bindeth us to keep

covenant with him, which a serious christian will see a need of, and not

only find life, but growth and perseverance ; therefore all these things

must not be separated.

2. These things must not be confounded one with another. We

must not ascribe that to the word and sacraments which belongeth to

the Spirit, nor that to the Spirit which belongeth to Christ, nor that to

Christ which only belongeth to the eternal love of God, nor that to good

works which belongeth to faith, nor that to the sacraments which be-

longeth to the word, nor that to baptism which belongeth to the Lord's

supper ; but all things must keep their proper place. Therefore we

must distinctly consider —

[1.] What is proper to the grace of God. The first moving cause

or inducement to incline God to show us favour, or bring about our

salvation, was merely the love of God: John iii. 16, ' God so loved the

■ world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on

him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

[2.] What is proper to the merits of Christ. That righteousness by

virtue of which the wrath of God is appeased, our sins are expiated,

blessings of the new covenant purchased, and we are reconciled to God,

is the only sacrifice and satisfaction of our Lord Jesus Christ : 1 John

iv. 9, 10, ' In this was the love of God manifested towards us, because

that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live

through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved

us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.' This honour

must be reserved to Christ, to be a sacrifice for sin, a propitiation for us,

and a perfect saviour and intercessor to obtain the Spirit to fit us for

our present duties and future happiness.

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[3.] What is proper to the Spirit of Christ, namely, to sanctify and

cleanse us or convert us unto God : John iii. 5, ' Jesus answered,

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and

the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'

[4.] What is proper to the operation or effect of the Spirit in us,

"which is faith and new obedience. Faith giveth us our first right

to the privileges of the new covenant, and new obedience contiuueth

it ; for the one is our entrance into the evangelical estate, the other

our abiding therein.

[5.] What is proper to the word and proper to the sacraments.

To the word, to convert ; to the sacraments, to confirm ; for the

sacraments are of no use till the word hath some effect upon us :

Acts ii. 41, ' Then they that gladly received his word were baptized ;

and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand

souls.'

[6.] What is proper to baptism and proper to the holy supper. To

baptism, to accept the covenant, wherein we, professing ourselves to

forsake the devil, the world, and the flesh, do choose Father, Son, and

Holy Ghost for our God. And the Lord entering into covenant with

us, to give us, first, grace to live in his obedience, and to pardon our

sins and bring us to glory. So that we are both obliged and enabled

hereby. This is once done in baptism, but often renewed in the Lord's

supper : 1 Peter iii. 21, ' The like figure whereunto baptism doth also

now save us ; not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer

of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ;'

Mat. iii. 11, \* I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance ; but he

that Cometh after me is mightier than I, wliose shoes I am not w^orthy

to bear, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.'

Well, then, if these things be confounded, we shall fall into dangerous

errors, and hinder both our sanctification and comfort. The sum is

this : the first cause of all is God's mercy, that floweth forth freely by

the merit of Christ. The merit of Christ procnreth the Spirit for us,

who sanctifieth and converteth us unto God, which grace is offered in

the word, sealed in the sacraments, which bind us more closely to God

and excite us with greater confidence to wait for the grace offered

by him, to bring us to salvation and eternal glory.

Neither is this useful only to set us riglit in doctrinals, but also to

guide us in matter of practice, how to obtain grace necessary for us.

If we lack anything, we must ask it of God ; for his love and grace is

the fountain-cause of all these things, and his grant is necessary to

accomplish our desires : Rev. xix. 8, \* And to her was granted, that slie

should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white ; for the fine linen is

the righteousness of saints ; ' Eph. iii. 16, ' That he would grant unto

you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with all

might by his Spirit in the inner man.' All cometh originally from his

grant. Now when we come to the Father for this, sin hath made us so

odious to God that he would not look graciously and favourably toward

us, but for Christ's sake ; therefore he scndeth us to his Son, whose

blood cleanseth us from all our sins, and in whom alone God is pro-

pitious to us. If we turn ourselves to Christ, he intercedeth for us at

the right hand of God, but referreth us to the Spirit, whose proper

J

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AV(jrk i^anctificatioii is. If we wait for the Spirit's efficacy, he sendeth

IIS to Moses and the prophets and apostles. In tlie word and ordin-

ances we shall hear of him ; therefore when we pray, hear, read,

meditate, receive the Lord s supper, let us behave ourselves suitably to

the nature of each ordinance ; these are means to convey and conhrni

grace. And they are the more effectual because they are sprinkled

with the blood of Christ, and receive their virtue from the love of

God, the merit of Christ, and the almighty operation of the Spirit.

But I waive the further pro.secution of this, and observe —

Doct. That Christ's end in dying for his people was to sanctify and

cleanse them, and make them a holy and peculiar people unto God.

It is asserted in the text, and confirmed, Titus ii. 14, 'He gave him-

self for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto

himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' Christ died, not

only to redeem us from wrath and from the flames of hell, but to

redeem us from sin ; not only to abolish guilt and our obligation to

punishment, but to establish holiness.

1. This is necessary with respect to our necessitj^ that the salvation

introduced by him might answer his people's necessities. The plaster

need be as broad as the sore, and our gain by Christ must correspond

with our loss by Adam, and our remedy be suited to our misery. Now

our misery lay in our sinfulness as well as our liableness to wrath. By

Adam we lost the image of God, iavour and fellowship with him ;

and therefore our restitution must be suited. First his image

restored, then his favour, then his fellowship. This misery is felt and

ii})prehended by a troubled conscience, therefore they come to God :

' Purify me, take away iniquity, and receive us graciously,' Hosea xiv. 2 ;

and not only, with Pharaoh, Take away this plague. To be sanctified

easeth the serious of their great ti'ouble. The misery is a motive, but

sin is the cause that niaketh them look after a remedy. A man that

hath broken his leg, his pain maketli him look after the chirurgeon ;

but the main work which he hath to do is to set it in joint again, that

he may go right.

2. With respect to God's interest. Surely Christ aimed at tbe ser-

vice of his redeemed ones, to make them perfect in every good work.

Sin had made them unserviceable to God. Now Christ died to put us into

a capacity of serving him again, by sanctifying and cleansing us from

sin, which disabled us for our work : ' He hath redeemed us to God,'

Eev. V. 9, that he might fit us for the Lord's use : Ps. iv. 3, ' But know

that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself ; ' Luke i.

74, 75, ' That he would grant unto us that we, being delivered out of

the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and

righteousness before him, all the days of our life.'

3. Christ would separate his people from the rest of the world, and

therefore would regenerate and sanctify them. A distinct community

must have a distinct excellency. Other societies excel the church for

strength, policy, worldly pomp ; but this is the proper excellency of

the church: Ps. xciii. 5, 'Holiness becometh thy liouse for ever.'

This becometh them, both for the special relation they have to God,

and their expectations from him. Their relation to God inferreth

their likeness ; for God himself is 'glorious in holiness,' Exod. xv. 11.

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And their expectations from him ; this they expect as their final glory,

and therefore it must be begun here : ver. 27, ' Tliat he might present

it to himself a glorious churcli, without spot or wrinkle, or any such

thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish.' The prepara-

tions and beginnings answer to our final happiness.

4. Without holiness there can be no communion with Grod ; for all

communion supposes agreement : Amos iii. 3, ' IIow can two walk

together except they are agreed ? ' How can God be present, and

familiarly conversant with us, or we be so with him, if we walk in

ways displeasing to each other ? God doth all things in exact holiness,

which we like not ; and we live in sin, which is provoking to God.

But we may expect his presence and favour when we are agreed,

willing and nilling, loving and hating the same things : 1 John i. 7,

' But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, then have we fellow-

ship one with another.' God is a pure and holy being, and the

fountain of all purity and holiness. The more like him we are, the

nearer we are to him, and the more capable of enjoying him ; for,

' Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart, Ps.

Ixxiii. 1 ; and Ps. xviii. 26, 'With the pure thou wilt show thyself

pure.' Therefore Christ, whose aim it was to bring us into the nearest

communion with God, would sanctify and cleanse his people, and make

them capable of familiarity and friendship with him.

5. Christ's design in his death was to express his love to us in the

highest way of manifestation, or to go to the uttermost, not only in the

manner, but in the effects. (1.) He hath expressed his love to us in

the manner of our deliverance in the most wonderful and astonishing

way that possibly can be imagined : Rom. v. 8, ' But God commendeth

his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died

for us ; ' 1 John iv. 10, ' Herein is love ; not that we loved God, but

that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.'

(2.) Not only in the manner, but in the fruits and effects of his death;

not in temporal mercies, but spiritual and eternal, in saving us from

hell rather than worldly misery and calamity. Among benefits this is

the order : Natural perfections are better than adventitious. He that

restoreth my health doth me a greater good than he that bestoweth

upon me a fine garment. Moral perfections are better than natural.

Life is more than riches, and wisdom is better than strength ; it is

better to be wise than to be strong ; and saving grace is more than

moral wisdom. And among spiritual and saving benefits holiness is

chief ; as compare the two saving benefits, justification and sanctifica-

tion. Justification, or pardon, freeth us a malo naturali, from a natural

evil, which is punishment or painful evil; but sanctification a malo

morali, from a moral evil, which is sin or a sinful evil. The one

freeth from the wrath of God, the other qualifieth us, and maketli us

capable of the love of God. They are both excellent privileges, but

judge you which is the greatest. Surely moral evils are greater than

natural ; sin is worse than hell. To offend God, or be displeasing to

God, is the worst state the creature can fall into. Certainly that which

is the object of God's complacency is the greatest benefit. God lovelh

us as sanctified rather than as pardoned. Ho pitieth our misery, and

pardoneth our sins for Christ's sake, but delighteth in us as having his

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own image impressed upon ns. We love God much because he par-

doneth much ; but God deligbtetb in the pure and upright : Prov. xi.

20, ' They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the Lord ;

but such as are upright in their way are his delight.' Or shall I use

this argument ? That which hath the nearest affinity to our eternal

blessedness is the greater benefit. Now if you will go by that rule, the

case will be soon decided. If you consider what our eternal blessed-

ness is, not only an estate of perfect felicity or exemption from misery,

but an estate of exact holiness and purity, to see God as he is, and to

be like him : 1 John iii. 2, ' Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and

it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that when he

shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' An

immaculate and sinless estate. Now let us see which of the benefits

hath the nearest affinity with it. Justification is causa removens

proMhens, a cause that removeth the impediment, or that which for-

biddeth our entrance into heaven ; and sanctification is the beginning

and introduction into this blessed estate, and doth dispositively fit us

for it. Therefore judge you which hath the nearest affinity, that which

removeth the impediment, or that which giveth us the beginning,

foretaste, and first-fruits of this happy life. Put it in a temporal

interest : If a man be banished the court or his country by sentence of

law, when is he nearer to the king ? when the legal exclusion is taken

off, or he is actually sent for and brought into the palace, and ready to

be received by him. ? This instance is not full home, because we are

not only brought to God, but there is a change of nature and we are

made amiable in his eyes. Well, then, to draw up the argument a

little closer, many would think God had expressed great love if Christ

had procured for us worldly comforts or temporal benefits ; others, if

he had only procured our pardon, and taken away the legal exclusion

which shut us out from God ; but he hath done more, he hath pro-

cured grace to change our natures, and to sanctify and cleanse us, that

God may delight in us. This is a gift answerable to Christ's love and

merit.

Use 1. Is information. It informeth us of divers important truths.

1. That in ourselves we are polluted and unclean, or else why need

there so much ado to get us sanctified and cleansed? Why must the

Son of God give himself for us to sanctify and cleanse us, but that we

are polluted? This is a truth frequently represented in scripture;

as Job XV. 14, ' What is man that he should be clean ? and he which

is born of a woman, that he should be righteous ? ' that is, man by

nature is neither clean nor righteous, but destitute of purity in his

nature, and also of uprightness in his conversation. They are ill

acquainted with man who think otherwise of him. If we consider the

universality in sinning, the earliness in sinning, the easiness in sinning,

the constancy in sinning, that is visible and evident in all mankind, you

may soon see what his nature is. And the fountain being so corrupt,

the streams are defiled also. Surely we are so in God's eyes : Ps. xiv.

3, ' The Lord looked down from heaven,' and what did he see here

below ? ' They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy

and abominable.' All persons, and all their actions flowing from their

corrupt hearts, are become filthy and odious to God, and they are utterly

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incapable of enjoying communion with him ; and so they remain till they

be sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Solomon telleth us, Prov. xiii. 5, that

' a wicked man is loathsome.' To whom ? To God especially, who is

\*of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,' Hab. i. 13 ; that is, with counte-

nance and approbation. To good men : Prov. xxix. 27, ' An unjust man

is an abomination to the just.' To standers-by, of what sort soever they

be; for they that allow sin in themselves dislike it in others: Titus iii.

3, ' Hateful and hating one another.' To themselves, for they are

unwilling to look into themselves : John iii. 20, ' For every one that

doetli evil, hateth tlie light ; neither cometli to the light, lest his deeds

should be reproved.' And are shy of God : 1 Sam. vi. 20, ' And the

men of Bethshemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy Lord

God ? ' Therefore we all need to be sanctified and cleansed if we

would have any benefit by Christ.

2. That nothing can cleanse us but the blood of Christ. Can man

cleanse himself? What sound part is there left in us to mend the

rest ? Job xiv. 4, ' Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ? not

one.' That which is corrupt cannot cleanse itself. Can the word do

it without Christ ? Good instructions may show a man his duty, but

cannot change the bent of his heart. Christ needed not only be sent as

a prophet, but must as a priest offer himself for a mediatorial sacrifice

before this benefit could be procured for us : Eph. v. 2, ' He hath given

himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God.' There was no pos-

sible way to recover holiness into the world again unless a price be

paid ; and no lesser price than the blood of the Son of God must be

paid to provoked justice. Christ must give himself before we can be

sanctified and cleansed.

3. That they do not aright improve the death of Christ that seek

comfort by it and not holiness. He died not only for our justification,

but sanctification also. There are two main reasons why the death of

Christ hath so little effect upon us — either he is a forgotten Christ or a

mistaken Christ.

[1.] Men do not consider the ends for which he came •• 1 John iii. 5,

\* He was manifested to take away our sins.' He came to give his Spirit

to miserable sinful man to sanctify and cleanse him, and fit him for the

service and enjoyment of God. Now things that we mind not do not

work upon us. The work of redemption Christ hath performed with-

out our minding or asking. He took our nature, fulfilled the law,

satisfied the Lawgiver, and merited grace for us, without our asking or

thinking. But in applying this grace, he requireth our serious considera-

tion : Heb. iii. 1, ' Consider the apostle and high priest of our profession,

Jesus Christ.' And our faith: John xi. 26, 'Believest thou that I am

able to do this for thee ? ' Our asking : John iv. 10, ' If thou knewest

the gift of God, thou wouldst have asked, and he would have given

thee living water.' Acceptance of him to these ends : John i. 12, ' To

as many as received him,' &c.

[2.] But the other is a greater evil, a mistaken Christ ; when we

make use of him only to increase our carnal security and boldness in

sinning, as if God were more reconcilable to sin than he was before,

because of Christ's dying for sinners. Now this is a great fault ;

for —

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(1.) Thereby yon make Christ a minister, an encourager of sin ;

which is a blasphemy to be abhorred by all christians : Gal. ii. 17,

' But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are

found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.'

(2.) You set up Christ against Christ, an imaginary Christ, or an

idol of your own making, against the true Christ, who came by water

and blood. Not by blood only : 1 John v. 6, ' This is he that came

by water and blood, even Jesus Christ ; not by water only, but by

water and blood ; ' and ' He bore our sins in his own body on the tree,

that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness ; by whose

stripes ye are healed,' 1 Peter ii. 24. You set his death against the

ends of his death, and run from and rebel against God, because he

came to redeem you, and recover you to God.

(3.) You separate between his benefits, and only cull out that part

which suiteth most with your self-love. You have natures to be healed,

as well as your peace to be made : Isa. liii. 5, ' But he was wounded

for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities : the chastise-

ment of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.'

They that seek holiness from the Eedeemer have a more spiritual affec-

tion to him. The guilt of sin is against our interest, but its power

against that subjection and duty we owe to God. Christ's work is not

only to ease our conscience, but free our hearts from slavery, that we

may serve God with more liberty and delight.

(4.) If you do not mind holiness, you defeat your Redeemer of his

end, and seek to put him to shame : 1 John iii. 8, ' For this purpose

the Sou of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the

devil.' To cherish what he came to destroy is vile ingratitude.

(5.) If you slight holiness, it argueth lessening thoughts of Christ's

merit. Christ thought it of such value as to offer himself a mediatorial

sacrifice to procure it. Our respect to Christ's blood is judged by the

respect we have to the benefits })urchased thereby. The two great

benefits are the favour of God and the image of God. He that pre-

ferreth corruptible things before the favour of God hath no esteem of

Christ's merit ; and he that doth not esteem the image of God, which

standeth in righteousness and true holiness, doth not esteem the blood

of Christ: 1 Peter i. 18, 19, 'Forasmuch as ye were not redeemed with

corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation,

received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of

the Son of God.'

4. We need not despair of holiness, Christ having paid so great a

price for it, but may with the more confidence use the means of grace

because they are sprinkled with the blood of Christ. Christ hath pur-

cliased such a treasure of grace as cannot be exhausted, and it is dis-

pensed to us by the word and sacraments. The apostle doth not say

barely, ' He gave himself to sanctify and cleanse,' resting there ; but he

addeth, ' by the washing of water through the word.' So John xvii. 19,

'And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanc-

tified through the truth.' Christ hath established the merit, but the

actual influence is by the Spirit, which we receive in the ordinances as

the ordinary way.

5. It shows the preciousness of holiness ; it is a thing dearly bought,

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and the great blessing which Christ intended to us ; therefore it should

be more prized and sought after by us. When Christ was devising

what he should do for his church to make it honourable and glorious, he

took this course to make it holy,

[1.] This is that which maketh us amiable in God's sight : Ps. xi. 7,

' The righteous God loveth righteousness ; his countenance doth behold

the upright.'

[2.] It is indispensably required by God : 1 Thes. iv. 3, \* This is the

will of God, even your sanctification.'

[3.] It is a great part of our salvation by Christ: Titus iii. 5,

' According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration,

and renewing of the Holy Ghost'

[4.] It is a means to the rest, especially eternal life : Acts xxvi. 18,

'That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among

them that are sanctified by faitli that is in me ; ' Heb. xii. 14, ' Without

holiness no man shall see the Lord.'

6. It shows who are partakers of the benefits and fruits of Christ's

death. His kindred by incarnation is reckoned to them ; he is doubly

akin to them, respectu incarnationis siice et regenerationis nosirce, both

as he is born of a woman and as they are born of God : Heb. ii. 11,

' He that sanctifies and they that are sanctified are all of one, for which

cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.' His sacrifice is

reckoned to them : Heb. x. 14, ' By one offering he hath perfected for

ever them that are sanctified.' Oiu- Lord regenerates, justifies, sanctifies

all who shall have benefit by his death. But who are they ? There

are two words used, ' sanctify' and ' cleanse.' To be sanctified argues

a dedication to God ; so there is a difference between you and others.

To be cleansed implies a change of the state of your hearts ; so there is

a difference between you and yourselves. They are a people set apart

to live and act for God : Ps. iv. 3, ' The Lord hath set apart him tiiat

is godly for himself They are not what they were before : 1 Cor.

vi. 11, 'Such were some of you, but ye are washed, sanctified,' &c.

And this change should be more sensible and visible every day.

SERMON XXXII.

Tliat he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot,

or lorinkle, or any such thing ; hut that it should he holy, and

tvithout hlemish. — Eph. v. 27.

In this verse we have the last end of our redemption by Christ, the

perfection and consummation of our sanctification in the life to come.

In setting forth of which take notice —

1. Of our nearness to Christ, ' That he might present it to himself ;'

that is, assume or take us home to live with him, and abide always ia

his presence.

2. The effect of this union and nearness, which is —

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[1.] Generally expressed, 'A glorious church.' It is an allusion to

the spouse of a king, or a royal marriage : Ps. xlv. 13, ' The king's

daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold.' Her

glory is now more internal than external and conspicuous, and also

shall be eternal and without end.

[2.] Particularly explained, or wherein the glory of the church doth

consist,

(1.) Negatively, ' Not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.'

A spot is in the garments, a wrinkle is in the flesh ; and then follow

the general words, ' Or any such thing.' Neither with filthy garments,

nor with shrivelled flesh, nor blind, nor lame. Metaphors are tender

things, and must not be strained. Some say no spot of sin, or wrinkle

of misery, when the flesh is dried up with age or sorrow. It is safer

to say in general. No defect or deformity shall remain ; no remnant or

stain of Adam's sin left, whether it be sin or misery : Cant. iv. 7,

' Thou art fair, my love ; there is no spot in thee.'

(2.) Positively, ' But that it should be holy, and without blemish,'

perfectly pure, and exempt from either blemish or blame, for the word

signifieth both ; and the allusion is to a spouse that excelleth in beauty

and comeliness.

Doct. That the final end of our redemption is that we may be pre-

sented at the last day glorious in purity and holiness.

I shall present this note or point of doctrine, as it lieth in the text,

by going over the several branches of it, which will fully make it out.

Give me leave to take notice of these things —

First, Of the final end of our redemption ; and there —

1. Of his love, that Christ could not satisfy himself with doing us

good here, but he would provide for our glorious estate hereafter. In

the former verse he had spoken of what Christ would do for us in this

life, whilst the ordinances of the word and baptism were in force, ' That

he might sanctify and cleanse us by the washing of water through the

word.' Now this did not content him, but he had a further end, and

that is in the text, that he might bring us into a nearer familiarity

and presence with himself, that we might not only be employed by

God in some remote service, or at a distance from him, but minister

before his throne. Here is a state consistent both with sin and

misery ; the church is not without her spots and infirmities, and also

her wrinkles and troubles ; but in the state of the life to come there is

no such thing. Here we enjoy God upon earth, but there in heaven,

a better paradise than that we lost by Adam. We have our blessedness

in the heavenly places : Eph, i. 3, ' Blessed be the God and Father of

our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in

heavenly places in Christ ; ' where we converse with God, not as Adam

in paradise among the beasts, but among the angels.

2. That our glory in heaven is the fruit of Christ's death, who pro-

cured this eternal inheritance for us. It is not merited by our holiness,

but purchased by Christ. Take away his death, there can be no

expiation of sin, therefore no inheritance, no covenant or promise of

the inheritance ; for it is said, Heb. ix. 15, ' That by means of death,

for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first

testament, they which are called may receive the promise of eternal

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inheritance.' All the promises of eternal life are made for and in

consideration of Christ's satisfying the justice of Grod, and meriting his

favour for us ; without that we can neither have right to nor possession

of this blessed estate. It is good to consider what respect the death of

Christ hath to our estate of glory, and what respect likewise holiness

hath to it. The death of Christ iiath a meritorious influence upon it,

as it purchaseth the gift, and the promise, and the Spirit to enable a

man to fulfil the conditions of the promise. But holiness doth qualify

for this blessedness, partly as it is the condition without which we can-

not obtain it : Heb. xii. 14, ' Follow peace with all men, and holiness,

without which no man shall see the Lord ; ' and partly as it denoteth

the persons who by the gospel grant have alone a title thereunto :

Mat. V. 8, ' Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God ; ' and

partly as it disposeth and fitteth us for this blessedness, for they are

foi'med for this very thing : 2 Cor. v. 5, ' Now he that hath wrought

us for the self-same thing is God, who hath given us the earnest of

the Spirit ; ' and are made meet for it: Col; i. 12, ' Giving thanks unto

the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance

of the saints in light'

3. It implieth that none but those who are purified by the blood

and Spirit of Christ have interest in this privilege. All these have au

interest, and none but these, for we must not disturb the order of

Christ's benefits ; for, first, he doth sanctify and cleanse the church

by the washing of water through the word, from the guilt and filth of

sin, and then present it to himself as a glorious church. They must be

regenerated by the Spirit, and have their consciences purged from dead

works by his blood, before they are capable. We must be children

before we can be heirs ; none ai'e children but they that are born of

the Spirit, and so justified and adopted into God's family ; none can

have the whole sum, but they that have the earnest and first-fruits, for

that is God's method : 2 Cor. i. 22, ' Who hath also sealed us, and

given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts ; ' Eom. viii. 23, ' And

not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the

Spirit; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the

adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.' We cannot expect the

flower or fruit without the seed, nor the end without the beginning. Now

holiness doth participate of glory, and heaven is virtually in the seed

of grace.

Secondly, That we enter into this everlasting estate by being pre-

sented to Christ ; for in the text it is said, ' That he may present it to

himself,' that is, as the bride to the bridegroom, that the marriage

may be consummated. It was the ancient custom that betrothing

preceded marrkige ; as Dent. xx. 7, ' What man is there that hath

betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her ? let him go and return to

his house, lest he die in battle, and another man takes her.' Thus

Mary was espoused to Joseph before they came together, Mat. i. 18.

So we are contracted to Christ now, but married hereafter ; as Rev.

xix. 7, 'Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the

marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.'

In the scripture there is a threefold presentation spoken of —

1. One made by believers themselves : Eom. xii. 1, ' I beseech you

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therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your

bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your

reasonable service ; ' Kora. vi. 13, ' Neither yield ye your members as-

instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God,

as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments^

of righteousness unto God.' When we give up ourselves to God by

Christ, and employ our time, and strength, and all our faculties for

him. ^

2. It is ascribed to the apostles, or Christ's messengers, who have a

charge ; and when they have done their work, present us to God as

the fruit of their labour : 2 Cor. xi. 2, ' But I am jealous over you with

a godly jealousy ; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I

may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.' It is the duty of the-

ministers of the gospel to prepare and fit Christ's people, that they may

be a spouse to him ; and it is a blessed thing when we can produce

them as the fruit and pledge of our faithfulness ; for in the great day

of our accounts this will be our crown and our rejoicing, that we have

converted any to God, or prepared and fitted them to be accepted by

Christ.

3. This presentation is applied to Christ himself. Now two ways is

Christ said to present us — (1.) To himself ; (2.) To God.

[1.] To himself; that is spoken of in the text, which is nothing else

but his assuming and taking us home to himself, according to the

marriage covenant and contract. As when Esther was chosen to be wife

to the great king Ahasuerus, she was first to be prepared, and to accom-

plish the months of her purification, Esther ii. ; so first Christ sauctifieth

and cleanseth us by the word and ordinances, and then he presentetli

us to himself, as a bride made. ready for the solemn day of espousals.

[2.] To God ; so it is said. Col. i. 22, ' To present you lioly, and

unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight ; ' that is, of God the Father ;

for the antecedent you find, ver. 19, 'It pleased the Father.' Now

Christ's presenting us to God may be looked upon —

(1.) As an account of his charge, as having done the work for which

he was sent into the world. Christ as mediator hath an office and trust

committed to him, of which he must give an account ; for so he ia

God's, 1 Cor. iii. 23, and 1 Cor. xi. 3, ' The head of Christ is God,'

and he must give an account to him. Now this account he giveth

when he doth present himself and all his flock to God, saying, Heb. ii.

13, 'Behold, I and the children which God hath given me.' Blessed

are they that shall appear in that company and congregation, when

they shall be presented to God as a prey snatched out of the teeth of

the lion.'

(2.) As an act of rejoicing in his own success ; as a minister taketh-

delight in those whom by grace he hath gained to God : ' What is our

hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing ? are not even ye in the presence of

our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming ? ' 1 Thes. ii. 19. ISo our Lord

himself rejoiceth to see the proof and virtue of his death, and that his

blood was not shed in vain. This is recompense enough for all his

sufferings : Isa. liii. 11, ' He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be

satisfied.' The words may be understood of foresight when it was

designed, or of sight when it was accomplished. And some good inter-

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preters understand, \* Who for the joy that was set before him endured

the cross,' Heb. xii. 2 ; that he had in his eye as a reward of his

siififerings his numerous seed, or the church of the saints, whom he

should purify and set apart for God.

(3.) As an act of his love and recompense to the faithful, who have

owned him in the world. Christ will own them before God, men, and

angels, be they never so mean and despicable here upon earth : Luke

xii. 8, ' Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men,

him shall also the Son of man confess before tlie angels of God ; '

Kev. iii. 5, ' But I will confess his name before my Father, and before

his angels.' Christ will solemnly and honourably own them as his, and

given to him in the great day, when all the holy angels shall be })resent.

Therefore we should often think of this solemn presentation, that we

may not be ashamed of Christ in the world.

Thirdly, I observe in the text, that those who are presented to Christ,

and by Christ to God, is his church, and is a glorious church : ' That

he might present it to himself,' evSo^ov riiv eKKkrjcTLav. This is

often spoken of in scripture. I shall produce but two places ; the

first is Col. iii. 3, 4, ' Our life is hid with Christ in God; but when Christ,

who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory.' The

life of a chiistian now is a glorious life, but it is a hidden life. The

spiritual life is hidden under the natural : Gal. i. 22, ' And was

unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ.'

And hidden under the veil of infirmities and weaknesses : 2 Cor. xii. 10,

' Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities.' And the obscurity and

meanness of their condition : Heb. xi. 36-38, ' And others had trials of

cruel mockings and scourgings ; yea, moreover, of bonds and impiison-

ment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted,

were slain with the sword ; they wandered about in sheep-skins, and

goat-skins, being destitute, affiicted, tormented, of whom the world was

not worthy : they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens

and caves of the earth.' Reproaches : 1 Peter iv. 14, ' If ye be reproached

for the name of Christ, happy are ye ; for the Spirit of God and of

glory resteth upon you ; ' 2 Cor. vi. 8, ' By honour and dishonour, by

evil report and good report, as deceivers, and yet true. ' They are counted

a company of dissemblers, and yet they are the faithful servants of the

most high God. But the glory of our life is manifested when Christ

is manifested and doth appear. God's children are owned before the

world : Rom. viii. 19, ' For the earnest expectation of the creature

waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.' And there is no

weakness or infelicity to obscure our life ; because of our relation to

the Lord of glory, we are made glorious. The other place is 2 Thes.

i. 10, \* When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be

admired in all them that believe.' Mark, first, the apostle doth not

say, the saints shall be glorified, but Christ shall be glorified in

them, that is, objectively, because of the glory he puts upon them.

Again, he doth not say, Christ shall be glorified in himself ; though

that is true, for his glory shall be revealed also : 1 Peter iv. 13,

•That when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with

exceeding joy ; ' but Christ shall be 'glorified in the saints;' there

shall a glory result to Christ from the glory he bestowetli on

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them. Christ is glorified in the saints two ways — actively, as he is

lauded and praised by them, and objectively, or by the impression of

glory upon them ; though the saints should be silent, the work would

speak for itself. But the other expression is, that Christ will be

\* admired in those that believe.' We admire at things that exceed

knowledge and expectation, or such things as were never seen before,

nor could the heart of man conceive how these things should ever be

brought to pass. Now this glory will exceed all our hope and expecta-

tion. But who shall thus admire ? The good angels, that wonder

now at the grace of the Kedeemer : 1 Peter i. 12, ' Which things

the angels desire to look into.' They shall wonder then at the final

effect, the glory he puts upon his people ; they stand by and admire

what Christ meaneth to do with creatures that are but newly crept out

of dust and rottenness. The wicked are amazed and astonished when

they see them so much loved and honoured whose lives they counted

madness and folly ; they counted them the off-scouring of all things,

and Christ maketh tliem to shine as the stars in the firmament.

Lastly, the saints themselves are filled with wonder, finding their

expectation so far exceeded.

But more distinctly, there is a threefold glory put upon the saints —

(1.) Relative and adherent; (2.) Intrinsic and inherent; (3.) Cir-

cumstantial.

1. The relative glory of the saints standeth in three things —

[1.] In the free and full forgiveness of all our sins ; and our absolu-

tion is pronounced by the judge's own mouth sitting on the throne:

Acts iii. 19, ' Repent, that your sins may be blotted out, when the

times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.' Here

we have a right to pardon by the grant of the new covenant ; and it is

in part executed, and put into act by the gift of the Spirit ; but then

the judge, pro trihunali, doth solemnly declare and determine our right,

and absolve and accept us unto life in the sight of all the world ; then

is the sentence pronounced, and also executed and put in force ; and

ever after do all the effects and fruits of sin cease.

[2.] A participation of judicial power. At the last day the saints

are not only judged, but judges: 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3, 'Do ye not know

that the saints shall judge the world ? and if the world shall be judged

by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye

not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that per-

tain to this life ? ' Per modum suffragii, as assessors with Christ on

the bench, or assessors in judicature, however they are here reviled,

slighted, and persecuted.

[3.] They shall be publicly owned before God and his angels by

head and poll, when Christ shall present them to God, and lead them as

the shepherd of the sheep into their everlasting fold, as having acquitted

themselves to God, conquered temptations, and kept his charge, that

Christ may own them without any impeachment of honour to himself :

1 Thes. iii. 13, ' To the end he may establish your hearts unblamable

in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of the Lord

Jesus Christ with all his saints.' The pure and holy are then accept-

able to him, and shall be presented by him to God, as a full proof of

the virtue of his death.

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2. The glory inherent and internal : Eoiu. viii. 18, ' For T reckon that

the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to he compared with the

gloiy that shall he revealed in us.' Now it is revealed to us, then in

us, fully accomplished in our persons, souls, and bodies.

[1.] In our souls. This glorious estate lieth in the sight and fruition

of God. Tlie object is glorious: John xvii. 24, 'Father, I will that

they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may

behold my glory which thou hast given me ; for thou hast loved me be-

fore the foundation of the world.' The manner of sight or knowing is

glorious : 1 Cor. xiii. 12, ' For now we see through a glass darkly, but

then face to face ; now I know in part, but then sliall I know even as

also I am known.' More intimately and more immediately : we shall

have the knowledge of the mysteries of salvation, which now we are

ignorant of, and know God as truly as God knoweth us.

[2.] In our bodies. There is a great deal of glory put upon the

bodies of the saints : Phil. iii. 21, ' Who shall change our vile body, that

it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.' A glimpse was given

to us in Christ's transfiguration : Mat. xvii. 2, \* And he was trans-

figured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment

was white as the light.' So when he appeared to Paul from heaven^

his body was wonderfully glorious ; he could not endure the light which

shined to him from heaven round about, Acts ix. 3. When the saints

shall appear with him in glory, ' the righteous shall shine forth as the

sun in tlie Idngdom of the Father,' Mat. xiii. 43.

3. Tlie circumstantial glory ; there —

[1.] The place is glorious, the heavenly paradise : 2 Cor. xii. 4, 'He

was caught into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not

lawful for a man to utter.'

[2.] The company is glorious. All the glorified saints and angels :

Heb. xii. 22, 23, ' But ye are come to Mount Sion, and unto the city of

the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable com-

pany of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born,

which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the

spirits of just men made perfect.'

[3.] Their daily work and exercise is glorious, even to give glory to

God for ever and ever : Ptev. vii. 9, 10, ' After this I beheld, and lo,

a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, kindreds^

and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Laml),

clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; and cried with a

loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne,

and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

Fourthly, I observe that the principal glory of the church lieth in its

purity and holiness : Jude 24, ' Now unto him that is able to keep

you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his

glory.' It must needs be so ; for —

1. This is God's glory : Exod. xv. 11, ' Glorious in holiness.' There

is nothing in God which is not God himself, and his unity forbids us to

divide him ; but yet the scripture teacheth us to distinguish his per-

fections, and comparing them one with another, give them the advan-

tage, as conduceth more to his honour and our profit. Therefore thus

we conceive of God, that moral perfections are to be preferred before

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natural ; it is better to be wise than to he strong. TsTow among moral

perfections, how shall we range them ? Justice, mercy, holiness : our

interest leadeth us to prefer mercy before justice, being laden with sins

and miseries ; that his mercy renderetli him more amiable to us, be-

cause of our miseries and necessities. Bat now we may give holiness

the pre-eminence, because this conduceth most to the glory of God and

the perfection and benefit of human nature, and doth most preserve the

awe of the majesty of God in our hearts ; for holiness is a more awing

thing than power. Power checketh and restraiueth any violent attempts

against sovereign majesty, but holiness daunteth the heart, and com-

mandeth reverence, and representeth God as fit to be loved and feared.

!Now, then, to be like God is one of the highest perfections of the

creature, and when the image of God is perfectly restored, they are in

their most glorious estate.

2. Sin is the cause of all our misery ; and therefore when we are

completely holy, our misery which we incurred by the fall of Adam is

then at an end. It was sin which was the cause of separation from God :

Isa. lix. 2, 'But your iniquities have separated between you and your

God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.'

So holiness is the means of union with him. Then when we are per-

fectly holy, by necessary consequence we are perfectly happy : Ps. xvii.

15, ' But as for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness ; I shall

be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.' Well, then, might

the apostle define this glory by purity and holiness ; nothing letteth

and hindereth the happiness of the creature when sin is fully done

away.

3. Then we are dispositively fitted for the full enjoyment of God.

Our glory is begun by holiness, and is still increasing to a further

glory: 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'But we all, with open face beholding as in a

glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from

glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' All privileges depend

upon holiness, our pardon on regeneration or change of nature, and

heaven on change of life ; and therefore, when justification and sancti-

fication are complete, our joy will be full.

Fifthly, This purity and holiness shall then be exactly complete.

While we are in the world, neither is the whole church perfect, nor

particular believers.

1. Not the whole church. The state of the church is quite different

from what it will be hereafter ; that needeth not much proof, if we con-

sider the disordered state of Christendom, as it is in its present posture.

Alas ! how much is the glory of it now eclipsed by the lamentable im-

perfection of its members and corruption in worship, and rent and

torn by divisions and sects, and scattered by persecutions of those

that have power over it! God's children are pilgrims to another

"world, and can hardly get leave to pass through this world, though they

would pay for their bread and water, as Israel offered to Edom. How

many enemies come forth to stop them in the very wilderness ! But

most of the calamities in the church come from itself, its diseased

members or foolish guides ; and no wonder that the ship in the hands

of ill pilots dasheth so often against the rocks. It is spotted and stained

by the calumnies and reproaches of adversaries, but chiefly by the

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scandal of its own children. To speak nothing of the openly corrupf;,

who have turned the doctrine of Christ into vain janglings, corrupted

his worship by the pageantry of empty and ridiculous ceremonies, and

have turned its discipline and government into a temporal domina-

tion, alas ! it hath nearer wounds at home, by sidings and emulations,

whilst every party is impaling and enclosing the common salvation,

uncharitably excommunicating all others ; and the ball of contention

is tossed to and fro ; and that party that can rustle down othei's that

stand in their way think Christ only favours them. Though with all

this disadvantage, it is ' better to dwell in the courts of the Lord than

in the tents of wickedness ; ' yet how much is this short of that

blessed state when all is glorious, pure, and holy, and the church is

adorned as a bride fit for her husband, and that great council of souls,

with perfect harmony, are lauding and praising God for evermore, and

live sweetly together without any discord in this holy mount !

2. Nor particular believers : Phil. iii. 12, ' Not as though I had

already attained, either were already perfect.' Paul's confession will

fit all our mouths. While we are in the world, we need that something

should be purged and washed from us ; but then there is ' no spot, or

wrinkle, or blemish, or any such thing.'

But if the soul be thus presented to Christ, when shall it be ?

Either we must acknowledge perfection in this life, or some purgatory

after death. I answer —

[1.] The thing is clear, but we may be ignorant of the time and

manner, and reserve it to experience.

[2.] It is most likely and probable that the same term that puts a

period to our lives doth also to our sins. As the soul in the first

conjunction with the body began to be defiled and infected with sin, so

that a man, when he first beginneth to be a man, is a sinner, so in the

separation of the soul from the body, it is perfectly sanctified, and pi-e-

sented to Christ without spot and blemish. The veil of the flesh is

then rent, and they are admitted into the immediate sight of God.

[3.] Those that have sense to the very last do then most eminently

desire and expect the glory of God ; as Stephen : Acts vii. 59, ' And

they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying. Lord Jesus, receive

my spirit.'

[4.] If we say the soul, when it is separated from the body, be sancti-

fied in its passage, there is no great inconvenience, for sanctification is a

part of glorification : Eom. viii. 30, ' For whom he justified, he sancti-

fied ; and whom he sanctified, he glorified ; ' and in a moment it may

be perfected.

Use 1. To exhort you often to tliink of this estate. Oh, that our

hearts were exercised more about these things ! Grace would not be so

dead, and comfort so scanty; it would enliven us and quicken us to duty ;

and, in the apostle's phrase, 'make us abound in the work of the Lord;'

that all will be glorious at Christ's coming. More especially our whole

life should be spent in thankfulness to God, who sent his Son to redeem

us to this end : 1 Peter i. 3, 4, ' Blessed be the God and Father of our

Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begot-

ten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from

the dead ; to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that

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fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you ; ' Eph. i. 3, ' Blessed be

the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed ua

with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.'

2. Let us improve it.

[1.] To glorify God and Christ, who intend so much glory to us^

We would all be glorified in heaven, but few think of glorifying God

upon earth. Our Lord teacheth us another lesson: John xvii. 4, 5, 'I

have glorified thee upon earth, I have finished the work thou gavest

me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self,

with the glory I had with thee before the world was.' God at first

placed us at the lower end of the world, that we may glorify him there,

before he translateth us to the upper end of the world to praise him

for ever. Here is our work, there we receive our reward ; our work

is on earth, where so few mind it, where there is so much opposition,

so many difficulties and temptations to divert us, where it costs us

shame, and pain, and trouble ; here we glorify him self-deny ingly, there

triumphantly.

[2.] Let the foresight of this estate comfort us against our abasement

in the world. We are now obscure, afflicted, poor, disgraced in the

world; our names are cast forth as evil, or, as the prophet speaketh,

' Ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and become the infamy of the

people,' Ezek. xxxvi. 3 ; but Christ will present us to God as glorious,

without any spot or blemish. Therefore let us not avoid crosses, nor

any abasement, scorn, and disgrace for Christ's sake ; everything that

relateth to Christ hath an honour put upon it for its relation to him :

Heb. xi. 26, ' Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the

treasures in Egypt.' Besides, the final reward of eternal glory doth

abundantly recompense all our disgraces. If the cross giveth us a title

to the crown, we have no reason to grudge at it. Therefore let us

patiently suff'er present ignominy and contempt ; count yourselves rather

bound to praise God that you are thought worthy of the world's hatred.

Alas ! what is man's day to Christ's day ? 1 Cor. iv. 3, ' But with me it is

a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judg-

ment,\* or man's day, airo dvdpwirivrj'i r]yi,epa<i.

[3.] Improve it to holiness. See that this work be begun, for heaven

is but the perfection of what is begun in this life ; and when it is

begun, never give over till you attain this perfect estate. The more

eminency in holiness you get, the more glorious you are. And you

have this encouragement, that Christ will prosecute his work till he

hath brought it to this eff'ect. Christ will make his people at last

without spot or wrinkle ; ere all be done it shall be so. We are not

faultless, but Christ will not rest till we are faultless, if he see you use

the means carefully.

[4.] Improve it to the love of God's people ; a necessary lesson in

these days, when they fly from others that are in trouble, as the rest

of the herd from the wounded deer : Ps. xv. 4, ' In whose eyes a vile

person is contemned ; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord ; ' Ps.

xvi. 3, ' But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in

whom is all my delight ; ' Ps. cxix. 63, ' I am a companion of them that

fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts ; ' Heb. x. 33, ' Partly

while ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions '■,

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and partly while ye became companions of them that were so used.'

We must not measure the glory of the people of God by the judgment

of sense or bodily eyes, for it is si)iritual and future ; it lieth not iii pomp,

but holiness ; and this holiness is perfect at the last day.

[5.] Improve it to thankfulness to Christ ; for we have all our holi-

ness from Christ ; from first to last, he is the author and finisher ; he

purchased and procured the Spirit of sanctification for us : Titus iii. 5,

6, ' According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration,

and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly

through Jesus Christ our Saviour.' And also this glorious estate ; he

gave himself not only to sanctify his people, but glorify them. Heaven

is the fruit of his blood and love : Kev. i. 5, ' Who hath loved us, and

•washed us from our sins in his own blood.' First he purchased it for

us, and then communicateth it to us.

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