

# A SPIRITUAL ANTIDOTE AGAINST SINFUL CONTAGION

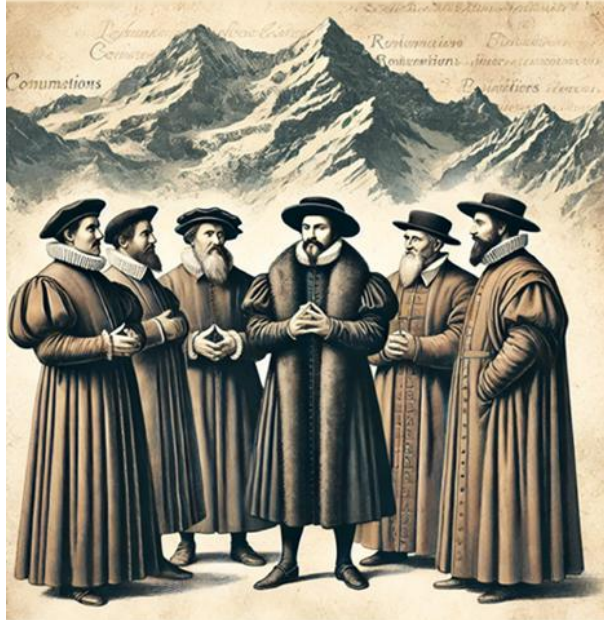
A CORDIAL FOR BELIEVERS & CORROSIVE  
FOR THE WICKED IN DYING TIMES



THOMAS DOOLITTLE

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# *A Spiritual Antidote Against Sinful Contagion*

*A Cordial for Believers & Corrosive for the Wicked in  
Dying Times*

*Thomas Doolittle*

Monergism Books

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## *PT. I. A Spiritual Antidote for a Dying Soul.*

Dear Friends,

The great concernment of every Man in this World, is with utmost and unwearied Diligence, to take care what shall become of his Precious and Immortal Soul in another life. But much more should this be minded with double Diligence, in a time of such great Mortality; when so many fall on the right hand and on the left; when Death is raging in every street; when it is breaking in at every Door, and climbing up in every Window: Bereaving Parents of their Children, which they have brought forth with Sorrow, and brought up with care; nay, not sparing the tender Babes, that hang upon the Brest, the Children of their Parents: Separating betwixt the loving Husband, and the Wife that loves as much as he.

Now, we are not sure of tomorrow, nor this hour of the next; how soon we must flit, we do not know; and a remove into eternity, will be the greatest remove we ever made: And though in his Providence, God hath removed me and my Family from the hearing of your Passing-Bells, and the doleful Lamentations that the ears of the there present, are filled with: Yet methinks

I see the living laboring day and night, to Bury their Dead, while the other half, as yet remain, partly lamenting the Death of them departed, and partly looking for their own. Methinks I see many oftentimes viewing of their own Bodies, to see when the Tokens will appear. Methinks I see one sick and dying in one Room, and another in another; and those that yet are well, tread every step they take upon the Brink and Border of another World. Surely then, now is the time, if ever, for Men to be serious with God, and in good earnest about the Matters of another World: And now to pray, as those that might be arrested while they are speaking, and be fetched from off their knees to God's Bar; and now to hear and do every duty, as those that are so near, so very near, to an eternal and unchangeable State. Oh what havoc doth the Plague make amongst Men's Bodies! And what slaughter is Sin making amongst Men's Souls! Oh how fast are Men passing into Eternal torments, when the Plague cometh and catcheth the Drunkard, the Swearer, in his known Impiety, and the Hypocrite in his close Hypocrisy! Ah that I could bewail the doleful state of the unbelieving and impenitent, of the Christless and the Graceless Souls, that must not live in this World, and yet are unfit to go into another! And yet must (when Death comes with its commission in its hand) (Poor Souls!) must into another life; which indeed, is a living Death, and a dying Life. Oh now are they the Blessed People (whatever thoughts the World had of them) that have walked close with God; that are washed in the Blood of Christ; that have the pardon of their sins! Oh now is Christ, a gift indeed; and now is saving grace, a mercy indeed! Grace is the truest, suitablest, and most durable riches; which neither Death, nor Men, nor Devils can strip us of! Oh will not that Christ, which was not valued by sinners in their life, be of greatest worth unto them when they come to die! Oh Dreadful Souls, that have now no interest in

God, nor title to his Kingdom! Oh miserable Men and Women, who have Spots and spots; Spots upon the Body, that are not the Spots of those that must remain in life; and spots upon the Soul, that are not the spots of God's Children! That die temporally by the Plague upon their Bodies, and die eternally by the Plague upon their Hearts.

Oh, now my Friends, bless God that did incline your Hearts to close with Christ before this day of great distress did come; Do you now Repent of all the Pains you took for Heaven? Do you now not think that was the Best time you spent, which you spent upon your Knees in conversing with your God, in looking Down into your Hearts? Or do you not rather repent you spent no more? That God had no more of your Hearts and Time? That you have done no more for God? And received no more Influences from Him? Who, that waits and looks for Death, doth not wish he had better managed and improved his life? Do you not now find and see the difference betwixt Christ and Earthly Friends? Earthly Friends are full of Fears to approach near unto their Friends, when they are visited with the noisome Pestilence; but Christ doth not refuse to come into his People's Hearts, when neighbors and Friends are afraid to come into their Houses. If the Door of your House should be shut up, yet keep open the Door of your Heart, and the King of Glory will come in: It is the Spots of Sin, and not Plague-Spots, that will make Christ stand at a distance from your Soul: and yet, oh, the Wonderful astonishing Love of an Holy Christ, that will come under the Roof of an Heart that is Stained with Sin, if it be the Sinners Grief, and Burden, and Complaint! Oh then get nearer to your Lord, and follow hard after the Enjoyments of your God, and Learn your Duty, what God doth in a special manner require, and expect at your hands, at such a time as this; and then you may with greater comfort trust yourself, and all your concernments



with him; especially, be much in the practice of these following Duties, which, as a well-wisher to your Souls Health and Happiness, I would mind you of.

### ***DUTY I.***

At such a time as this, be Frequent and Serious in Self-examination Heart-scrutiny is every man's unquestionable Duty, and multitudes do everlastingly miscarry by the willful neglect thereof: many do lay claim to God, and Christ, and Heaven, that have no Title to them; and God forbid that you should be numbered among such at the coming of the Lord to Judgment; and for the better managing of this so necessary and seasonable a Duty; do it,

First, Solemnly, as Judges when they sit upon Life and Death; and to the Solemnity of this work, reduce these particulars.

1. For the time, do this only; If you would search your hearts solemnly, exclude other things for that time; leave your worldly thoughts at your Closet Door, and remember you are now to inquire after the State of your Soul: the Question is, Do I Believe, or do I not? Do I Love God, or do I not, &c?

2. Set yourself, as before the Searcher of Hearts, whom you cannot deceive, though you should deceive yourselves. Think, Now I am in the presence of an All-knowing God; who perfectly seeth the State of my Soul; and desire God that he would search you.

3. Then produce the Statutes by which your Heart is to be tried; take your Bible, and know, this is the Book by which you must be damned or saved, live or die eternally.

4. Then plead for and against yourself, why you think and hope you do Believe; and why you doubt and fear you do not believe; what are your

doubts, and how do you resolve them.

5. Then produce the Witnesses which must give in their Evidences, God and your own Conscience: These alone can tell you whether you are religious indeed; whether you pray sincerely, or no; and in all your actions design and aim at the glory of God, or no.

6. Then proceed to the passing of the Sentence, be it for you, or against you; and say, Oh my Soul! This day upon serious search, I have found that thou art out of Christ, that thou art a Stranger unto God; or, that you find you have unfeignedly closed with, and accepted of Jesus Christ for Lord and Savior.

7. Then Record this in your Memory, or your Diary, which might stand you instead when you have occasion to review it.

Secondly, Judiciously; be not rash, but weigh your Condition in the Balance of the Sanctuary; take heed that Pride and Self-love do not Blind your Eyes, that you should not see the Evil in you: nor unbelief and inordinate Self-loathing Blear your Eyes, that you should not see the Grace that God hath implanted in your Heart.

Thirdly, Effectually; bring the Question to an issue, if it might be; do not stir till you are resolved; if your heart begin to slink away, command it in the Name of God to abide the trial.

Fourthly, Humbly begging the assistance and the witness of the Spirit of God; you cannot have grace, till he give it; and you cannot see the grace you have, till he doth show it to you. Oh my Friends! Though the work be difficult, and displeasing to the flesh, yet be not kept from it, but press yourself to it, by considering,

First, That many now in Hell, once thought their condition good, till they found themselves irrecoverably lost.

Secondly, That it is an easy thing to be deceived about the sincerity of your Heart; and that,

1. Because of the near resemblance betwixt the highest degree of common grace, and lowest degree of saving grace. There is something in Hypocrites, like Faith in Christ, and love to God, that is neither Faith nor Love.

2. Because of the unskillfulness of the most, to judge where the difference lieth.

3. Because the worst Heart is apt to conclude the best of itself. Some think they are worse than they be; but the most, that they are better than they be.

Thirdly, That a mistake about the estate of your Soul, is most dangerous; and to die in this mistake, is to be lost irrecoverably.

Fourthly, That it is possible you may know whether you shall be saved.

Fifthly, That this will be very comfortable.

Sixthly, That a Heart unwilling to be searched, is much to be suspected.

And now for the helping of you in the discovering the sincerity of your Heart towards God, I would advise you to make some inquires About,  
Sin.

Grace.

Duty.

First, Can you truly say, making your appeal to God, That sin is the object of your hatred? What is the special thing your Soul abhors? Every unregenerate man doth indeed hate God, and Christ, and the Power of Religion; and every sanctified person, doth unfeignedly hate those sins, which he cannot shake off. A wicked man might be angry with himself for sin, but yet he doth not hate it; might speak displeasing words against sin with his tongue, and yet have love for it in his heart: But as God hateth

nothing more than sin, so everyone that is born of God, hateth nothing more than sin. True hatred to sin is,

1. Implacable, and therein it differs from anger. This may be pacified, but hatred is irreconcilable, especially when there is a radicated antipathy, as there is betwixt Grace and Sin. A man may be angry with his friend, and yet own him for his friend: A Father may be angry with his Child; and yet love him. Anger and Love are consistent, but so is not Love and Hatred.

2. Universal Hatred is to all the kind: He that hates a Toad, hates every Toad; he that hates anything as such, hates everything that is such: Love to one sin, proves there is not a hatred to any sin? Now then seriously inquire, Is there not any one sin that you love with a prevailing love, you might not care for prodigality; but do not you love covetousness? You might not care for sinful sports; but do not you love to please the flesh, in being brought under the power of your sensitive appetite?

3. Hatred tends to separation, fighteth with the strongest opposition, and longeth for a total extirpation of the sin you hate. It makes you strive and struggle to get the victory; to abstain from the very appearance of evil; and to hate the temptation to sin, as well as the commission of it. Doth it cost you daily pains to subdue and conquer it? Do you labor to weep it out at your eyes? And though the relics do abide, yet doth the Soul breathe and long after the extirpation of it? Doth it not make you willing sometimes to go out of the World, if God would call you, that you may get sin out of your Heart?

Secondly, How do you find your heart affected toward that sin which by way of special propriety you might call your own? Indeed, nothing is so properly our own, as our sin: But yet some one sin is dearer to us, then all the rest. All other sins are but attendants upon this, and all will be parted

with, rather than this. One beloved sin hath kept many off from Christ, and out of Heaven. David proves the sincerity of his heart, by keeping himself from his own iniquity, Psal. 18:23. Do you love that part of God's Word that doth most discover your bosom sin, though it be the sin, (1) Of your constitution. (2) That hath become your darling, by former frequent commissions, that you have been long accustomed unto. (3) That hath been the sin of your calling, and brought you in the greatest profit. If indeed you be sincere, that sin hath most of your hatred, that before had most of your love.

Thirdly, How do you find your heart to work against secret sins? Can you in secret mourn and grieve for such sins that were always secret? Do you know no sin by yourself, that never any man knew to be in you; that never did expose you to shame among men? Can you as heartily grieve, and weep, and mourn for this, as for others, that have discovered your infirmities unto the World? Is it more to you, that God doth see you, then if all the World did see you.

Make inquiry concerning your Grace. There is a great deal of counterfeit grace in the World. Many think they have grace, that are indeed under the power of their sin and lust.

First, Inquire after the truth of your Faith.

1. Doth it make you to prize, and value, and esteem the Lord Jesus Christ above all things in the World?

2. Are you unfeignedly willing to receive Christ, upon the terms of the Gospel, for Lord and Savior?

3. Doth it put you on to daily diligence to purify your heart, and to cleanse your inward man from sin?

Secondly, Inquire after your love to God and Christ. Is it a superlative love? Hath Christ the chiefest seat and room in your heart? Do you love his person, as well as his privileges? Doth your love make you labor to be like him? Doth it constrain you to unfeigned obedience, that is universal?

1. In respect of the Object, All God's commands, though never so displeasing to the Flesh.

2. In respect of the Subject, That it is obedience, with all your hearts.

3. In respect of Time, That it should be constant.

4. In respect of Place, That you would obey God where-ever you are, with others, or alone. Doth your love to God appear in the loving of his people? In the loving of his ways, of his Word, and Ordinances?

Make inquiry concerning your Duties. Judge not by the matter so much, as by other circumstances; for there is no external duty you can perform (materially considered) but a Hypocrite may do it as well as you; yea, and excel you. Do you pray? So doth an Hypocrite. Do you hear and talk of God? So doth an Hypocrite. Do you Fast sometimes, and sometimes Feast at the Lord's Table? So doth an Hypocrite. Inquire then after those things concerning your Duties.

1. What is the Principle from whence all your duties do proceed? If your Principle be wrong, then your heart is not right. Is it only natural conscience, or custom, or Religious education, or profit in the World, or praise among men? You can then take no comfort in sickness, or at death, in any such duties. Many now in Hell have prayed and heard the Word of God upon these accounts: Or can you say, you pray from a Principle of love and fear; because you love him, and love to converse with him, therefore you pray unto him?

2. What is the care of your Souls, as to the manner of your duties? It is the manner that will, in Christ, commend you unto God? Do you do your duties, (1) Humbly, with self-loathing, as becomes a Worm, dust and ashes mingled with sin, before a pure, holy, perfect God? (2) In the Name of Christ, trusting to his merits alone for favor and acceptance. (3) Looking up for the assistance of the Spirit, as one that believeth you can do nothing pleasing unto God, but by his help. (4) Watchfully. Do ye watch against Satan, Sin, and the World, that they may not divert your thoughts from the thing you are about? Or, if you do not watch always to prevent distractions in holy duties, yet do you watch to be humbled for them. (5) Laboriously; do ye labor in Prayer as becomes one praying for the favor of God; the pardon of sin, eternal life, and against everlasting flames? (6) Constantly. Is it now and then that you pray; or do you keep a constancy in these holy duties, as you do in eating and in drinking?

Thirdly, Inquire after the End of all your duty: Such as your end is, such is your heart. A Thief might arm himself, as well as an honest Man; but it is for other ends. Ask then your own heart, do you perform Religious duties,

1. That you may bring glory to God? Is this the White you principally fix your eye upon? Though you be slighted, disesteemed, and debased in the eyes of Men; doth your heart desire, Oh that I could now pray, that God might be glorified by me; and that I might now hear that his honor might be promoted by my hearing?

2. Is it your end that you might have communion with God, and meet with him? And do you count that duty lost, and that time lost you spent in duty, and did not meet with God? And go away weeping and complaining when you miss of him?

3. Is it your end that you might have power more against your sins, and not to feed your lust of pride and vain glory?

4. Is it your end in all your duties, that you may have more ability to walk more close with God, and to increase in grace, that you may delight and rejoice more in God?

5. Is it your end in all your duties, that you may be fitted more and more to live with God in glory; that every Prayer, and Sermon, and Sacrament, may make you more meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light? Oh my Friends, answer to all these Serious Demands, which you put to your own souls, as dying men would do; as men, that do not know how soon the Plague may seize upon you; as such, that have Death staring in your Faces where ever you walk. Search therefore, and rest not, till you can find it thus with you; and then you may have solid ground of peace and comfort, whether you live or die, whether you fall among the rest into your grave, or remain alive when this Visitation is over.

### ***DUTY II.***

A second thing you should now labor after, is, Assurance of the Love of God unto your Souls, of Salvation when you die. When you are going to your Prayers, it is uncomfortable not to know, whether he be your God you are going to; but to doubt of this when you are going to your Grave, will be very terrible; to doubt when you are to die, will fill you with amazing fears; and make you much dishonor God at the very closure of your life. Oh, what is Death, though by the Plague, to him that knows he hath Eternal Life, that can look toward Heaven, and say, Yonder is the Place of my everlasting habitation, with yonder God and Christ; in yonder Heaven and Glory must I shortly be. Oh, now make sure of God and Christ, for you can be sure of nothing else.



Especially, get clear Evidence of the Pardon of your sins; oh, get off Guilt before you die; and if you can get clear discoveries of the removal of your Guilt before Sickness comes upon you, assurance of your Pardon would lighten your afflictions, Isa. 33:24. The Inhabitant, &c. Would it not be a reviving to your departing Soul, to have the secret whisperings of the Spirit, saying unto you, as Christ to the Sick man, Matth. 9:2. Son be of good cheer, thy Sins are forgiven thee. You know you have sinned; but do you know that you are pardoned? You may read your Sins; but can you read your Pardon? If not, pray answer these following Questions, which might be as so many Motives to provoke you to look after Pardon.

First, How can you think of God, or anything in God, if you have not hopes or assurance of your Pardon? How know you, but his Justice might condemn you? And that his Power might break and crush you? His Patience come forth in judgment against you? But if you know your Sins are pardoned, all God's Attributes would administer certain ground of solid comfort to you, in all Conditions and sorest of Afflictions.

Secondly, How can you read with comfort the Word of God? Either his Word of Precept, when you consider how you have transgressed it; or his Word of Promise, when you question your Interest in it; or his Word of Threatening, when you fear it is your Portion? And do not know but you may read your own Sentence: This is not to discourage your studying the Word of God, but to excite you to look out after Pardon.

Thirdly, How can you have any delightful forethoughts of the Joys of Heaven, when you do not know but unpardoned Sins might Bar the Gates thereof against you?

Fourthly, How can you, without amazement and fear, forethink of the Torments of the Damned, when you cannot see your deliverance from

them? Can you seriously think of Eternity, and extremity of Torments, while you doubt of your own escaping of them, and not fear and tremble?

Fifthly, How can you think of the certain near approach of Death, while you do not know your Pardon? Is Death round about you, and every day making nearer and nearer approaches to you, and you not able to say your Sins are pardoned?

Sixthly, How can you think of the Resurrection of the Dead, while you are uncertain of your Pardon? That the Soul of an unpardoned Sinner must be presently dragged to the Bar of God; when it leaves its sinful body, is dreadful; but that the Body must also come forth at the sounding of the last Trumpet, addeth to the Horror of such persons; a dark and stinking Grave, will be too good a place for the Bodies of unpardoned Sinners forever to remain in.

Seventhly, How can you think of the Day of Judgment, and not tremble when you do not know your Pardon? Blessed are they that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors, and their Works do follow them; but cursed are they that die in their sins, for they rest not, (as to their Souls) from their Sorrows, and their sins will follow them, and meet them at the Day of Judgment; and then to see the Books produced and uncrossed, will be terrible; and if they are now blotted out, and you not perceive it, in the meantime it must be uncomfortable.

Eighthly, How can you lay down yourself to sleep, when you do not know whether your debts are remitted? Is your Pillow soft, or your heart hard, that you can sleep so quietly, and yet are uncertain of your pardon?

Ninthly, How can you so cheerfully prosecute your worldly affairs, and mind your earthly concernments, while you are ignorant of the pardon of your sins? Is the making sure of riches, of greater moment then the making

sure of pardon? Can you buy and sell so eagerly, while you cannot evidence the forgiveness of your sins?

Tenthly, How can you with comfort go to God in Prayer, or sit down at his Table, while you do not know but your guilt remains? When you do not know, but you pray to God as a guilty malefactor speaks unto the Judge? And will not this exceedingly prevent your solacing joys at the Lord's Table, when you fear you are there in your sins?

But that you may get this Question resolved, Whether your sins be pardoned, you must take this course.

1. Search the Word of God, that you may know what are the qualifications of those persons, whose sins God hath remitted: For though there be no causes of our pardon in ourselves, yet there are conditions of our pardon, which are wrought by the Spirit of God in the hearts of pardoned sinners.

2. Search narrowly your own heart, whether there be a Transcript of those things in your Soul.

3. Beg the Testimony of the Spirit, to evidence to you, what he hath wrought within you. If therefore you ask, how you may know whether your sins are pardoned, I answer,

First, A pardoned sinner, is a self-loathing sinner. He is truly ashamed of the sins he hath committed: As he is pardoned, he can rejoice; but as he hath sinned, he abhors himself. Mary that was pardoned, stood behind Jesus, as one ashamed of her former courses, Luk. 7:38. And the Justified Publican, through self-abhorrence, stood afar off, and through shame could not lift up his eyes, Luk. 18:13,14.

Secondly, A pardoned sinner, is a weeping sinner. He cannot read his pardon with dry eyes, nor without a sorrowful heart. Luk. 7:38. Mary when she was pardoned, stood behind Jesus weeping; and these tears do proceed

from joy and sorrow. From sorrow, that he sinned; from joy, that he is pardoned. But, no contrition, no remission, Acts 2:38, and 5:31. I have reckoned eleven places in the Scripture where Repentance and Remission are annexed. Whence I do infer the necessity of Repentance, if you will be pardoned; and the certainty of your pardon, if you do repent.

Thirdly, A pardoned sinner, is a Christ-loving sinner. Mary's eyes were broached with tears, and her heart did burn with love, Luk. 7:47. Much was forgiven her, for (i.e. therefore) she loved much. And to whom little is forgiven, they love little; but more or less they truly love. And if our love were proportionable to our pardoned sins, Oh, how great would our love then be! Oh, can you think you are pardoned, and forbear to love your Lord?

Fourthly, A pardoned sinner, is a believing sinner. No faith, no pardon, Luk. 7:50; Acts 10:48. He that hath obtained a pardon, hath received Christ into his heart. If you do believe your sins are certainly forgiven, then see to the truth of your Faith. If you are mistaken about the nature of your Faith, you will come short, and be disappointed of the Pardon.

Fifthly, A pardoned sinner, is a reformed, changed sinner, both in heart and life. Mary that was pardoned, was wont to lay out her hair to entice her lovers; but afterwards, with them she wiped the Feet of Christ. Whatsoever was a Mans sinful course before pardon, he walks directly contrary after pardon, Acts 26:18.

Sixthly, A pardoned sinner, is a sin-mortifying sinner. Wheresoever God takes away the guilt of any sin, he taketh down the reigning power of it. You might know an unpardoned sinner by his death in sin; a pardoned man by his death to sin. Do you cry to God for strength against your sin? Do you

long for the ruin of your lusts? Could not you be content with a pardon, without you also have the death of your sins?

Seventhly, A pardoned sinner, is a sin-fearing sinner. Psal. 130:3,4. With thee there is forgiveness, that thou mayest be feared. Such a one is afraid to sin after pardon; he is afraid of a temptation to sin; he is afraid of an occasion unto sin, and maketh conscience of abstaining from the appearance of evil; and when tempted, saith with Joseph, Gen. 39:9. How can I do this thing, and sin against God? If you search these Scriptures, upon which these evidences of a pardon are bottomed, you will see sufficient reason, why you should be satisfied concerning this grand and necessary question: And if you find it so with you, you have the Word of God to prove your pardon.

Though you must understand that a poor sinner might be pardoned, and yet he might not have the sense and comfort of his pardon; so that his condition is safe, though it might not be so sweet. A poor distressed Soul may pray for pardon oftentimes, and may have it, but not see it; yet let not that discourage you; for,

1. David did so as well as you, after he was pardoned; he did want the comfort of his pardon. 2 Sam. 12:13; Psal. 51.

2. Was it not long, before God did bring you on your knees, seriously to ask for a pardon? And will you think much, if God doth defer to tell you, that you are pardoned?

3. God might do this to make you prize a pardon; when you have got it, then you must say, This pardon is a fruit of many tears, and sighs, and groans. You will set a higher valuation upon pardoning mercies, and God will have his pardons to be prized.

4. God might deny you long the sight of your pardon; that when you have it, you might take heed that you sin no more willingly after pardon. Did you pray so long, and weep so much, and fast so often, before you could see your pardon? And will you not after this be more careful, and more watchful, that you run not in arrears with God again?

5. It might be, you have not prayed earnestly for a pardon: It may be you pray for pardon of your sin with dry eyes; and do you think you shall obtain that without tears, which Christ purchased by his Blood? Christ did bleed, and will not you weep, that you may be pardoned.

Thus I have given you my thoughts in this Second Direction, That you would now get the assurance of the Love of God, and particularly in the pardon of your sins; because I have often found by standing by the Bedsides of dying men, That the doubting of their pardon, hath filled them full of tears, to consider they must into Eternity; but whether pardoned or unpardoned, they could not tell.

### ***DUTY III.***

A consequent and fruit of this, Will be victory over the fears of Death. Hath God delivered you from the hurt and sting of Death, and will you remain under the fears of Death? Have you been praying, to be fit to die; and hearing, that you may be fit to die; and yet so afraid of it?

Fears of Death in God's People, argues.

First, Great Folly.

1. It is Folly to desire to live in a strange Country, rather than go home to your Father's House.

2. To prefer Trouble and Sorrow, before a place of Rest and Joy.

3. To prefer Thralldom before Liberty, Death knocks off all our fetters of Sin and Corruption.

4. To take up with little measures of Grace and Love to God, when by Death, we might have Perfection.

Secondly, Great Weakness.

1. It argues Weakness of our love to God and Christ. Is this your love to Christ, to be more afraid then desirous to go to him? Doth not Love labor after Union? And do you not desire to be with them, whom you love?

2. It argues weakness of hope of Heaven and Eternal Life.

Thirdly, Great Wickedness.

1. In that it implies, That you are not yet weary of sinning: And what have you so oft wept for sin, and smarted for sin; and will not Death yet be welcome, that would release you from it?

2. It argues Great Hypocrisy and Dissimulation with God, and before Men. Have you not prayed sometimes, That you might be willing to die? And in some Prayers and Duties, have desired to be dissolved? And when God sends, are you unwilling to go?

3. It argues Great Slothfulness and neglect of precious time; and misimproving the means of Grace, and the several Providences of God to wean you from this World?

That you may overcome the fears of Death, take these Directions.

Let it be your care to prepare for death: If Death come before you are ready, it will be terrible; when you must say, Oh! Lord, must I die, though not ready! Must I leave this World, though I do not see myself prepared for a better? Do you not live to prepare to die? Let it be (1) your prime and first care. Before you take care to get anything in this world, take care how you may safely and comfortably leave it. (2) Let it be your daily and constant care: You may die today; therefore provide for death today. (3) Let it be your greatest and most diligent care: For the order, let it be the first; for

duration, constant; for the measure, great. There are great things that are to be one in order to our comfortable departure out of this World. A great God, to get reconciled; great sins, to get subdued and pardoned. Great oppositions from Satan and the World, to be resisted; and such great things will not be done with a little care. Death is a great change, you must change Time for Eternity; Earth for Heaven or Hell; your company upon Earth, for society of Saints or Devils, in another World. And doth not such a great change, call for great care and preparations.

And if you would be prepared; First, Die to sin; if you would not fear Death when it comes, fear sin while you live; the sting of Death is sin. He that is dead in sin, and feareth not Death; it is because his mind is blind, and his heart is hard: But he that is dead to sin, hath cause to look upon Death with courage, and embrace it with joy.

Secondly, Live to God, take heed of walking loosely, carnally, vainly.

If you would overcome the fears of Death; get a great measure of Grace, and be much in the Exercise of it. The more grace, and exercise, the less fears; especially labor (1) for a strong Faith, that with its piercing eye, it may look beyond temporal death, to eternal life; and beyond a grave, to a joyful resurrection. (2) A strong burning love, longing after God's presence. (3) A lively hope, of an incorruptible, never fading Crown.

Be much in the fore-thoughts and meditation of Death: Few consider their latter end before it come; and therefore fear it when it comes. Abhor that frame of heart that some express, when they say of a thing, They thought not of, no more than the day of their Death.

Get right apprehensions of Death; do not look upon it, only as a debt due to nature; nor only as a punishment due to sinners; but as a privilege granted to Believers; as that which is part of your Christian Charter, 1 Cor.



3:22. Death is yours. For which purpose consider, That there are Ten evils you shall never be delivered from, till you die.

1. Not from the ignorance there is in your minds. There are many things we understand not *lumine naturae*, by the light of nature, which we do *lumine gratiae*, by the light of grace. And many things we understand not *lumine gratiae*, the light of grace, which we shall *lumine gloriae*, by the light of glory, 1 Cor. 13:9-12.

2. Nor from the vanity of your thoughts. You will in this life have low and too irreverent thoughts of God, in your most solemn approaches unto him.

3. Nor from the total perverseness of your will. And though the inclination of the Will is towards God, and its choice is of God for his portion and its happiness; yet the disobedience of the Will is taken away but in part till you die.

4. Nor from the turbulent motions of your Affections. Your love is not now pure love, and your joy is now too much in carnal outward things, then all in God and Christ. Now hatred is exorbitant; and anger, is unruly; and desires, are extravagant: None of all this, the very moment after Death.

5. Nor from the Pollution of your Conscience. Though it be washed, yet you still defile it.

6. Nor from the frailty of your memory. You now forget oftentimes the love of your Lord, and many of his kindnesses to your Soul.

7. Nor from the war in your members. The contrary principles in a Believers heart can never be in *esse quieto*, at true quiet. Now you would often do good, but you are hindered, Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:18,21. When you would delight yourself in God, and solace yourself in the forethoughts and foretastes of Heaven, you are hindered.

8. Nor from the temptations of the Devil. Do not you find him busy with you in every place, and nibbling at your heart in every duty? Oh my Friends! Death will set you out of his reach.

9. Nor from an insufficiency for the managing of your duties. Now you complain you cannot pray to God, but in Heaven you shall never say you cannot praise him.

10. Nor from a liableness to Death. The same day you live, the same day you may die; but after death, you shall no more be liable to die: Nay, when you have got above the slavish fears of death, yet the natural fears of Death will remain, till by death you put off this natural body.

Secondly, That you might perceive Death to be a privilege, consider there are Five great things you cannot have till you die.

1. Till you die, you cannot have the beatifical vision.

2. Nor perfection of grace. While you live, you are to grow in grace; but you will not be perfect till you die.

3. Nor perfect satisfaction and contentment of heart. In every state you will here find something to embitter it; and in the Creatures fullness, you will find an emptiness.

4. Nor society with spotless Angels and Saints.

5. Nor the crown of glory, for that is reserved for you, till you go into another World.

Be much in the meditation of the death of Christ. You might have trembled at the thoughts of Death, if Christ had never died: The efficacy of this cure will be experimented, if you believably consider.

1. That Christ by death hath destroyed him that had the power of death; that is, the Devil.

2. That Christ by death hath overcome the power of death, as well as him that had the power of death. Christ hath turned the Serpent into a Rod: It is indeed but a Rod, and will you fear a disarmed Enemy, a weaponless Adversary, a Serpent without a sting?

3. That Christ hath sanctified death and the grave unto us. Christ knows what it is to go through the gates of death; and he knows how to pity you, when you are to do that work which you must do indeed but once.

4. That Christ by his death hath delivered you from spiritual death. He killed your sin, by the application of his death unto your Soul.

5. That Christ by his death, hath delivered you from eternal death. You die temporally, but yet you shall not die eternally. Let them fear death, that must die after death: That must forever roar, and howl, and lament, amongst the cursed crew of damned souls.

6. That Christ by his death hath pacified God, whose anger is worse than death, and peace with him, is enough to sweeten it. If God be not angry with you, when you come to die, what hurt can Death do unto you?

7. That Christ by his death hath purchased for you eternal life; and shall temporal death be more dreaded, then eternal life be desired by you?

Get right apprehensions of this World, in which you now live, and the nature of all things contained therein. We have over-valuing thoughts of this World, and that makes us so loath to leave it. Oh that we could esteem it but according to its worth!

First, Consider the seeming excellencies of this World, as, riches, honor, relations, beauty.

1. Consider their Transitoriness.

2. The unsuitableness of the things of this World.

First, To your Soul, which is (1) immortal, these temporary. (2) Your Soul immaterial, these corporeal. (3) Your Soul capable of an infinite Good, these but finite. So that it was a demonstration of the folly of the rich man in the Gospel, Luk. 12:19,20. who spake of his riches, as if they had been soul-riches; but God convinced him of his folly, by giving Devils leave to fetch away his soul, and others to take the possession of his goods, which could not go with him into eternity; but he did, must leave behind him.

Secondly, To your new-man; not only to our Souls considered as a constitutive part of man, but unsuitable to the renewed part. If your Soul, as natural, cannot feed upon these things, much less, as renewed: But the promises of the Gospel, the privileges of the covenant of Grace, the joys of the Holy Ghost, communion with God, are things suitable unto a renewed Soul; and should the losing of these things, make us unwilling to leave the World.

3. The commonness of these things; they are given to the wicked, as well as to the godly. God gives great riches to some, to whom he doth not give the least degree of grace here, he will never admit into his glory hereafter. Riches never were in themselves a demonstration of God's special and peculiar love to men in this World, nor an evidence of their salvation in another. But Grace, and Christ, and Pardon of sin, are peculiar fruits of God's special love to you now, and a pledge, that he will save you when you die. You may have riches, and yet be damned; and honors, and yet be damned; and beauty of body, and gifts of mind, and yet be damned: For all these are common unto Reprobates.

4. The unusefulness of worldly things, in the time of your greatest need. They cannot keep sickness from your Body, nor terrors from your Soul, nor your Body from the Grave, nor your Soul from Hell; they may make you

worse, but cannot make you better. That is best, that comforts your heart, and supports your spirits, when Death looks you in the face. Now lay all together, and get a right apprehension of the best things in this World: And what can you see in them, to make you loath to leave them; or afraid of death, because it will deprive you of them.

Secondly, To help you to a right discovery of this World; consider, what are the real inconveniences of it, and the lively representations thereof; which duly weighed, will diminish your love to it, and consequently quell your fears of leaving of it.

1. This World is a Wilderness, but Heaven is our Canaan; and will you be afraid to leave a Wilderness, to be possessed of the Promised Land. Now this World is a Wilderness; (1) In regard of the wants we are pinched with, while we are in it. Did ever God set you in that condition, that you could say, you wanted nothing. I am sure he never did, and I am sure, he never will. Sometimes you have wanted health of Body, and sometimes peace of Conscience, and true content: If not these, yet you always want more love to God, and delight, and joy in God. (2.) In regard of the dangers you are exposed unto, while you are in it. A Wilderness is full of Pits, and Snares, and venomous Serpents, and wild Beasts: So this World is full of Snares and Temptations. You are in danger of a tempting Devil, of a seducing World, and of being diverted from the holy ways of God, by your own corrupt, deceitful hearts. (3) In regard of liableness, to lose yourself, as a man easily loseth his way in a Wilderness. How often do you lose your warmth of Affection; your actual zeal for God; your comforts, and your peace of Conscience, in a Wood of worldly business; in the Thickets of worldly affairs; in the Briers and Thorns of worldly cares; that sometimes you have not opportunity to recollect with yourself, what you are, and

whether you are going? (4) In regard of the uncomfortableness of this World, it is a Wilderness; were it not that you had a God to comfort you, and a Bible to refresh you, and the Spirit of God to apply promises unto you; what an uncomfortable place would this World be?

2. This World is a very Pest-house, a place of great Infection; where you converse with men daily that have Plague-sores upon their Souls, as now upon their Bodies; and sin is more loathsome and more catching than the Plague. When the Plague is in the City, how many are willing to remove into the Country for their preservation? Or would a man that hath been cured in the Pest-house, be unwilling to leave the company of things that are yet infected? God hath cured you in part of the Plague of your heart; and will you be afraid to be removed from among the diseased, into your Father's House, where all are well, and no infection of sin remaining?

3. This World is a Place of worse than Egyptian Bondage, where we have many cruel Task-masters, that do double our drudgeries; As,

First, The World itself, it makes us work in Clay: The Egyptians had power over the Bodies of the Israelites, but the World doth enthrall our Will, and our Affections, and so is worse.

Secondly, The Devil, who though we make too great a Tally of sins and transgressions, yet still solicits us to double our number.

Thirdly, Our own Lusts do impose upon us; and when we do yield unto them once, they are the more eager and impetuous. The more we do obey, the more they do require and exact.

Fourthly, an erroneous Conscience exacting sometimes what God requites not, and when God doth not require it.

4. This World is a very Sodom, abounding with Pride, fullness of Bread, and Idleness; and yet shall we (with Lot) be so unwilling to leave this

World, that he might bring us unto Zoar!

5. This World is a place where the dead lie among the living; where those that are dead in sin, do walk among those that live a life of Grace. You cannot go along the streets, but you meet with walking ghosts; nay, in yourself, a dead man tied to a living man; the old man yet within you, though you are in part renewed. And are you so much afraid, that Death should translate you out of such a place into a better, infinitely better!

Familiarize Death to yourself, by representing it to your mind, under the easiest notions. This hath been usual with the holy men of God, in-Scripture, to set forth Death by the resemblance,

1. Of a Sleep. And who is afraid, or loath at night, to go to sleep, when he hath been at hard labor all the day? Children indeed might cry when they are to go to bed. Sleep is the shadow of Death, Joh. 11:11; 1 Thess. 4:13,14; 1 Cor. 6:18. Death is but the putting off your old rags. 2 Cor. 5:2,3,4. When Men go to sleep, they leave their wealth in some other place; their Lands and Houses are elsewhere. You take not your Gold into your Bed, so neither must you into your Grave. The putting out of your Candle, as the expiration of your life; you are covering you with clothes, as the covering of your Body with the Mold of the Earth, And in the morning when you awake, think of the Resurrection when your Body shall be raised; and be then,

First, A strong and powerful Body: Secondly, Immortal: Thirdly, Quick and active: Fourthly, Spiritual: Fifthly, Beautiful: Sixthly, Impassible, no more subject to hunger and cold, &c. Seventhly, Glorious, like to Christ's. As after sleep, you are refreshed and lively; so after Death, will your Body be at the Resurrection.

2. Death is represented by Rest. Death is a Sleep, and the Grave your Bed.

First, Death is a resting from the burden of sin: Remember nothing but Death can part you and sin.

Secondly, A resting from your worldly labors in this life; there the Servant is at rest, Job 3:19.

Thirdly, A resting from guilt, and apprehensions of God's wrath. Guilt is wearisome, and doubts are toilsome.

3. Death is represented by a Departing: The same word is used to signify, The going out of this World; as is the name of the Second Book of Moses, which treats of the Children of Israel's going out of Egypt, ἔξοδος. 2 Pet. 1:15. Simeon and Paul looked upon Death but as a departure, Luk. 2:29; Phil. 1:23.

A holy life. Walk close with God while you live, as you will wish you had done, when you come to die. Suppose yourself sometimes in a dying condition, and ask yourself, If I were now a dying, what would my Conscience accuse me of? And that forbear now. And what should I wish I had done? And do that now. Isa. 38:2,3. When Hezekiah had received the message of Death, it comforted him, that with appeal to God, he could say, Lord, now remember how I have walked before thee with an upright heart. But it will terrify you to think, Now the Lord remembers against me, a dying man, the formality or omission of my secret duties: The Lord remembers against me, my Pride and Passion: This will gall your Conscience. Take heed when you come to die, Conscience might not have just cause, with roaring, to cry out, Alas, I have misspent my time! I have not done the work that God committed to my hands! A strict and holy life, will bring you to a happy, and a comfortable death.

Thus have I more largely insisted upon the cure of your fears of Death; which is a grievous bondage to such as are filled with them, And, Oh how



becoming the Gospel, would it be for Christians to go with humble boldness about their duty, though Death doth look them in the face? That the World may see there is something you hope and look for, that Death cannot strip you off. If you do but live in the conscientious practice of these Directions, I am persuaded you will find the Fears of Death (in these dying days) to be much abated.

#### ***DUTY IV.***

Be much in secret Fervent Prayer. Weep when you are alone; wrestle with God, when you have him by himself: Neglect not to visit God in your Closet. God's people have sweetest communion in secret. Take heed of dullness, and lukewarmness, when you are in secret. Let the eye of God be that to you in secret, which the eye of Men is to a Hypocrite in public. Judge more of the sincerity of your heart by its frame in secret, then in the company of others. No Grace will thrive well, if you are negligent of, or superficial in your secret duties. And because we are apter to be dull, when we are praying alone, then we are in the presence of others; because then we do want those external motives of applause and esteem among others. To quicken your heart in secret Duty, I would pray you to consider,

1. A slothful Prayer will not be acceptable unto God: Nay, they will provoke him, to see you pray, as though you were more inclined to sleep, then to pray: To speak to God, and think of something else, is a great slighting of the God of Heaven. A Prayer from a dead, dull, and slothful heart, will be a torn, lame, and ragged Prayer, Mal. 1:8,14. Nay, it will bring down a curse, and not a blessing; to offer the blind and lame, when you have a Male in your flock. To give God a few words in Prayer, when you have a heart in your breast to serve him with. God loves a broken heart, but doth not approve of a dull broken Prayer; that is so, through the

carelessness of the Suppliant. And, wherefore do you pray at all, but that you may be accepted? Then ply your work, while you are at it.

2. Dull and slothful Prayers will not be prevalent with God. And why do you pray, but that you may prevail? Do you think a slothful Prayer, shall obtain pardon of sin, or peace of Conscience? It is the effectual, fervent (or inwrought) Prayer of the Righteous, that avails much. The Seed of Jacob shall not seek God's face in vain, Isa. 45:19. But then Jacob was a wrestler with God, Gen. 32:24,25,26; Hos. 12:3,4.

3. Dull and slothful Prayers, will never afford you comfort in the actual performance of them; nor in the after review.

4. Dull and slothful Prayers, will bring a deal of guilt upon your Conscience; And do you pray to make them more guilty, or to get off former contracted guilt? You should pray for the pardon of a dull and lifeless Prayer; and will you pray for pardon of a lukewarm Prayer, with a lukewarm Prayer? Will one sin prevail with God, to get off the guilt of another? When you have been upon your knees in secret, and look back when your duty is done; doth not Conscience reproach you, for remissness and deadness of your heart therein? When you come to die, what will Conscience then say to you? Thou didst indeed pray in secret, Oh! But I remember, saith Conscience, It was very coldly, it was very lazily, and lukewarmly; and shall Conscience reproach you not only for your secret sins, but also for your secret duties? Yea, it will be bitter to you, to consider your very duties to be sin, by your ill management of them.

5. Consider the Heart-piercing Eye of God is upon you, when you are in secret. When you are upon your knees, remember God is by you. God is looking on you: How would you pray in secret, if you thought a holy Man did over-hear you? And shall not the presence of the Great God awaken

you, to a lively performance of your duty much more? God seeth in secret, Matth. 6:6. And will not you give eye-service unto God?

6. Consider you must give an account unto God of the manner of your duties; not only whether you pray in secret, but how you pray in secret. The matter of a duty will not profit you, if the manner be neglected by you. God will not regard Men's duties, by the bulk and number, but according to their weight and manner: And what difference will there be at the day of accounts, if one Man go to Hell for not praying at all, and another go to Hell for not praying aright?

7. Possess your heart with the weightiness of the business you are going about. And let the earnestness of your heart bear some proportion to the greatness of your work. You are about matters of the highest importance, when you are upon your knees: You are then to pray down the power of your sin; and were it possible, to pray it out of your heart. You are then to pray for pardon of sin; for the favor of God; for strength to resist temptation; to do duty for everlasting life, against everlasting flames. And doth it become such a man to be lukewarm, and slothful in his petitions unto God? Nay, your work that then you have to do, requires haste. Reconciliation with God is a great work, and it requires haste, or else you may die in your enmity to him. Preparation for death, is a great work, and it requireth haste, or else you may die before you are prepared: And will you then be slothful, when your work calleth for much diligence?

8. Remember Death is at your back; and it might be the last time, you might ever have to speak and plead with God in behalf of your Soul. Tell me, Would you pray so slothfully, if you were to die when your Prayer is done? Did you suppose you were to go into Eternity, to the Bar of God, when your Prayer is over? Oh, how would you pray, and weep, and strive

with God, that you would be loath to rise off your knees, till you were persuaded you had obtained a Blessing? Thoughts of Death would enliven you in your duty; especially now in this time of great Mortality, when so many thousands in a week go down into their Graves; and for ought you know, Death might arrest you on your knees, What, and with a sleepy prayer in your mouth? Eccl. 9:10. Whatsoever therefore thou findest in thy hand to do (that is good) do it with all thy might; for there is no wisdom, or counsel in the Grave, whither thou art going; there is no praying in your Grave. Praying time is but short, therefore Prayer should be the more fervent.

9. Get a right sense and feeling of your wants; then you will be more importunate. No wonder that a man that doth not feel the want of Christ, and the want of Grace, and the favor of God, be lukewarm in his actions for them. A Man that feels himself pinched with hunger, needs not be bidden to ask earnestly for his food: Therefore when you go to Prayer, think first with yourself, and work it upon your heart, and say to yourself, I need a pardon for my sin; I need the Righteousness of Christ to clothe me in the sight of God. I need more love to God, more faith in Christ, more holiness. Know your need, you will be fervent in begging for supplies.

10. Consider that the Devil is laborious to deaden your hearts, and divert your thoughts, and make you dull; and will not you be laborious in duty to counter-work him? The Apostle doth exhort to greater vigilancy, because the Devil, our adversary, as a roaring Lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Pet. 5:8. Do but think how you please the Devil, when you pray lukewarmly; and that duty is but badly done, when the Devil is pleased with it.

But here I would wish you to distinguish betwixt the slothfulness of heart in duty, and deadness and dullness of heart in duty. Dullness doth not always argue slothfulness, though slothfulness doth evermore cause dullness. A slothful heart, is always a dead and a dull heart; but a dead, and a dull heart, cannot be said to be always slothful: For a man may take a great deal of pains with his own heart in Prayer, and yet not get it quickened and enlivened. A man might labor till he sweat, in rolling up a great stone up Hill, and yet he cannot do it. It is not because he is slothful, but because it is above his strength. To conclude this, let me advise (if it may be) that you be not dead or dull in secret Prayer, but be sure you be not slothful.

#### ***DUTY V.***

Be much in speaking of God, and in the exercise of Grace in every Company and Duty; live a Life of Faith and Love; be much in speaking for God, and to men, for their Souls good, as you have opportunity. Give them some hints of the danger of Death; bespeak them to be serious for God, and for their Souls. Oh, what good might a word do upon some men, when the Arrows of God are flying abroad, when they do not know how soon God might strike his Arrows in their heart, and dip them in their blood!

Oh, Speak unto your carnal Relations, and your carnal Neighbors, speak to them with earnestness, with compassion, that you may be instrumental to save their Souls from Sin. For this end,

First, Consider the worth and excellency of the Souls of men, that one Soul is of more value and worth then all the World: Little do the ungodly think of the excellency of that Soul, that they will drink away, and swear away, and lose it for a Lust.

Secondly, Consider what the Soul of man is capable of; it is capable of the Communion of God upon Earth, and of the enjoyment of God in Heaven; it

is capable of living and delighting in God; and should it not grieve and pity you to see them fix their noble affections upon such vile and empty things (even as their primary objects) upon the World and Sin?

Thirdly, Consider the Price that was laid down by the Lord Jesus Christ, to ransom and redeem Souls; for ought you know, Christ laid down his precious Blood to redeem that man's Soul that you stand by, and hear him swear, and will not reprove him. For ought you know, Christ had the Soul of your Child in his eye, and upon his heart, when he was upon the Cross; and will not you try and endeavor to recover his Soul out of the power of Satan and Sin? Did Christ shed his blood, and will not you speak a word to save a Soul?

Fourthly, Consider the real danger their Souls are in while unconverted, how little there is betwixt them and Hell; Can you see them merry at the very Borders of Hell, and not warn them? Can you see them cheerful, when they are near Damnation, and not your bowels yearn over them?

Fifthly, Consider the time is very short that they are to be with you; and now in the time of Plague, how short indeed! Within a day they may be out of the reach of your Admonitions and Reproofs, of your Counsels and Warnings, and afterwards you may wish you had done something for their Souls, when it will be too late. Are not men falling about you by the hand of God? And can you see men daily going to Eternity, and many of them unfit to die, and not speak a word to save their Souls? Tell them, oh tell them, of the evil of Sin, of the greatness of their Misery, of the Danger, they are in, and of the Remedy by Christ, and of the Terms and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace.

#### ***DUTY VI.***

Study much the Word of God, which must now support you in a time of great discomfort. Fetch your comforts from thence; study God's Word of Precept, to direct you in your duty. God's Word of Promise to encourage you to, and in your duty. God's Word of Threatening to awe your heart, that you may not deviate from his ways. Especially, have often recourse to the Promises in the Gospel. These will be a Cordial to you in your sickness; and be life unto your Soul in the time of Death. Oh how valuable is a Promise from a Faithful God! How sweet! How comforting! And reviving! It will not comfort you, when you are sick to view your Writings for your Lands and Houses; but it will delight you to view the Writings of the Word of God, if you can find a Promise of Life and Happiness, and say, This belongs to me; this I have to show for the Eternal happiness of my Immortal Soul: Especially, if you consider, That the Promises of the Gospel, are,

First, Exceeding precious Promises; made to a precious people, concerning precious things, through a Precious Christ, and received by a precious Faith.

Secondly, Exceeding great; made by a Great God, concerning great things, producing great effects of peace and joy in the hearts of Believers. Great and precious, do exceedingly raise the valuation of the Promises. Things may be great, and not precious; some precious, and not great: But both together, should move us to take them for our treasure.

Thirdly, Exceeding many; and this addeth to the rest. If they had been precious, and not great; or great, and precious, and but few, should we not highly esteem them? One promise from a Glorious God, is above thousands of Gold and Silver: But when they be many great, and many precious Promises, we should look upon them as our chiefest riches. Is it nothing to a dying Man, to have Heaven in a Promise; to have the promise of a pardon.

You complain of variety of wants, and there is as great a variety of Promises for the supply of these wants.

1. Do you complain of the hardness of your heart, turn to the Promise, and improve it, Ezek. 36:26. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

2. Do you complain of your unworthiness, that you have no portion to carry with you unto Christ? Read Isa. 55:1. Ho! Everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no Money: Come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy Wine and Milk without Money, and without price. Ver. 2. Wherefore do ye spend Money for that which is not Bread? And your labor, for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your Soul delight itself in fatness.

3. Do you complain you cannot pray, God hath promised his Spirit to help you, Rom. 8:26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Zach. 12:10. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of Grace and of Supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.

4. Do you fear you shall fall away? Hath not God undertaken you shall never depart from him? Jer. 32:38. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. Ver. 39. And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them. And Ver. 40. And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will



not turn away from them, to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

5. Doth Satan buffet you by frequent temptations? God hath promised you sufficiency of Grace, 2 Cor. 12:9. And he said unto me, My Grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. And Victory, Rom. 16:20. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, Amen.

6. Do you lie under a wounded Conscience? Do you want peace? It is promised, Psal. 85:8. I will hear what the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

7. Are you filled with fears of outward wants, that you are, or may be reduced to straits and poverty? Read Psal. 34:9. O fear the Lord ye his Saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. Ver. 10. The young Lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Heb. 11:5. 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. Matth. 6:26. *ad finem*, Behold the fowls of the air: For they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into Barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them: Are ye not much better than they? Ver. 27. Which of you by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature? Ver. 28. And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the Lilies of the Field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. Ver. 29. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Ver. 30. Wherefore, if God so clothe the Grass of the Field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the

Oven: Shall be not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Ver. 31. Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, what shall we drink? Or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? Ver. 32. (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. Ver. 33. But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Ver. 34. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: For the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself: Sufficient unto the day, is the evil thereof.

8. Are you under trials and sufferings? He hath promised to be with you in the fire, and in the water, Isa. 43:1. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: For I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. Ver. 2. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

9. Doth it grieve you to find a weariness in holy duty, and want of strength to do it? Read Isa. 40:31. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: They shall mount up with Wings as Eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

10. Doth it trouble you, you cannot profit by God's Ordinances? He hath said, he will teach you to profit. You think you pray, but are not the better; and you hear, and are not the better. Pray over that promise, Isa. 48:17. Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel, I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go. Isa. 61:3. To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes; the oil of joy, for mourning; the garment of praise, for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called Trees of

Righteousness; the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. Ver. 11. For as the Earth bringeth forth her bud; and as the Garden causeth the things that are sown in it, to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause Righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the Nations.

11. Are you grieved, because of the strength and power of your pride, passion, worldliness, &c? Read Rom. 6:14. For sin shall not have dominion over you: For ye are not under the Law, but under Grace.

12. Are you reproached for holiness, and close walking with God? You may be supported from, 1 Pet. 1:7. That the trial of your Faith being much more precious than of Gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 4:13. But rejoice, in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. Ver. 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.

13. Are you afraid of Death, especially by the Dreadful Plague? Are you full of Fears, when you walk about your calling and employment, least any contagion should seize upon you? You have a Promise, because you have set your love upon God, that he will keep you, and charge his Angels over you. Read the 91st Psalm throughout. Which Promise you must understand as others about things Temporally, viz. Conditionally: If your preservation be for his glory, and your good; if not, it will be better to be removed by it.

Fourthly, Exceeding free. The Promise is free, and the Performance is free: God hath freely said it, and will freely do it.

Fifthly, Exceeding sure. If they had been great, and precious, and many, and free, and had not been sure, our comfort in affliction, and sickness, and

death, would not have been certain. Oh do not doubt of the Promise; it is true, if you consider,

1. The Nature of that God that made them, immutable, faithful; that wants neither Will nor Power to make them good.

2. You have them inspired by the Holy Ghost upon Record.

3. You have them confirmed by God's oath; and shall the oath of Man be for confirmation, and not the oath of God?

4. They are made in Christ; in him, they are Yea and Amen.

5. They are confirmed by God's Broad-Seal, viz. His Sacraments.

Sixthly, Exceeding suitable: If you should be sick to death, and a man promise you honors and riches, this is not suitable. If you be full of Spiritual trouble, and a man promise you outward kindness, this is not suitable: But if a malefactor be promised a pardon; a thirsty man drink; and so a poor lost sinner a Savior; this is suitable. Oh do not neglect the study of God's promises! David's heart had sunk in affliction, had it not been for the Word of Promise, on which God had caused him to hope. If you should be shut up, look upon it as an exceeding privilege that you have a Bible to read, and a God to go unto.

### ***DUTY VII.***

Be sensible of God's Judgments. When the Rod is in the Fathers hand, shall not the Children tremble? Especially when so many fall daily by such a sore hand of God? This is one of God's sorest Judgments, Ezek. 14:21. God's hand is lifted up, and shall we not see it. Isa. 26:11. Then the judgment is judicial only; then it is not to cure, but to kill: When God's hand is lifted up, then we should lie down at his feet; when God lifteth up his hand, then for any man to lift up heart in pride and obstinacy, is daring-provocation unto God. This present judgment is, first, A Speaking

judgment. The word that signifies the Plague, comes from a word that signifies to speak. God in lesser judgments whispereth to a sinner, but in a Plague, he speaketh out. Secondly, A Plague is a wasting and consuming Judgment; it is a sweeping Judgment. Thirdly, It is a Judgment that may be brought upon persons by their nearest friends, and that secretly and invisibly conveyed from one unto another. Fourthly, It is a very uncomfortable Judgment when we are sick of other diseases, it is comfort to see our Neighbors at our Bed-side, and our Relations looking on our dying bodies; to have them speak to us, pray by us, and for us. But this Judgment makes a Friend to be afraid of his Friend. Oh take heed of security and stupidity under this afflicting Hand of God.

#### ***DUTY VIII.***

Weigh God's Mercies towards you: To your Soul, to your Body, to your Friends. Hath God visited your Family, and hath he not spared you? Hath the destroying Angel been at your door, and you yet alive? Oh what a lasting engagement is this to you! That you have not been one of those many thousands that have taken up their Lodgings in the Chambers of Death. Your Neighbor dead, and not you! Your Relations or Acquaintance dead, and not you! Study this, but especially weigh God's distinguishing Mercy to your Soul, and that,

1. In his electing love, when God was determining the eternal state of men's immortal souls, who should be left to themselves, and so perish, and be damned; and who he would choose to be Vessels of Mercy, and Heirs of Salvation; that you should be one of these; and that when God foresaw nothing in you antecedently to his decree, that should be a Motive or Reason of his choice, when you were in the same condition with those that perish. Did God pass by your Neighbor, and choose you? Did God pass by

some of your Relations, and choose you? Oh surely some serious thoughts spent upon God's distinguishing, electing Mercy, would warm your heart!

2. In his giving his own Son, to purchase Heaven for you, and to redeem you from misery, to this unspeakable happiness. Could you be willing that your own only Son, should die for your enemy? And yet God hath given his own, and only begotten Son to die for you: And that while you were a professed enemy unto him; and yet you dwell no more in your admiring thoughts upon such love?

3. In his effectual application of the Blood of Christ unto your Soul, in enlightening of your mind, and in the insuperable workings thereof; in the bowing of your will to take this Christ for your Lord and Savior, and uniting you unto him in your effectual calling.

4. In the imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to your Soul, and thereby justifying you who had no righteousness of your own.

5. In the free, full, and Everlasting pardon of your sin.

6. In taking of you into the number of his Children by his Adoption.

7. In his being reconciled to your Soul, and that he sought this first, though he was the offended party.

8. In his filling you oftentimes with joys and comforts of the Holy Ghost.

### ***DUTY IX.***

Study much the evil of sin, be grieved for other men's, and repent for your own. Do you not see the deserts of it daily, how provoking it is to God? Oh that whilst others weep because of the Plague, you might mourn because of sin; while others are sinning, be you mourning. It is the property of a Hypocrite, to have his eye upon the infirmities of others, and to overlook his own: But it is the practice and duty of the truly religious, to observe the sins of others, and to mourn for them, as well as his own. As the 119th Psal.

53rd, 136th, 158th ver.; Ezra 9:2,3; 2 Pet. 2:7,8. Can you see God dishonored, and not mourn? Can you think that sin is a grief to God, Psal. 78:40. To Christ, Matth 3:5. To the Holy Ghost, Eph. 4:30. And shall it not be so to you? Can you think of the worth and excellency of the Souls of Men that are capable of having communion with God, should be destroyed and damned for sin, and not mourn? Can you think that the Devil should have more followers to Hell, then Christ to Heaven, and not be grieved? Can you see the danger that sinners are in of eternal torments, and not pity them? Can you see the judgments of God slaughtering, and not lay it to heart? Oh let your sorrow and grief, be real sorrow and real grief. The sins of men, though they have no real entity, yet they are real iniquities, and do make God really angry, and make them really guilty, and bring down real judgments, and procure real damnation. Therefore let your sorrow be real and unfeigned. Men sin constantly, do you grieve constantly. Men's sins are great, let your grief and sorrow in some measure be proportionable: Especially study the aggravations of your own sin, that might have a hand in procuring this Judgment that is upon the Nation.

### ***DUTY X.***

Improve Afflictions. If God put you into the Furnace, let it be for the Brightening of your Graces, and for the purging away of your sin, that you might be more humble, holy, heavenly; not so passionate as before; not so unprofitable under; not so unthankful for the means of Grace as before.

The great improvement of Affliction, will be in getting a sanctified use thereof; be not so desirous to have them removed, as to have them sanctified. A carnal heart would have them removed, but a gracious Soul would have them sanctified: Wicked men would have the Rod removed, but

godly men would desire first to learn the Lesson God is teaching them thereby. And Afflictions are sanctified, and so improved, when,

1. You are by them more weaned from the World, and more mortified thereto; when you are not so much taken with the pleasures and profits thereof.

2. When you are more diligent to find what is amiss in your Soul, and are more sensible of your sin, and more humbled for it.

3. When you learn obedience by the things you suffer, and walk more close with God. That though before you went astray, yet since you have learned to keep God's commands. When you say to God, show me wherein I have done foolishly, I firmly resolve to do so no more.

4. When Heaven is more in your eye, and aim, and you make God more the ultimate end in all your actions, and do more resolvedly seek his glory, and more cordially choose him for your treasure, and esteem him as your chiefest joy.

5. When God by them makes you more willing to die; not so much to be freed from the Affliction itself, the fruit of sin; but from sin, the cause of your Affliction.

6. When God by them hath taught you more patiently to bear greater afflictions now, then you could lesser corrections formerly; and willingly wait God's time of deliverance, and not dare to use any indirect and unlawful means to get from under God's afflicting hand.

7. When God hath taught you by your Affliction, to set a higher price upon the Mercy, that by your Affliction you are deprived of; and more thankfully to enjoy it, and more carefully improve it for God then before you did, if he give it to you again. If God visit you with sickness, he teacheth you to see what a mercy Health is; and that when you are restored,



you spend your strength in filling up the duties of your place, more then you did before.

8. When God teacheth you by your Afflictions, to serve God more cheerfully, and more willingly than you could before in your Prosperity; and do God more service with a little health, then before you did with more. And if God make you meaner in the World, you honor him more with your little, then you did when you had a full and a plentiful estate.

### ***DUTY XI.***

Get a holy submission to the Will of God under all Providences. Whether he will have you live, you may be content; whether he will have you die, you may be willing. If God take away your Relations from you, say, It is the Lord, let him do whatsoever seemeth him good. Know, God cannot wrong you, though he may afflict you; and he can take nothing from you, but what he hath first given to you.

That you may quietly submit to the Will of God in the Afflictions and Sickness that may befall you; Consider some Arguments taken from God, yourself, and your Affliction.

First, From God. He is, 1. Infinitely wise; and your murmuring is a charging God with folly. Memorable is that Text, Job 1:22. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly: Or you may read it, Did not attribute folly to God. And God being infinite in Wisdom, knoweth best, First, What kind of affliction to lay upon you: You may think, if God afflicted me any other way, it would have been better for me, or I could have better born it. Secondly, He best knows how long, it is meet your affliction should last. Thirdly, He knows what measure to lay upon you; whether to take one child, or two, or three from you, by the Pestilence.

2. Consider, It is your Father that doth afflict you. Your child is willing to take a bitter, unpleasant Potion, when it is administered by your own hand, and will not you from God?

3. Consider, God is Almighty; and if you murmur, he can yet afflict you more, till he hath stripped you of all your Mercies and Relations.

4. Consider, He is just, and can do you no wrong.

5. Consider, He is merciful, and his Bowels yearn over you in all your afflictions. When his people, that are his Gold and Jewels, are in the fire, he sitteth by the Furnace. Never was Goldsmith so careful of his Gold, when it is in the fire, as God is of his people, when they be in affliction.

Secondly, Arguments taken from yourself, should induce you to submit to God's afflicting hand. Forasmuch, as you have a real need of those chastisements that God doth exercise you with all; persuade yourself you need afflictions as well as your daily Bread.

1. For the exercise of your Grace, which like Spices send forth a more fragrant smell, when pounded in a Morter; like Roses, smell the sweeter when rubbed betwixt your hands, like Stars that shine the brightest in the darkest night. God seeth you have need of affliction for the trial and exercise of your Faith and Love: Whether you can trust him, and love him, when he is killing of you, when he is taking your children from you: To put you on to greater diligence in holy duties, and to exercise your patience, and mend your pace Heaven-ward.

2. God seeth afflictions needful for you, for the purging away of your sins, and corruption. Corrosives are necessary sometimes, as Cordials; in some distempers, it is needful to open a Vein to let out the corrupt blood. It might be needful to afflict you, for the curing of your Pride and Covetousness; for the curing of your careless omission of holy duties.

Thirdly, If you do but consider the afflictions themselves that do befall you. You have reason to submit, as,

1. They are but light in comparison of what you have deserved. If God should visit you with the Plague, this is not so great a punishment, as if he had given you up to the Plague of an hard heart, or reprobate mind. Remember when your heart is rising in discontent, because of the heaviness of your affliction, that you are not in Hell.

2. They will be but short: The punishment of the damned, is heavy and eternal; but yours light, and short too.

3. They are mingled with abundance of Mercy: If you have a sick body, yet God hath given you a healthful Soul. If he takes one Relation, yet not all; if all, yet you remain; if yourself, it is from a place of sin, to a place of happiness.

4. They are sanctified to you. If the Pill be bitter, yet it works for the good of your Soul. Can you say, you could have been without this affliction.

5. They are no more, then what are common to God's children. Others of God's dear Saints have endured more then you, and have not complained so much as you. It is good to hear the Rod, and submit to him that doth appoint it; knowing no affliction riseth out of the dust.

### ***DUTY XII.***

Sympathize with others that be in distress, Remembering that you yourself are also in the Body liable to the same diseases, and may be exercised with the same trials. Be not unconcerned in the afflictions of others: It may be some might want Food, and Physic, and necessary Means for their Preservation; willingly reach forth your hand for the relieving of such, according to your ability (yea, and now beyond your ability) and according to their necessity. Oh let none die of the Plague, and hunger too,

if you have it by you. Seriously study these Scriptures, 1 Joh. 3:17; Heb. 13:15,16; Matth. 25:34. *Ad finem.*

And that you may do so,

1. Suppose their condition to be yours, and yours to be theirs; and what you would that they should then do to you, that do you now to them.

2. Consider you are also in the flesh, and that which is the condition of others, may you know not how soon be your own. Heb. 13:3. Remember them that be in Bonds, as bound with them: And them that suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the Body.

3. How do you know, but God hath made a difference between you and others, in these outward dispensations of his Providence, that you may be a help and relief unto them?

4. Hereby you will prove yourself a real living member of Christ's Mystical Body, when you have a fellow-feeling of the miseries that others are urged with; especially, when you do it out of love to God, and in obedience to his command, and think it not below you to condescend to any mean Office of Love (for Christ's sake) to the meanest, or the poorest of Christ's Members, no more then the nobler parts of the Body Natural do to preserve the meanest, and the most ignoble.

5. So shall you give a better account of your estate unto God, who hath made you but a Steward of what you do enjoy.

6. Consider it is better to give, then to receive; to help, then to be helped. It is God's mercy to you, that you are in a capacity to give; and not reduced to a necessity to receive. And be kind to them that cannot requite you again, except it be by their Prayers for you.

***DUTY XIII.***

Sit loose in your heart and affections to the World. Love not the World, when Death threatens to take you out of the World: Let not Death take you catching after the things of this life, but let it wean your heart from this World.

Oh keep the prevailing degree of your love to God, who is altogether, lovely, and hath all the Motives and Attractive's of love in himself. If Goodness be a ground of love, he is infinitely Good. If Suitableness be a ground of love, he is most suitable for your Soul. If Love be a ground of love, he is most loving. He hath loved you with a free, eternal, unchangeable, incomprehensible Love: And why should the World have so much of your Heart, when there is a God, and such a God to place your affections upon? But yet it is too usual with God's own people, to lavish too much of their affections upon the things of this World, and let their heart run waste upon the Creature And therefore to get your heart off from the love of this World,

1. Consider, That no Man can love God, and the World too, with a prevailing and predominant love. To set the heart upon God, and the World too, is impossible. You may have God, and the World too; but you cannot with intense love, love God and the World too, no more than two contrary qualities of heats and cold, can be in the same Water at the same time in intense degrees; no more than a man can look upon the Heavens and the Earth at the same time, 1 Joh. 2:15. Love not the world, nor the things of the world: If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Jam. 4:4; Matth. 6:24; Col. 3:1,2.

2. It is incongruous for a Pilgrim and a Stranger, to set his heart upon the things of the Country, where he must not stay. You are a Pilgrim, this is not your home: You are a Stranger, though not to God, yet you are to the World.

Now the heart of a stranger is upon his home, and not upon the pleasant Houses and delightful Walks. He may see as he passes by; he thinks upon his home, and speaks and talks of it as he is travelling to it.

3. To set the Heart upon the World, is to love that which will not love you again. The Man that loves God, is beloved by God; but he that loveth his Silver and Gold, receiveth no reciprocation of love. Believers must love their enemy, that will not love them again; but those that love the World, love that that cannot love them again. Do you not meet with daily unkindness's in the World, and yet have you so much love for it? Will not the World ere long turn you out of it? Doth it not now serve its lovers so every day? And will not you have the World out of your heart beforehand?

4. To set the Heart upon the World, it is to set the heart upon that which is not. To love a shadow, to love vanity, to love that which is a daily vexation to your heart. Prov. 23:5. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? But will you do more, to set your heart upon that which is not? But those that love God, shall possess that which is? And have substantial blessings. Prov. 8:21. That I might cause them that love me, to inherit substance. 1 Cor. 7:31. The fashion of this world passeth away. An accidental and external figure without substance, such are the things of this World.

5. To set the Heart upon the World, is secret idolatry. You set up another God in your heart; for that which you set your heart upon, and make your end, that is your god. Eph. 5:5. A covetous man is an idolater; and covetousness is idolatry. Col. 3:5. And no idolater shall inherit the Kingdom of God. 1 Cor. 6:9. And shall any man lose Heaven, for loving of the World? Will any man be so doting upon the Creature, as to lose Eternal life, by cleaving in his heart unto it? Yet, it is the case of thousands.

6. To set the Heart upon the World, it is the character of a man that shall be damned. It is a certain sign, that that man hath not one degree of saving grace yet wrought in his Soul; and if his Soul be disunited from his body, before his heart and affections are taken off, from predominant love of the World, there is no salvation for that man. Phil. 3:19. Whose end is destruction, who mind earthly things. Col. 3:19. If ye then be risen with Christ, and have the life of Grace, demonstrate it by setting your affections on things above, and not on things on Earth. Prevailing love to the World, is a sign of no Grace; and better you had no Money, then no Grace.

7. To set your Heart upon the World, is to lead a most unquiet, perplexing life. Love of the World makes men restless, because they love where they can find no satisfaction. Eccl. 5:10. He that loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance, with increase. This then is vanity.

8. To set the Heart upon the World, is to expose yourself to grievous temptations. By this you are brought unto many sins, it being the root of all evil, 1 Tim. 6:10. By this you are drawn off from many duties, and have your heart wonderfully distracted in those you do perform, How can you pray, when your heart is upon the World? How can you meditate upon God, and the things to come, when your heart is upon the World? Do you complain of temptations, and yet by this sin, expose yourself unto temptations? 1 Tim 6:9. They that will be rich (as those would that have their hearts upon the World) fall into temptation, and a snare. A heart upon the World, is like a Beast in a snare, and a Bird in the lime-twigs.

9. Do not you profess your treasure is in Heaven, and that your riches are above; And shall your treasure be in one place, and your heart in another?

That cannot be; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also, Matth. 6:21.

10. Are there not other objects for you, to set your heart upon; that are better in themselves, and better unto you? That you may be more fully convinced, that Spiritual things are the best things, seriously consider,

First, Are not those things best, and most worthy of your hearty love, that are most suitable unto your Soul?

Secondly, Are not those things best and most worthy of your hearty love, that bring greatest, fullest, most constant, satisfaction in to your Soul? The heart of man doth naturally breathe after something that is infinite, though the most mistake it.

Thirdly, Is not that most worthy of your love, that is a certain pledge of God's special love unto you, and peculiarly proper to the best men? Is not that better for you, which God cannot give you, and yet hate you, then that which he may give you, and yet abhor you? Which he cannot give in wrath, and with a curse, then that which he may give in wrath, and with a curse? God never gave any man his Grace, his Son, and Spirit, in wrath? Oh, but he hath riches! If God give you Christ, he will save you; but he may give a man riches, and yet damn him forever. You cannot look upon riches and honors, and say from these, I know that God doth love me now, and will certainly save me hereafter: For no man knoweth, love or hatred, by anything that is before him; but you may make an infallible conclusion of God's love to your Soul, if he hath given you Christ and Grace.

4. Is not that best for you, and most worthy of your love, which maketh you better then you were before? Riches make many men the worse, through the corruption of their own hearts; but Spiritual things always make



him better, that is partaker of them; make him more Humble, more Spiritual, more Heavenly.

5. Is not that best for you, and most worthy of your love, that makes you more pleasing and more acceptable unto God? Riches commend you not to God, but an interest in Christ doth. Learning, parts, greatness, doth not commend you unto God, but Faith and Holiness doth.

Sixthly, Is not that best for you, and most worthy of your love, which no men, nor death itself can strip you of, nor take away from you? Death will strip you of your riches, but not of your graces.

Seventhly, Is not that best for you, and most worthy of your love, that will make you happy in the want of other things? If you want riches, Christ, will make you happy; if you want honors, yet grace will make you happy? Oh do but make the comparison between things of Heaven, and things of this World; and let that which indeed is the best, have the best, and the most of your heart and love.

#### ***DUTY XIV.***

Leave your Relations with God, and commit the care of them to him that hath taken care for them and you. The hearts of many fear a Plague, because they know not, if they die, what will become of their Children and Relations. Are you in God's stead? Or, cannot he that provideth for them by you, provide for them without you? Jer. 49:11. Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.

That you may, if God call you away by death, leave your Relations behind you, and not have them to be a clog to your departing Souls, consider,

1. That God loves your Relations (that are also his) with a more tender, constant, and greater love, then you can do. If they are not his, it might

grieve you more to live with them, and see them dishonor God, then now it doth to leave them.

2. That God can help them, when you are dead and gone; when you could not, though you were living with them.

3. That God doth in an especially manner take care of Orphans, and of Fatherless Children; and that your Children have one promise to plead more when you are dead, then they had when you were yet remaining alive amongst them, viz. Those Scriptures which God hath written peculiarly for such as are deprived of their Parents: And the like I understand of Widows, which need to have something to support them, when so many are deprived of the Husbands of their Bosoms.

4. That it argueth great diffidence and distrust in God, and that you set yourself too high, when you think your Relations must needs be brought to unsufferable necessities, when you are taken from them. Know, though you are a Father, yet you are not a God unto your Children.

5. Seriously inquire, whether this your trouble doth not rise out of the pride of your heart: That you aim at great things in the World for your Relations, and are troubled at the forethoughts of that supposed disappointment.

### ***DUTY XV.***

Redeem Time; and live every day as one that expecteth not tomorrow. Is Death snatching so many out of Time, and shall we misspend ours? Do many that are dying, cry out for Time; and shall we that live, not be careful to improve it? Oh what would damned souls give for Time, and dying men give for Time?

1. Consider, That Time is a very precious commodity, it cannot be bought with the most precious things in Nature; Gold and Silver cannot redeem

Time.

2. Time is a very scarce commodity; every man hath but a little of it. Many fools say, they know not how to spend their time. What have they a God to serve, and a Soul to save? Duties to perform, and temptations to resist? Preparations to be made for Death, and for Eternity; and do they not know how to spend their time? He that hath most of Time, yet wanteth time to do the great works that God expecteth at his hands.

3. That time which is spent, cannot be recalled. Time past, it is irrevocable. Oh what would many give for wasted hours, spent in following of the World; the pleasures, and the vanities of this life! Time future, you may never see; therefore improve the present.

4. That it is a special part of a Christians wisdom to redeem Time. He is a wise man that knows how to manage time for the greatest works, Eph. 5:15,16.

5. That your time is determined, and the number of your hours that you shall have to work for God, for your Soul, for Eternity; it is immovable fixed, Job 14:5.

6. While Time doth last, your opportunity for many services will not always last. You might have an opportunity to trust God now with your life: In time of Plague to do him service, you might never have again while you live; you might have time, when you might not have a season for many things.

7. If you know not how to improve time, you will be liable to many temptations; when you know not how to use time, that is, the Devils time to tempt you unto sins; therefore redeem time,

First, From idle and unnecessary visits.

Secondly, From superfluous cares of the things of this World.

Thirdly, From unnecessary sleep and recreations.

Fourthly, From fleshly lusts. Take some time for every duty; some for works of Piety; some for works of Mercy: Get time for Prayer, hearing, holy conference, meditation; and especially, take heed of losing time, when you are in holy duties, by a customary performance; that is lost time: Especially, lose not holy Time upon the Lord's Day, that is the queen of Time.

### ***DUTY XVI.***

Look for the coming of your Lord. He is at the door, be ready and prepared; he will come certainly, he will come quickly, he will come personally, he will come gloriously, he will come terribly to the wicked, and comfortably to the godly.

First, Christ will come certainly, and the certainty of his coming is bottomed upon unalterable grounds, which you should persuade yourself firmly of, as a great provocation to a holy life, viz.

1. The immutability of God's purpose and decree. Christ's second coming is concluded of in Heaven. Acts 17:31. He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. As sure as Christ is risen from the dead, so surely shall he come again: And God hath determined it, and his counsel must stand.

2. The infallibility of his promise. All God's promises are, Yea and Amen, 2 Cor. 1:20. Men might fail of their promises, but God will not fail of fulfilling his. Matth. 26:64. Hereafter shall you see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven. Joh. 14:3.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and take you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

3. The certainty of his Mercy towards his people.

4. The impartiality of his Justice towards his enemies. Both those you have in 2 Thess. 1:4-7.

5. The necessity of clearing of Providence. Now many of God's providences are dark and obscure; but when Christ comes, we shall see the reason of them: Therefore it is called, The day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Rom. 2:5.

Secondly, Christ will come suddenly, and to many unexpectedly; and to such, his coming will be very unwelcome, 1 Thess. 5:2,3,4.

Thirdly, Christ will come personally. The very same Jesus that ascended up into glory, will come again. 1 Thess. 4:6; Acts 1:11. When God delivered the people of Israel out of Egypt, he sent Moses; but when Christ would deliver his people from sin and Hell, he came himself. And as he came himself to purchase Heaven for us, so he will come himself, and put us into the full and perfect possession of it.

Fourthly, Christ will come gloriously. At his first coming he lay in a Manger; at his second coming he will sit upon the Clouds: At his first coming he came as a Servant, but at his second as the King of Glory. At his first coming he came with the imputation of sin upon him, but at his second he shall come without sin (imputed) unto the salvation of God's elect, Heb. 9:28. At his first coming he was judged by men, at his second he shall be the Judge of all men; at his first coming he had but mean attendance; at his second, all the Angels in Heaven shall wait upon him.

Fifthly, Christ will come terribly to all final, impenitent, and unbelieving persons. Many things will strike wonderful terror to the ungodly;

1. The consideration of the Person that comes. It is that Christ whom they did vilify and disesteem, in preferring the World, and Sin, and Self, before him. When they shall lift up their eyes, and see him, and say, Yonder now comes that Christ that was offered to us to be our Savior, but we would have none of him. Yonder comes he that did beseech us by his Ministers, and did strive with us by his Spirit, to take him for our Lord; which, if we had done, he would now have been our Savior; but that we did not, that we would not do: Therefore now shall they wail, because of him; and desire Rocks to fall upon them, to hide them from the presence of the Lamb, that doth now come against them as a Lyon, Rev. 7, and 6:15,16,17.

2. The consideration of the attendants that shall come with him; the holy Angels, many in number, and mighty in power, 2 Thess. 1:7,8.

3. The consideration of the separation from the godly. Now they are weary of their company, then they shall have none of it: Now it is their sin that they are weary of it, then it shall be their punishment to be separated from them. The Goats and the Sheep shall then be divided, Matth. 25:32.

4. The consideration of the Books that then shall be produced; the Book of the Scripture, which now they will not take as their rule to walk by; the Book of God's Knowledge, in which he recordeth all their sins: the Book of their own Conscience, by which they shall condemn themselves according to the Book of God's Knowledge, for their not walking according to the Book of God's Word, Rev. 20:12.

5. The consideration of the Dreadful Doom that shall then pass upon their guilty Souls; every word of which, will make their ears to tingle, and their hearts to ache. Oh that they would now consider it, and get from under the dreadfulness of it! Oh that such would sometimes read their sentence, recorded Matth. 25:41. Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,

prepared for the Devil and his Angels. They now say to Christ, Depart from us; and Christ will then say to them, Depart from me. Oh Lord! Whither must they go, that must depart from thee? That is, from Mercy, from Happiness; and yet must not be blest before they go, but must go with curses upon their heads: But it must not be into some place of Rest and Joy, but into fire; and where they shall have no better company, then Devils and damned Fiends. This will be terrible.

6. The consideration of the expectants, that is, the Devils waiting for their commission to drag them from the Bar of God, to eternal flames, when they are condemned to the place of execution. Oh foolish sinners, that will please and gratify the Devil now, that will torment them hereafter! Is this the wages for their service? Did you serve him so heartily, and doth he now torment you so severely? Would it not have been better for you, if you had received Christ into your hearts, that would have saved you? But it is too late.

7. The consideration of the names of the day of Christ's coming, will make them tremble: It is called,

First, The Day of Wrath. Now is the day of his patience and forbearance, but that the day of wrath, Rev. 6:16,17.

Secondly, The notable day of the Lord; it will be the most notable day that ever came; it will be notable for many things. Never such a noted day, especially for justice to the wicked, Acts 2:20.

Thirdly, The day of damnation; the day of great damnation. Every day is a day of damnation to some Soul or other, that depart this life in their sins; but the day of Christ's coming, is the day of the great damnation, when all the innumerable sinners shall be damned together, 2 Pet. 3:7.

8. The things that shall then be produced against them, and laid to their charge, shall make this a terrible day unto the wicked. All their abominations, their open sins, their drunkenness, and oaths, and profanation of Sabbaths, their secret sins what they did in hidden places, shall then be published before Angels, Men, and Devils. Oh what cause have you to bless God, that you are none of these, in all the burdens you groan under in this life! Let this revive you, when Christ comes, you shall not be condemned. Though now you may fear the Plague, yet to allay those fears, think of your exemption from this great condemnation at the day of Christ: That though you might fall by the Plague with them into the Grave, yet you shall not fall with them into Hell.

Sixthly, Christ coming will be comfortable to the godly. Christ's Disciples did sorrow when he went, but they shall rejoice when he comes again; the parting of friends causeth sorrow, but their meeting causeth joy. Oh solace your Souls with the thoughts, that Christ will come again. Tell me,

1. Can you think who it is that will come, and not rejoice? Is it not that Christ that died for you? Is it not that Christ that bled, and was crucified for you? Is it not that Lord, in whom you have believed, whom you have obeyed? Is it not your Redeemer? Your Elder Brother, your Husband, your King, your Friend? Oh can you think of the coming of an earthly friend after his long absence, and rejoice; and not when you think of the coming of the best friend that you ever had?

2. Can you think of the attendants that come along with him, and not rejoice? Those Angels that have rejoiced at your conversion, will surely then rejoice at your perfect salvation. Those Angels that now God chargeth with you, to keep you from the Plague, Psal. 91:10,11,12. shall then gather you with the rest of God's elect, and set you in the presence of your Lord.



Those Angels that are now Ministering Spirits for your good in this World, shall take care for you at the end thereof.

3. Can you think of the sentence of absolution, that your loving Lord will openly pronounce, and not rejoice? It is questioned by some, Whether the sins of God's people shall be mentioned at the day of Judgment? But I am sure they shall be pardoned. Of that, there is no question. Oh the reading of that sentence, is now sweet unto my Soul; it is of greater worth then thousands of Gold and Silver: Take your Bible and seriously view, and think, What now you read, you shall hear one day from the mouth of your Lord. Matth. 25:34. Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit a Kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the World. Oh blessed words! Oh reviving sentence! Oh what food is here to feed upon! The words are plain, but full of comfort. Lord, who can do otherwise then rejoice, to whom thou shalt hereafter call to come unto thee: Thou callest me now to come unto thee, and thou wilt call me hereafter to come unto thee. Oh Friend! Do you obey Christ's call now, and you shall have his invitation hereafter unto glory. Do you now cry to Christ, to come into your heart, and he will call to you to come into his Kingdom: Then he will pronounce you blessed, though now the world might account you miserable and unhappy. And will this be a Word without a thing? Must you not be blessed indeed? When you shall inherit a Kingdom? A heavenly, everlasting, holy Kingdom?

4. Can you think of the completeness of the glory that then you shall have, and not rejoice? Your Soul shall have possession of this Kingdom at your Dissolution; but not your Body, till the Resurrection. But what this happiness will be, I cannot tell, nor no man else; so saith the Apostle, 1 Joh. 3:2. It doth not yet appear what we shall be; only we know when he appears, we shall be like him. Like him? Oh who would not be like him

now in grace and holiness, that he may be like him then in happiness and glory?

5. Can you read the name this day is called by, and not rejoice? Why it is called the day of refreshing, Acts 3:19. The very name doth tell you what that day will be to Believing Souls. You have now tiresome and wearisome days, but that will be a refreshing day unto you: You have had some refreshing times upon the Earth. A Sabbath day hath been a refreshing day unto your Soul; but then you shall have such refreshments you never did experience before, in such measure and degree.

6. Can you think of the privileges of that day, and not rejoice? Then shall your sincerity be manifested, though now you might be censured for Hypocrisy, 1 Cor. 4:3,4. Now you are full of spots and sins, incident to God's Children; but then without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, Eph. 5:27. Then you shall be approved by God, Christ, Angels, and Saints; then you shall be fully rewarded; your enemies, sin, Satan, perfectly subdued. Oh look, wait, long for the coming of your Lord. Read Tit. 2:15; 2 Tim. 4:8; Phil. 3:20,21; Rev. 22:20.

### ***DUTY XVII.***

Be much in the meditation of the life to come, and the glory that shall be revealed at the coming of Christ. Often think how sure Heaven is unto Believers; how near it is to dying Believers. For ought you know, that do believe, you may be in Heaven before tomorrow. Oh what will it be, for to be freed from all,

1. Afflictions from God.
2. Molestations from Men.
3. Temptations by the Devil.
4. Inclination to Sin.

5. Possibility of Sinning.

6. All doubts and fears, or complaints of God's withdrawing. Oh what will it be to have communion with God! That shall be,

First, Immediate without the help of Ministers and Ordinances.

Secondly, Uninterrupted, or without intermission: No heats and colds in Heaven.

Thirdly, Perfect; to have your heart as full of God, as you can contain; to do nothing else, but love God, and delight in him; to see Christ, and the Prophets, and Apostles, and your Friends with whom you prayed and suffered with upon the Earth.

### ***DUTY XVIII.***

Be much in Fasting's and Prayers in the Communion of the Saints. Extraordinary judgments call aloud for us to cry aloud to God. Bring your Bucket to quench this fire of God's wrath that is kindled, which waxeth hotter and hotter every week. Have you added to the sins, and will you not add to the tears that are shed? Will you not stand or lie betwixt the living and the dead, that the Plague may be staid? Let these things move your hearts to engage in this work.

1. Shall we sin extraordinarily, and shall we not fast and pray extraordinarily? We have committed mighty sins, Amos 5:12. Now let us send up a mighty cry to God in fervent Prayer: The cry of our sins hath reached unto Heaven, and shall not the cry of our Prayers?

2. Shall God punish us with extraordinary judgments, as the Plague is, and shall we not pray and fast extraordinarily? When we feel the smart of God's Rod, it is a seasonably time for such duties.

3. Do not visited Families cry aloud to you, to pray with extraordinary Prayer unto God? Methinks the language of many Families that are sick,

where God is making breach upon breach, is. Oh you that are well, pray to God for us. How many do bespeak your Prayers, and will you fail them?

4. Do you not pray for your own security, when you pray for the common good of the City, and the Kingdom? Is not your welfare wrapped up in the welfare thereof? Will not you yourself be in less danger, if the Plague should stay?

5. What will you do for dying men, if you will not pray mightily for them? Do you see men dying by thousands, and will you not pray to save their lives? You cannot do less for them, and yet you cannot do more for them.

6. Doth not the Public Authority command you to fast and pray, and will not you do it? Do not your lawful Magistrates, call upon you to this duty, and will you then neglect it?

7. Have you not more leisure for this duty then formerly? In time of health your hands were full of trading; but is it so now? The less time your Trade takes up, the more improve time in extraordinary Prayer.

### ***DUTY XIX.***

To all this add speedy, real, and through Reformation. Say to God, show me wherein I have done amiss, and I will do so no more. If others will not reform, yet let us: We cannot reform others, we may ourselves.

God speaks aloud unto us by his smarting judgment, that we should turn to him, wherein we have departed from him. If we will not yet turn to God, God will yet turn more into their Grave, yea, and into Hell. If you would have God turn away his wrath from us, we must think of turning from our sins against him. If we yet go on, he will punish us yet seven times more. Read Lev. 26, from the 14th to the end. If men would make a Personal Reformation, we should then have Family Reformation, and that would

bring a more general. There is surely something amiss in all our Persons and Families: If we would repent and turn from our sins, God would soon repent him of the evil, by which so many every week are swept away. Oh it is our sin that hath kindled the fire of God's displeasure, that burneth so hot to the destruction of so many thousands!

Weigh these Arguments for our turning, taken,

First, From sinful ways in which we have walked; and consider,

1. That the way of sin, it is the Broad way; the way that leads to death and to damnation, Matth. 7:13.

2. The way of sin, it is a pernicious way; destructive to Men's Bodies, Souls, Estate, Peace of Conscience, Rom. 7:27; 2 Pet. 2:2.

3. The way of sin, it is a false way: Men look for Happiness, but sin is not the way thereto: You are out of your way to happiness, if you be in the way of sin, Psal. 119:104.

4. The way of sin, it is a dark way: Whoso walketh therein, knoweth not whither he goeth, Prov. 4:19, and 2:13; 1 Joh. 2:11.

5. The way of sin, it is a very hard way: It is a general mistake of the greatest part of the World, when Christ saith, his yoke is easy, Matth. 11:30. to look upon the ways of God as difficult. It is difficult to corrupt nature, but easy to the renewed part; And the way of sin not to be hard, but God saith the contrary, Prov 13:15. The way of transgressors is hard. It is the hardest bondage in the World to be a slave unto one's own lusts, to drudge in the Devils service.

6. The way of sin is a hateful way to God and good men. Rom. 15:9. The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; and is not God showing his dislike to sinful ways?

7. The way of sin is a rough and unequal way, Ezek. 18:25. Many rubs doth a sinner meet with from God, and his own Conscience,

8. The way of sin is a crooked way, Psal. 125:5; Prov. 2:15, full of snares.

9. The way of sin is a very uncomfortable way. There may be Carnal mirth, but no true Spiritual joy in the way of sin.

10. The way of sin is a miry and defiling way. A man can never keep his conscience and conversation clean, that walks therein; and shall any of God's people be found wandering in such ways as these? Oh let us turn back again into the ways of God; which is the second head of Arguments.

Secondly, The way we must turn into, i.e. The way of Holiness.

1. The way of Holiness, it is the best way. If you were to go a journey, you would inquire which is your best way. Your face is Heaven-ward; would you know your best way? It is the way of Holiness that leads you directly unto Heaven.

2. The way of Holiness, it is the nearest way to Happiness. If you go in the way of sin, you go about; you must back again,

3. The way of Holiness, it is the surest way: For therein you shall have God's direction, you shall have God's protection. You are safe, while you walk in this way. Satan shall not rob you of your Graces, nor so much of your comfort. Did you not too often go out of this way?

4. The way of Holiness, it is the pleasantest way, and most delightful: For you have God's presence in this way, Prov. 3:17.

5. The way of Holiness, it is the cleanest way, Psal. 119:1. You shall have a clean conversation, clean heart and conscience in this way.

6. The way of Holiness, it is the oldest way. Holiness was before wickedness. Jer. 6:16. Inquire for the good old way, and walk therein. There are some ways that are old, that are not good; but the oldest is the best. Oh

what did we do when we forsook the ways of Holiness, to walk in paths of wickedness! Oh get into the holy path again.

Thirdly, The benefits of turning unto God, should move us thereunto,

1. God would then soon hear our Prayers, and till then he will not, Psal. 66:18. If we did but know the Plague of our own hearts, and turn from it, the Plague would stay. See this 1 King. 8, from the 35th to the 40th. But how shall it cease, if we still go on?

2. God would then soon forgive our sins; and if our guilt were removed, it would be better with us.

3. God would then heal us, as well as pardon us, Jer. 3:12,22.

4. God would then rejoice over us, to do us good. Deut. 30:9,10. Oh it would be better for us to turn to God, that he might spare us, then go on in sin, till he makes us an utter desolation. But let us do it,

1. Penitently. With tears in our eyes, and sorrow in our hearts, Joel 2:12.

2. Heartily. And not feignedly, Jer. 2:10; Joel 2:12.

3. Believingly.

4. Speedily. Without delay, least Death prevent our turning.

5. Willingly. Let it be matter of our choice.

6. Let us turn to God so, as never more to turn from him. Jere. 50:4,5. In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the Children of Israel shall come; they, and the Children of Judah together, going, and weeping: They shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thither-ward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual Covenant that shall not be forgotten.

### ***DUTY XX.***

Be content with that allowance of outward enjoyments, which God doth give and continue to you, under the present Providence. You with others

might have your outward enjoyments diminished by want of Trade and free Commerce; and those that are not visited with the Pestilence, might suffer a decay in their estates. And as it is hard to submit unto God's Rod, when we feel the smart thereof upon our bodies, so it must be the fruit of much pains with our own hearts and fervent prayers unto God, to be content when we find ourselves decreasing in outward enjoyments. Those that have much, might have it reduced unto little; and those that had little, might be brought almost to nothing at all. And, Oh how apt is the heart of man, to fret within himself at such decays! And the heart of a Christian that hath much corruption amongst a little grace, to be more sensible of decays in Temporals, then declining's in Spirituals! We too often lose some degrees of our Grace, of Love, and Faith, and Hope, and too seldom complain thereof to God. But though we do not so often decay in Temporals, we too much complain to Man, and murmur and repine against God. Do not many find some inward fretting's in their hearts, that they live upon the spend, and nothing coming in; so many to maintain, and their shops shut up! What trouble is it unto some that the other day did live in good repute, and were esteemed to be rich, that now must be constrained to borrow, or to beg; that the other day they hoped they should be rich, but now are effectually convinced that they are poor; that if they escape the stroke of Death, see themselves falling into the depths of Poverty and want! To be content with that which God allows you, when it is but little, requireth not a little, but some degrees of Grace. Contentation is not natural, it is a lesson must be learned; and many in the School of Christ, are very dull, and spend much time before they can take it out. Phil. 4:11,12. I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be contented. I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need. But this is too great to be



attained, but in the strength of Christ, Ver. 13. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. As if when a Christian had learned to do this, he had learned to do all things, Phil. 4:6. Be careful for nothing, be prayer-full but not careful, i.e. solicitously, distrustfully, anxiously careful: But by Prayer make known your case, and care, and troubles unto God. Heb. 13:5. Let your conversation (especially at such a time as this) be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have. As we have? It may be that is a piece of Bread, a cup of Water, torn Clothes. Why such as they be, you must be content withal; For he hath said, He will never leave you, nor forsake you. A Promise better worth then thousands per annum, which might and will leave the owners thereof: but God will never leave them that are his, 1 Tim. 6:6,7,8. Godliness with contentment is great gain. Get holiness and contentedness, and you have got enough to make you happy hereafter, and comfortable here. We brought nothing into the World, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. You shall take as much with you as you brought. Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. If you have not variety, yet you have for necessity; if you have anything you can call food, be content; and raiment, though it be not costly, but course; yet if you have anything you can call raiment, be content. That you may attain this excellent frame of heart, seriously weigh these Arguments.

1. God hath given to you the best things, the best in themselves, and the best for you. Hath he not given you Himself, and his Son, and Spirit? Hath he not given you Grace and Promises of Glory? And doth he not sometimes give you the joys and comfort of the Holy Ghost? Why then are you discontented? How many times have you professed, that God is your Happiness, and that Heaven is your Treasure; and that the World, and the things thereof, are but the offal given unto Dogs? Do you believe the things

you say? If you do, have you not more cause, infinitely more cause to rejoice, that God hath given you the best, then murmur that he denieth to you the worst? Or, will you say or think, that he to whom God hath given Christ, and not riches too; Grace, and not Gold too; Heaven, and not Earthly things too; hath cause to be dis-satisfied? Would you not be ashamed to say it, and yet will you not be ashamed to do it; or will you go up and down complaining, and say, God hath given me nothing but Himself; nothing but a little Grace? What nothing but? Why there is nothing greater, nothing better, nothing surer. Oh! It would become you better to say, I have enough, though I have but little; I have all, when I have nothing at all, because I have him that is all, and all in all.

2. Jesus Christ was poor, as well as you. She that bare him was poor, Luk. 2:24. compared with Lev. 12:8. His birth was mean, born in a Stable, and laid in a Manger; was it so with you? He had not a house to dwell in, but so have you. Nay, Christ was poor, that he begged for your sakes, 2 Cor. 8:9. ἐπρώχουσεν, He begged; you will say, when, and of whom? See the fourth of John, 7th, 8th, 9th ver. He asked for necessary refreshment; not Wine, but Water: Was it ever so with you? Were you ever so mean, to ask an alms; and is the Disciple, better than his Lord; or the servant greater than his Master? When your heart begins to murmur, reflect upon the condition of your Lord and Savior.

3. Many of those that have been closer followers of Christ, then you have been, have been poorer then yet you are. Read Heb. 11:30 to the 39th and see if they were not indeed, as to Spirituall, better than you. Humility will teach you to say they were; and yet see whither as to Temporall, they were not worse than you. Truth will teach you to say they were; they were destituted of many accommodations that you enjoy; they wandered in

Deserts, and in Mountains, in Dens, and Caves of the Earth; is it so with you? Were not the Apostles of Christ better than you, and are you troubled, if sometimes you have no money by you? It was Peters case as well as yours. Acts 3:6. Silver and Gold have I none; but were they ever so discontented as you are? Did ever such murmuring words fall from their mouths? Nay look about you in the World, and you shall see many whom you might charitably judge, love God more than you do, and fear God more than you do, and have more communion with God, then you have, are yet in a meaner condition then yourselves. When you would get your hearts to be low and humble, look upon your Superiors in gifts and grace: When you would have it thankful and content, look upon your Inferiors, in those things, the want of which you so much complain of.

4. If you have not so much of the World as others have, so you have not in some other respects so much trouble and affliction, as some of those have with their worldly enjoyments. A great estate hath oftentimes great troubles; and great cares, and great temptations. See if you have not freedom from such affliction, as others with their abundance do lie under. None is so full, nor happy, as to meet with no affliction; nor is your condition so miserable as to enjoy no good; and therefore,

5. Study what you have, as well as what you have not. You want superfluity, but you have for necessity; that time you spend in complaining of your wants, would be better improved in giving thanks to God for what you have.

6. Consider what an ill return you have made to God of the little you have had; do you yet complain you have no more, or should you not rather wonder at the patience and goodness of your God, that hath not stripped you of all? If you have not been faithful in a little, would you have been

faithful, if you had had more? God saw you had not grace enough to manage a great estate, you have loved a little too much. But what would you have done if you had more? God himself would rather have your love, then give you anything that should be sharer with him. Have you improved your one talent? Have you spent your little better, do not complain that you have no more.

7. It may be, if you had not had so little of the World, you had not had so much of Heaven in your heart; nor so much of God, nor so much of rich experience of the Work of God upon your Soul. And though others may, yet God saw that you would not; if you had not been so poor in the World, you would not have been so rich towards God. It may be you have gone more to God in your wants, then you would have done if you had been full.

8. The less you have, the less you are to be accountable for, at the coming of your Lord. If your estate is less, your accounts will not be so great. To whom much is given, of them much will be required, Luk. 12:48. Have not you had more than you can give account you have spent well? Are not your accounts great enough already, but you must complain that you have not more to answer for?

9. More is not good for you then you have. God denieth nothing unto his, that he seeth would be better for them to have, then be without. The condition God puts you in, is best for you; and would you have it, whether it be good for you, or no? Psal. 64:11 and 34:10.

10. Consider it is your own will and desire it should be with you as it is, and do you complain that you have your will? You would have it so, or else you fearfully dissemble with God: Have not you often prayed, that God's will might be done? And are you discontented when your Prayers are answered? Have not you often resigned your will to God's? And often

desired your will might be molded into his? And will you contradict your praying by repining?

11. Consider, if you had more of the World, you would be more unwilling to leave the World; and that you need not be; you are loath enough to die already, and need not wish for more to make you more unwilling: Usually men's love to the World doth increase, as the enjoyments of it do increase; the more men have of it, the more they love it; and the more they love it, the more loath they are to leave it.

12. Consider, you must leave all when you come to die, had you never so much. If now you have much when you come to your Grave, you shall have nothing over; and if now you have but little, then and there you shall have no want. Why do you trouble yourself about such things as you cannot take with you into eternity? As will not accompany you into another World? That cannot stand you instead at the hour of Death, or day of Judgment? Will a great estate afford comfort to a dying man? Or will it administer peace to a departing Soul? Or can these things be-friend you at the Bar of God? If you had a houseful of Gold and Silver, you cannot take a handful with you. Then let it be your care, you do not go down into the Grave with your heart full of the World, or full of discontent, that you could not get it, Eccl. 5:15; Psal. 49:16,17,18; 1 Tim. 6:7,8; Job 1:21.

13. Consider, God loves you as much in your mean condition, as he did in your flourishing and prosperous estate. The friendship of men might increase and decrease, as your enjoyment in the World does ebb and flow; but so doth not the love of God. God loves none, because they be rich; neither doth he hate any, because they be poor. God loved Job upon his Dung-hill, and Lazarus in his Rags and Sores. If you be poorer than you

were, you are not therefore less beloved by the God of Heaven then you were. And let that content you,

14. Consider, God doth not give his people their portion in this life, but their estate doth lie above in another World. A Christians estate is invisible, and out of sight: Your treasure is in Heaven. These things are not all you look for, and hope for: But better, greater, and more lasting things you have in your eye, and hope. If you looked for no more hereafter, you might be troubled that you have no more here: You are not of the number of the men of this World, that have their portion in this life. Psal. 17:14. You are an heir to a great estate, and are now in your minority; and shall the heir be discontented, if he have not the actual possession in his non-age; and will you, if you have not possession of great things here, as well as expectation of great things hereafter.

15. Consider these things are at God's dispose, and he may give them to whom he will, and in what measure he will; and will not you be pleased, if God doth with his own, as seemeth him good? Shall your eye be evil because God's is good? Matth. 20:13,14,15. Doth God keep from you anything that is your due? These things are gifts, and not a debt.

16. Consider, you have more already, then you do deserve: Study much your own unworthiness, and believe you are indeed less than the least of all God's mercies, Gen. 32:10. Every crumb of Bread is more than you do deserve.

17. Consider, it is uncomely for a living man to complain of God's dispensations, and to murmur against them, Lam. 3:39. Wherefore doth a living man complain, or murmur, especially in such times of great mortality? Doth God take some outward things from you? But doth not he take the lives of others, and continue yours? Think with yourself, if some of

those that are gone down into their Graves, would have complained, if God had spared their lives, though he had diminished their estates. God continueth that unto you, which is dearer unto you, then a great estate; and will you yet complain?

18. Consider, much is not necessary; a little will bear your charges till you come unto your journeys end: Nature is content with little, and Grace with less. Lusts are chargeable to maintain, but Grace will teach you to live at a cheaper rate. Pride is costly, but Humility is more easily satisfied. Gluttony and Drunkenness require more, but Temperance less.

19. Consider, when you have but little in possession, you have all in the promise; which promise you may believingly plead with God at the Throne of Grace. There are many promises concerning outward things, which God hath made unto his people, which are conditional; that he will give you these outward things, if your having them, will more conduce unto his glory, and your own good; and shall not a promise of God, quiet your heart? Is there not more in God's promise to satisfy you, then in the Creature, if you had as much as you do desire. Psal. 34:9,10, and 37:9,11.

20. Consider your little is better than a wicked man's much: You have a little, and you have it with the love of God; and a wicked man hath much, and hath it with the frowns of God. You have a little with a blessing, and the wicked have abundance with a curse. And which do you think is better? God giveth you a little, and the pardon of your sins too, with a soft and sensible heart. And he giveth more to the ungodly, but retains their sins, and takes not from them a hard and impenitent heart: And so far as Grace prevails, you are more truly thankful for a little, then they are for their all. And to have a little, and be thankful, is better than to have more, and be unthankful, Psal. 37:16.

21. Do the Fowls of the Heaven, or the Beasts of the Field, disquiet themselves as you do? And as bad as you think you are, yet being one of God's children, you are better than they, Matth. 6:26. Will God provide for Beasts, and not for those he hath redeemed with the precious Blood of his own Son?

22. All your discontenting cares, they are fruitless and unprofitable, they will do you much harm; but they cannot do you any good. What addition do you make by all your vexatious-pricking-heart-disquieting care? By all your thoughts, you cannot add one cubit to your stature, nor anymore unto your State. Matth. 6:27.

23. These discontents are fitter for a Heathen, then a Christian; those that have no better, and do know no better; but not for you. Matth. 6:32.

24. Consider your relation unto God: Is he not your Father? And cannot you then quietly commit your affairs to him? And cast all your cares upon him. Do your little children thus disquiet themselves about their food and raiment? Shall they trust you more, then you trust God? He is your Father, and therefore will: He is in Heaven, and therefore can give to you all that is needful for you; and what is needful for you, he knows better than yourself.

Thus I have in my Meditations thought upon some Arguments for Contentation with our present condition, if we have but small enjoyments in this World: Which, through the Grace of God, have had some operation in my heart in writing; and I pray they may also have upon yours in reading of them.

### ***DUTY XXI.***

Persevere in all these Duties, and be not weary in the practice and performance of them: They will be difficult and displeasing to flesh and blood; but yet if you go on unweariedly, you shall find them sweet.



Unweariedly to persevere in examining your heart, in praying unto God, in mortifying of sin, in redeeming time, in holy contemplation of the life to come, is the work of an upright heart, when a Hypocrite might do some of these sometimes.

And that may I not lose my labor in all the rest, I think it necessary to add a few Arguments to press you to unweariedness in all the forementioned duties.

1. Consider, God is never weary of doing good to you. God is not weary in hearing your Prayers, and will you be weary in making of them? God is not weary in bestowing, and will you be weary in asking? Unweariedness of God in giving Mercy, should be a lasting engagement unto us, to unweariedness in performance of duty.

2. Consider, Christ was not weary in suffering anything for us, and shall we be weary in doing duty unto him? Christ was weary in suffering, but he was not weary of suffering; so though you may be weary sometimes in duty, yet be not weary of duty: Yea, Christ prayed unweariedly, and acted unweariedly, and was most constant in all his undertakings for us; and what is our doing to Christ's dying, and our acting for Christ, and for our own Souls, to Christ's doing for us?

3. Consider, the Holy Ghost was never weary in striving with your heart, till he had overcome it. He came time after time, and moved upon your heart in the time of your non-conversion, and did unweariedly work till he had subdued your will, and united your heart unto Jesus Christ; and will you be weary in doing of duties unto such a God?

4. Consider, the more unwearied you are in holy duties, the more like you are unto the Angels in Heaven, and the spirits of just men made perfect in glory; they do unweariedly sing Hallelujahs unto God, and the Lamb that

sits upon the Throne; and do not you pray, that you may do the Will of God in Earth, as the Angels do in Heaven?

5. Consider, you cannot spend your time better, then in a constant doing of your duty. It will not repent you, when you come to die, that so much of your time was filled up with holy Prayer; in a serious searching of your own hearts, in the believing fore-thoughts of the life to come.

6. Consider, the more unwearied and constant you are in all these duties, the more advantage you shall find for the present: In the doing of your duty, there is great reward, Psal. 19:11. great increase you shall find.

First, Of strength and power against your sin. This will be the way to get down your pride and covetousness, &c.

Secondly, Of Heavenly-mindedness; the more your heart is in duty, the more your heart will be in Heaven.

Thirdly, Of Christian experience, and of the dealing of God's Spirit with your hearts. The more you are in duty, the more God will meet with you, and the more his Spirit will warm and affect your heart.

Fourthly, Of the discoveries of the evil of sin, and of the deceitfulness of your own heart: The more you do examine yourself, the more you will perceive the desperate wickedness, and the turnings and windings of your own heart: The more you meditate of the joys of Heaven, the more vile will sin appear unto you, that would deprive you of it.

Fifthly, Of love to God and Christ, and the things above. The more constant you are in holy duties, the more discoveries you shall have of the excellency of God and Christ; and the more you know them, the more you will love them.

7. Consider, the more unwearied and constant you are in holy duties, the greater reward you shall have hereafter, and more degrees of glory. The

more wicked men are, the more they shall be tormented; so those that do anything for God, shall not lose their reward, 1 Cor. 15:58. And the more degrees of Grace you get, by being constant in holy duties, the more shall be your degrees of glory, 1 Cor. 15:40,41.

8. Consider, Wicked men are constant and unwearied in their sinning; and you yourselves in time past were constant in your disobedience; and will you not now be constant in duty and obedience? Shall others be more unwearied in undoing themselves, then you will be to save your Souls?

9. Consider, the more unwearied and constant you are in holy duties, the better shall you give an account unto God at the last day; when your Lord shall come to reckon with you, what you have been doing; and how you have spent your time he gave you upon Earth; and how you have improved your talents he did entrust you with.

10. Consider, The Devil is unwearied in tempting men to sin; it is his constant daily work; and if you be weary in resisting him in a way of holy, constant duties, he will get a great advantage against you.

And that you may attain to this unweariedness in holy duties, take these directions.

First, Make duty your delight: That which men delight in, they are not so soon weary of. Wicked men delight not in praying unto God; and therefore are weary in it, and weary of it. David's delight was in the Word of God, and therefore he was unwearied in the study of it, Psal. 1:2.

Secondly, Look upon duty as your privilege; it is your real privilege, that you may pray to God, that you may look into his Word. Hypocrites that do their duties as a task, do groan under the performance of them.

Thirdly, Get an inward principle suitable unto your work. Those that pray and do other duties, being moved thereto by outward Motives, will be

inconstant in the performance of them: But those that do them from an inward principle, will persevere in the practice of them. An unholy heart, will be burdened with holy work; a carnal heart, will be weary of spiritual duties.

Fourthly, Be convinced of the absolute necessity of these duties, and perseverance in them; they are necessary, because they are commanded; and they are necessary, as they are means leading you to your highest end; firmly believe, that it is the unwearied Christian that shall be the only, happy, and successful Christian. It is unweariedness and perseverance that will crown all your labors, Ezek. 18:24.

Fifthly, Endeavor after communion, and fuller, and more intimate acquaintance with God in all your duties. A Christian, as such, cannot be weary of those duties in which he enjoyeth fellowship with God: But when a man hath nothing but the duty, and nothing of God, God meets him not in Prayer; God discovereth nothing of himself to him in Meditation; it must needs be irksome unto such to be employed in those duties. Can a Believer be weary of that Ordinance, in which he enjoyeth God? Or doth he not say, it is good for me to be here? It is good for me to draw near to God. But then you must not take up with anything short of true communion with God, which when you have it, it will,

1. Leave a lasting engagement upon your heart, to walk close with God after duty.
2. It will make you prize Duties and Ordinances above the outward enjoyments of this World.
3. It will make sin exceeding vile in your eyes.
4. It will make you very humble and vile in your own apprehensions.
5. It will wonderfully enflame your hearts with love to God.

6. It will darken the glory of this World in your eyes.
7. It will make you exceeding desirous, that others should be brought unto the participation of the same fellowship with God.
8. It will raise your appreciation and esteem of the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom you have this fellowship with the Father.
9. It will make you pity and commiserate the ungodly World, that are feeding upon Husks, when there is such delighting joys to be had, in and from God in holy duties.
10. It will set your Soul a longing after the full fruition of God in the Highest Heavens.

This is true communion with God indeed, and take up with nothing short of such enjoyment of God, and then you will make it your greatest delight to serve God. And these duties, which to carnal men are sapless and empty things, will be to you as meat and drink. And if Death find you so doing, no question it will be your out-let from all miseries, and an in-let to all happiness. To all such, the day of Dissolution, shall be the day of Coronation; when the Body shall be said in the Grave, the Soul shall be carried into Glory. And though some of God's people may fall in a time of such general calamity, that men may refuse to accompany their Dead-bodies to the Grave, yet the holy Angels shall not deny to conduct their Souls to Eternal happiness. That is the place we are praying for, waiting, longing, and looking for. Oh my Friends, what will it be to be with God; where you shall never feel sin, nor sickness more; where you shall delight, and love, and joy, and praise him to all eternity! Where we shall reap the fruit of all our labors; not that we deserve anything from God, but all shall be freely conferred upon us.

My Friends, I being something remote from you, can serve you (not in the same way as formerly) but by praying for you, and directing a few lines unto you; which I hope you will take from me, as an expression of my real love unto your Souls: And that God would affect your hearts in the reading of them, and enable you and me to live in the constant practice of these Christian duties, shall be the unfeigned Prayers of,

Your Real Friend and Servant in the Lord.

ROM. 15:30.

*Now I beseech you for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your Prayers to God for me, and my Family, that God would preserve us in this day of his great displeasure.*

## *PT. II. A Cordial for Believers in Dying Times.*

**S**ad are the Tidings which you frequently send of the raging Plague amongst you; dolorous are the complaints that you fill your Letters with, because of the many breaches that Death is making in your Families: One, My Husband and Children are dead; another, My Wife and Children dead; a third, that such a Family is wholly removed, Parents and Children too; Master and Servants too. There is Death in every Letter, and Death almost in every Line, and you in fears concerning yourselves: Oh my friends let us now spend our little time rather in preparation for our own, then in lamentation of others Death; for that they shall not return to us, but we shall go down to them. You are indeed walking in the valley of the shadow of Death; but yet the Lord is your Shepherd; therefore why should you fear inordinately; I pray, for your comforts in this day of distress, have in your mind such things as these? Let me ask you;

First, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your Soul, That your name is written in the Book of Life? That your name is enrolled in the Record of Heaven? And what will it be to be put into the

Bill of Mortality, when you are first in the Book of Life? Are you not a chosen vessel? Hath not God set his heart upon you? Were you not in his thoughts of love, when he was appointing what should be the place of the Eternal abode of every man? If you would but dwell in your believing thoughts upon God's eternal Electing love it would wonderfully comfort you, though you were a dying: Oh! Why are you so exceedingly saddened, because of slaughtering Death? Let Reprobates and Souls passed by, stand trembling, and be filled with Horror at the approaches thereof: But shall you that are elected? Shall you that have some discoveries of God's eternal choice of your precious Souls? Tell me I beseech you.

1. Can you consider who it is that hath chosen you, and yet put by the comfort of it? God, and not man; the King of glory, and the mighty God hath fixed his eyes upon you.

2. Can you consider when this choice was made, and not be comforted? Election is an Eternal act of God, it was concluded by the God of Heaven before this world began, that you should be happy with himself, when this world shall be no more.

3. Can you consider what it is that he hath chosen you from, and not be comforted? From Sin and misery, from a loathsome state in which you were; shall a man be chosen from the dunghill, to a place of Honor, and not be affected with the favor of the Prince that makes that choice?

4. Can you consider what it is that God hath chosen you to, and not have your hearts revived at the thoughts thereof? Is it not to a Kingdom and a Crown; a Crown of glory, that is undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in the Heavens for you. 1 Pet. 1:4,5. To an eternal mansion, to the beatifical vision, to the everlasting, immediate, full fruition of the chiefest good.



5. Can you consider why it was that God did choose you, and not have your Soul wonderfully affected therewith? Was it because you were better than others? Was it because you would honor him more than others? Oh no: there was nothing in you as a motive, reason, cause, ground, or Antecedent to this choice, but because he would. He did choose you, because it was his pleasure so to do. Rom. 9:15. I will have mercy, on whom I will have mercy; I will have compassion, on whom I will have compassion.

6. Can you consider how long this glory shall remain, that he hath chosen you unto, and not admire him for his love? Had God chosen you to live in honor, and in happiness a little while, or for some thousand of years, and then to suffer you to live in shame and everlasting contempt? Is it to some temporary honor? Is it to some transitory dignities? Oh no, it is to an everlasting blessed state.

7. Can you consider whom it is that God hath chosen, viz. you, and not have it a refreshment unto your Soul? A Man, a Woman, a great Sinner, that wert a Sinner a great while; oh what kind of condescension is this in God to you! Oh what kind of honor is this conferred by God upon you! That God should choose any man was wonderful, but that he should choose you and not another; this to you should be more wonderful and affecting.

8. Can you consider how few these are that are chosen by God, and will it not raise your heart in dying times, that you should be one of those few? If there should be but a few that should escape this Plague, (which God prevent) and you should be one of those few, would you not own it as a strong engagement to love God, and live unto him, and rejoice in him? Oh how much more, when but a few are elected; and you should be of that little number! If God had chosen all but one man, you might have been left to have been that only Reprobate person: Oh then in dying times let this be

your comfort! That though God hath chosen but a few, you are one of the number. Some of you may be so mean, that Men will not vouchsafe to choose you to a place of office among men; and yet the great God hath chosen you to life and glory.

9. Can you consider the peculiar care that God takes of his chosen ones, in times of judgment, and not rejoice that you are one of them? God will not lose one of his elect, though they may die in a general calamity, and be cast into the same common grave, yet God knows who are his. 2 Tim. 2:19.

You will reply, If I did know indeed, that I were elected of God to eternal life, it would be a Cordial to me indeed, though I were sick of this uncomfortable disease. But alas, that is my doubt, that is my fear: I am afraid God will cut me off by death, and cast me off forever. I am afraid God hath not chosen me; I pray you Sir, tell me how I should do to know it. I answer,

1. If you have chosen God, undoubtedly God hath chosen you; not that your choice of God, precedes God's choice of you. That follows it. God chooseth us first, and then he causeth us to choose him; what say you then? Speak I pray you as a dying man should speak, deny nor affirm more than is true. Have you not after you have experienced the vanity of the Creature, upon your serious and mature deliberation, choose God for your portion, and your treasure, and your chiefest joy? Could you not be thankful for a share in God, though you had nothing besides? Doth your judgment value him, and your will chose him, and are your affections set upon him above all things; that you prize nothing more, and love nothing more? You may certainly thankfully conclude, that God hath chosen you. For as we love God because he first loved us; so we chose God, because he first chose us.

There is no reason why you should say you have made choice of God, but you fear he hath not chosen you.

2. If you have a Christ-prizing heart, purifying Faith, certainly you are elected of God unto eternal life; therefore such a Faith, it is called the Faith of God's elect. Tit. 1:1. and Faith is the true and infallible consequent of God's election. Acts 13:48. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. Therefore prove that you do believe, and you may be sure that you are chosen.

3. If you are effectually called, then you are certainly elected, 2 Pet. 1:10. Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. There is a connection betwixt calling and election: Though everyone that is elected, is not yet called; yet everyone that is called, is elected; and we must by our calling make our election sure. Tell me then, Hath not God opened your eyes, and caused you to see your sin and misery, and broken your heart, and made you mourn for your sin, and given you a sight of Christ, and instructed you in the terms of the Covenant of Grace [viz. To take him for your Lord and Savior,] and are not you willing to take him into your heart upon those terms? Dare you say this if you were now a dying? Oh certainly there is something in God's eternal choice of you, to support and comfort you in sickness, and judgments, and death; if you would believe it, and evidence it to your soul, and work the thoughts thereof upon your heart.

Secondly, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your Soul, that God is at peace with you, and you actually, really, and eternally reconciled to God? If you die in this Plague, you will not die an enemy to God, nor God be an enemy to you. As God is the forest enemy, so God is the surest friend. As it is most dreadful in dying times, to have God to be ones enemy; so it is in the same times most comfortable to have

God to be at peace. If the Plague doth come and seize upon you, it comes from your friend; your God. This one word, he is yours, will be ground enough of solid comfort in all times, conditions, and places. This is the very quintessence of the Covenant of Grace, the very extract and sum of all the promises of the Gospel; nay, these words, I will be your God, are the very spirits of the Gospel promises, which will appear, if you consider, what is comprehended in this principal promise.

1. I will be your God, i.e. I will love you with the choicest, freest, and with the tenderest love; and can you conceive God speaking thus unto your Soul, and can any outward judgment be so heavy, as to weigh your Spirit down with slavish fears thereof?

2. I will be your God, i.e. I will bestow myself upon you. God giveth riches to the wicked, and bestoweth honor upon the ungodly, but he bestows himself upon his people. What will God make himself over to you, and yet Plague and Death more affright you, then the thoughts of this shall content and support you?

3. I will be your God, that is, I will oblige myself to communicate to you all the good I see necessary to the life of Grace and Glory; anything that is good for you (whether Health, Life, Plenty,) I will not with-hold from you.

4. I will be your God, i.e. It doth include the continuance and duration of this Relation betwixt God and your Soul. He doth not say only he is your God, but he will be your God, in Health, in Sicknes, in Death. You may complain you want comfort in times of great Mortality, but you cannot say, you have not ground of comfort, while this promise stands recorded in the Scripture. When you come to die, and your external parts of your body begin to be cold, this promise laid warm unto your heart, will minister matter of Spiritual joy to your departing Soul. To have a good God to be

your God, a merciful God to be your God, and a faithful and eternal God to be your God, will be more to you when you come to die, then to have thousands of Gold and Silver to be yours.

*Quest.* But you will say, How shall I know, that God is my God?

*Ans.* 1. If you have really and heartily resigned yourself to God, to become his, then he is yours. In every Covenant there is a mutual consent, else it is no Covenant. I will be your God, and there is added, You shall be my people. If you are one of these people which are a willing people; in the day of Christ's power willing,

1. To forsake every Sin.
2. To do every Duty.
3. Willing to bear every burden, willing to bear anything, to do anything; then you have a propriety in God.

2. If you have real love unto him; for such a Covenant relation cannot be without affection. If you did not love him before you took him for your God, yet you do now.

3. If you have received some special Covenant tokens from him. He never becomes a God in Covenant with any Soul, but he gives to such a one Covenant Graces, and Covenant Blessings and Privileges; Such as are a soft Heart, sense of Hardness, Spiritual life, the Spirit of Prayer, Holiness of Heart and Life in some measure; which if you have received, assuredly God is your God. Now will it not comfort you, whether you be well or sick, to say, God is a tender-hearted God, and he is mine; an All-sufficient God, and he is mine. Oh let life be continued, or let Death approach, he is mine, let me live or die! This is enough, that God is mine.

4. If you have broken league with Sin, and Sin be not yours by Covenant and free consent, when God is yours. Every man in the World is in

Covenant with God or Sin, and these are inconsistent the one with the other; if Sin be not your Lord, and bear Dominion in your Soul, then God is your God, and your Lord. Oh break of your Covenant with Sin while you live! And God will be your God while you live, and when you die.

Thirdly, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your departing Soul, that you shall still remain united unto Christ. Do you fear death, because it will separate you from your dear relations? Yet it shall not separate you from Christ. Do you fear it, because it will separate your body and your Soul, these two that were together in the same womb, and lived together in this World? Yet know and study it, and dwell upon it in your thoughts, till it doth overcome your fears; it shall not separate the union betwixt you and your Redeemer. Death indeed will dissolve the Natural union betwixt Body and Soul, the Conjugal union betwixt Husband and Wife, the Political union betwixt Magistrate and Subject; but not the Mystical union betwixt you and Christ. Your body when it is sleeping in the dust, shall still be united to him; nay, your body turned unto dust, shall still retain this union and your Soul when it's got into the highest Heavens. Oh, what did God do for you, when he did by his Spirit on his part; and by Faith on your part, unite you unto Christ! Oh ponder a while upon this union in these properties of it!

1. In that it is a Spiritual and an Invisible union: it is to be perceived by Faith, and not by Sense. Carnal men they have it not, and they have no experimental knowledge of it: They may talk of it, but have no benefit by it, because they are not partakers of it. It is a scorn to the ungodly world, but you have tasted the sweetness of it.

2. In that it is an unspeakable union. There are three unions very admirable; the union of three persons in one Nature; the union of two

natures in one Person; and the union of Christ to Believers.

3. In that it is a sympathizing union; by virtue of this union, Christ hath a feeling of all the evils that befall you. You cannot be sick, but Christ is sensible of it. Your head cannot ache, but Christ sympathizeth with you; and you shall not go through the pangs of death, but he will be afflicted with you. Isa. 63:9. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, Heb. 4:15. For we have not a high Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities by virtue of this union. It was that Christ did call from heaven, when Saul was making havoc of his members: As there is a sympathy betwixt the head and the members of the body natural, so there is betwixt Christ the Head and every Member of his Body Mystical:

4. In that it is an indissoluble union: Devils cannot break it, men can never break it, sin and death can never break it. Once united to Christ, and you are forever united to him. There is nothing you can call forever yours, but God and Christ; and the special things you receive from them. You cannot look upon your Children; and say, these are forever mine; nor upon the Wife of your bosom, and say, this is forever mine; for our relation and our title to these, doth cease at death: But because this union is inseparable, you may say, this God and Christ is forever mine. If sickness and death could part you and your Lord, your heart might break at the thoughts thereof; but since it is not in their power, be filled with such joy both in sickness and in death, as doth become one that doth indeed believe it.

Fourthly, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your Soul, that your Sins are freely, fully, everlastingly forgiven? Were you indeed to die in your Sins, and go out of the World with all your guilt upon your Souls, you had cause then to be filled with horror of conscience, and unspeakable perplexities of mind; but through mercy this is

not your case. The Debt is discharged, the Bond is cancelled, the Book is crossed; it is guilt that maketh death more terrible then the bare destruction of nature would make it to be. Oh! What if you be a dying man! Yet you are a pardoned man. It is guilt that is the sting of death; and when the guilt of sin is removed, the sting of death is taken away. This is your comfort, you shall not die in debt, because your surety hath already paid it for you. Oh! Consider seriously the greatness of this blessing; for,

1. It is a blessing which none can give but God himself; none can take off the obligation that lies upon a sinner unto eternal condemnation, but that God against whom the sin is committed.

2. It is such a blessing, that none could purchase, but the Son of God.

3. It is such a blessing, that he did purchase with his blood. Blood was the price of pardon, and not common but precious blood; the blood of Bulls and Goats could not have done it; the blood of an Ordinary, no nor of an Innocent man, had there been any such mere man to be found; but it must be the Blood of God and Man; and that not a little of his blood, but it must be the Life-blood, the very Heart-blood of this precious person that could procure it for you.

4. It is such a blessing, that doth sweeten all your mercies; what were other mercies, if your sins had not been pardoned? What if you could say, that you are rich, but not pardoned? Pardon giveth a better relish to your other blessings.

5. It is such a blessing that lighteneth all your burdens; it makes poverty easy, and death comfortable.

6. It is a blessing which God giveth always in his love. God doth not use to give pardon in his anger, to remit sins in his displeasure. Whom he



pardons them he loves; and if he did not love you, he would not have pardoned you,

7. It is such a blessing that is peculiar to God's own; it is a mercy that a Hypocrite never had; it is a blessing that a Reprobate never shared of.

8. It is such a blessing that might comfort you against the fears of being cast out of the love of God. What is it that maketh you fear that God should cast you off? Is it your poverty, and your meanness in the World? No, but it is the thought of sin that filleth you with these fears; but need you fear this, when your sin is pardoned? God never did, and never will cast off a pardoned Sinner; and are you partakers of so great a mercy, and will you be so much perplexed with the thoughts of sickness and death? When you are visited, remember you are pardoned; when you are at the very point of death remember you are pardoned; and this will sweeten your passage into another life: When the Plague is upon your body, remember the great Plague of all is removed from you.

Fifthly, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your Soul, that the Righteousness of Christ is imputed to you? Your sins were imputed to him, and his righteousness to you, 2 Cor. 5, last. Oh wonderful exchange! If you were to die and appear before God in your sins, your case were miserable. And if you were to die, and appear before God in your own righteousness, your condition were deplorable: But the remission of sins prevents the former, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness the latter. Is it a trouble to you to look back upon your life, and see how you have transgressed God's Law, which is holy, just, and good? But Christ he hath kept the Law, and satisfied for your breaking of it, and both these imputed unto you. Christ's Active obedience is imputed unto you; and Christ's Passive obedience is imputed unto you. i.e. There is a free

donation, adjudication, application of the righteousness of Christ unto you [believing] as if it had been performed by you; for as our sins were so laid upon Christ and imputed unto him, as if he had been the sinner, who yet knew no sin; so Christ's Righteousness and Obedience is reckoned unto us, as if we had obeyed in our own persons, who yet had no righteousness of our own. Rom. 4:6, and 5:18,19; 2 Cor. 5:21. If you look within you, you may find something that is a pledge of future happiness; but there is nothing within you can justify you before God, all your righteousness's are as filthy rags. Isa. 64:6. And if we trust in our own righteousness, we shall perish. Duties are good means, but bad saviors. Oh! Lay hold upon the righteousness of Christ, and see that he be made of God to you, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1:30. There is enough in Christ's Righteousness to comfort a believers Soul against the fears of death, that is so formidable; for,

1. It is the Righteousness of God. The Righteousness of Adam in his Innocency, was but the Righteousness of a mere man; at his best, he was but a man; but that Righteousness which is yours by imputation, is the Righteousness of one that was God and Man. 2 Cor. 5:21. That we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.

2. It is perfect Righteousness; there is no blemish in it, nothing wanting, nothing short.

3. It is the Righteousness of Faith, Rom. 4:13. It is a Righteousness which is of Faith. Rom. 10:6. It is a Righteousness by Faith. Rom. 3:22; Phil. 3:9. i.e. It is a Righteousness which is to be received and embraced by Faith. You are not to be justified by your works, but believe and you shall be justified.

4. It is a Righteousness that cannot be lost; if it be once imputed, it shall never be revoked. Adams Righteousness was perfect, it wanted nothing that should be found in him; but it was mutable, it was righteousness that might be lost, that was lost. Would you count yourself happy if you were in your first estate, if you were in your Primitive condition? Why? Though in many respects our condition is worse, yet in some respects our condition is better; as,

That the Righteousness that is really ours by imputation, is more excellent than Adams, as Christ is more excellent than Adam.

And that this Righteousness is permanent; it is lasting Righteousness; Death, nor Men, nor Devils, cannot rob us, spoil us of it. And God will not so far forsake his, that by their sin they should be deprived of it. When you die, you must put off this body, but not this garment of Christ Righteousness; you shall not appear naked before God's tribunal.

5. It is a Righteousness that shall make you appear without spot, or wrinkle, or blemish, or any such thing. You now complain of the many blemishes in your Soul; of your spots and imperfections, but being clothed with this Righteousness; you shall be presented unto God without any such thing.

Sixthly, When you look upon yourself as a dying Man, will not this delight your Soul, that death comes peaceably to you; that it comes without a sting? You may see some smiles in the face of death itself; for death is to a Man, as God is; if God be a Mans enemy, so is death. If God be a Mans friend, so is death. Out of the eater comes forth meat; death eats up all mankind; and yet there is food in death for a believing Soul. Death is part of your Christian Charter. 1 Cor. 3:21,22. All things are yours, whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come. It is your

Chariot to wheel you away into everlasting glory. The outward marching's of death towards you, may be the same as to other men; it might come by the same disease, by the same Plague to you, as to a wicked man; but it is not really to you, as it is to the wicked. It is their real enemy, it stings them to death, it doth but lay you asleep; it is to them an out-let from their seeming happiness, and an in-let to their real misery; it is to you an out-let from your present trouble, and an in-let to your future happiness. Consider,

1. Is it not a mercy that God hath shortened the days of man upon earth? As it is the fruit and desert of sin, it is a punishment; but God doth turn it into mercy. If you should live longer, you would sin longer, and you would sorrow longer, and you would be afflicted longer; and are these so pleasing to you, that you would not die?

2. How would you go to Heaven, if you would not die? Must you not die, and so enter into glory? Would you have God to translate you, that you should not see death? But that is not the common road to Heaven. Be content to go the same way as others do, though it be dark and uncomfortable in itself, and be glad that by dying you may go to Heaven. Have you forfeited Heaven, and do you think much that you must die to take possession of it?

3. Though the entry and passage of death be dark, yet you have the light of God's countenance shining upon you; he is with you, he will not leave you at the gates of Death, but through them will bring you to the gates of life everlasting.

Seventhly, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your Soul, that God doth bear a special love unto you? That as he loved you from eternity, with a love of purpose to do you good; so now in Christ, he loveth you with a love of complacency and delight, and rejoiceth

over you to do you good. Oh, what Cordial like to the love of God in times of Plague, or Sickness, or Death! To be sick, and have God hate one, is the Sting of the Affliction. But what is Sickness, when Love is mixed with it, when indeed it doth proceed from Love! Will a God that loves you, do anything to hurt you? And will he that hath embraced you in his Arms, and engraven you upon the Palms of his Hands, be forgetful and unmindful of you, in time of Plague or Death? Can you forget your Children whom you love? And what is your love to yours; to God's love to you? It is little, short and scanty love, in comparison of his to you. Oh! Dwell upon the love of God, in the believing thoughts thereof, and tell me then, if it warm not your hearts in the sorest of Afflictions.

1. God's love to you is a free love, Hos. 14:14. I will love them freely. This will satisfy all your doubts about your own unworthiness, and about your own loathsomeness. Will God love a piece of breathing, creeping, living Clay, Dust, and Sin, molded and mingled together? God's love is free, in that there was no Motives nor attraction of his love.

First, There was nothing truly spiritually good in you, to move him to set his love upon you; there was enough in you, to have moved him to hate you: Your pride, your worldliness, your unbelief, might have made you the object of his hatred; but yet he hath freely loved you.

Secondly, There was no beauty nor comeliness in you to move him to set his love upon you. You had defaced the Image of God which was the beauty of your Soul, and yet he hath loved you.

Thirdly, You had no likeness in your heart to God, that should have moved him to love you. Likeness is a ground of love among men; but there was in you the greatest contrariety and dissimilitude unto God, and yet he hath loved you.

Fourthly, There was no love in you to God, and yet there was love in God to you; and did he love you when you had none of these, and will he not love you, when he hath himself wrought all these in your Souls? When he hath made you good, and comely, and like himself, and set your love upon himself; will he not now much more love you?

2. God's love to you, it is an everlasting and unchangeable love Your love is not always the same in degree and act to him, but his is always the same to you, though not always the same in the manifestations thereof unto your Souls. This love to you never did begin to be, and his love to you will never cease to be. Jer. 31:3; Joh. 13:1. The love of the Creature might be turned to hatred, but so will not the love of God.

3. God's love to you, is a matchless and unparalleled love. There is no love like it; there is no love equal to it. The natural love of Parents to their Children, will not equalize this love of God. The conjugal love betwixt Husband and Wife comes short of this love of God, who hath married you to himself. The moral love of a friend to his friend, is exceedingly disgraced by this love of God to those whom he hath taken into friendship with himself. Oh! Read and wonder at the love of God, when he hath loved you, as he hath loved his only begotten Son! Joh. 17:23. And hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

4. God's love to you, is manifest and undeniable love. Hath God given you such eminent demonstrations of his love unto you, and yet can you question his love? Hath God given his Son to die for you, and yet deny he loveth you? 1 Joh. 4:9. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him. Hath God sent his Spirit into your heart, and yet deny he loveth you? Hath God oftentimes come to you, when you were upon your

knees, and melted your hearts, and wiped your eyes, and comforted your Souls, and yet deny that he doth love you?

5. God's love to you, it was a seasonable love. He loved you in your low condition, when you stood in real need of the fruits of his love; he loved you then, when you must have perished and been damned, if he had not loved you. Ezek. 16:4-8. When you were in your blood, and were cast out to the loathing of your person, then God passed by and looked upon you, and behold, that time was the time of love. Did he love you when you were a sinner, and will he not love you when you are sick?

6. God's love to you, is a tender love. There are bowels of compassion in his love; what is the tenderness of your love to your Children, when they are sick? How do you pity them? How do you take care of them, and for them? Oh! How tender is the love of God to his people in their troubles? When you are sick, he will hold your head, and he will make your bed, and will comfort your heart.

Doth God love you with so great a love, and will he forsake you when you are sick, and come to die? Doth he in this manner love you, and will he deny anything unto you? If he denieth anything unto you, it will be such things, the denial whereof is consistent with his love; yea, it will be his love to deny them to you; or will you reply, Alas this is my fear, that God doth not love me! Could I but perceive his love, I could be comforted whatever doth befall me: If I should be sick, this would comfort me; if I come to die, this would comfort me. But how shall I know God's love to me? I answer, you may know God's love to you, by your love to him: You could never have loved God, if he had not first loved you. Your love to God, is a fruit and evidence of God's love to you, 1 Joh. 4:19. We love him, because he first loved us. Can you say you love him with a superlative love? That you

love him more than sin, self, and the World? Can you say, you love to be where God doth show himself unto his people, and are grieved at his absence, and do rejoice when he is present in your Souls? Are your desires after him so, that they cannot be satisfied till you do enjoy him? Do you long after communion with him, and look, and wait, and prepare for his appearance? Then may you assuredly conclude, that he doth love you; and is there no virtue in the love of God to support you, in the saddest time of the sorest sickness that you may be cast into? If you be sick, and God doth love you; if you come to die, and God doth love you, will not this fill your Soul with delighting joys? And make you to say, Though my affliction be great, yet God's love to me is greater, and my affliction is so much the less, by how much the more I perceive the love of God unto my Soul. Study then the love of God.

Eighthly, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your Soul, that the Comforter is with you? God himself will be with you in your affliction; he will stand by your Bedside, when you are sick; when you are in the fire of affliction, he will sit by the furnace; and the Spirit of God, whose work and office is to comfort them that are the Lord's, Joh. 14:16-18. you shall find him in your affliction to be.

1. An inward and effectual Comforter; he will comfort you indeed. Ministers may propound ground of comfort to you when you are sick, but this is but to the ear, and might be ineffectual: Doubts might still remain, but the Spirit of God will speak comfort to your heart; and rather than you should be comfortless, he will create comfort for you. Isa. 66:17. As one whom his mother comforteth, so I will comfort you, and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem. Ministers might comfort you, and you will not be



comforted; but when the Spirit of God will come to comfort you, you shall be comforted.

2. The Spirit of God will be to you a seasonable Comforter; he will bring suitable comforts into your Souls. If you lie under guilt, he will comfort you from the Merits of Christ, and the Mercy of God. If you be in sickness, he will comfort you against the fears of Death.

3. The Spirit of God he will be a present Comforter: When you are sick, all other comforters might be absent, or may on purpose absent themselves, that your heart may break, and your spirits sink under your griefs and sorrows: But this Comforter is always at hand. If you be mourning in your Closet, he is there; if you be upon a Bed of sickness, he is there.

4. The Spirit is an Everlasting Comforter. The comforts you fetch from the Creature, are fleeting and unstable comforts: Your outward comforts, and your outward comforters may both fail. Your Relations might now be comforters to you but they will die; but this Comforter remaineth, and will live forever,

5. The Spirit of God will bring in substantial and real comforts to your Souls, bottomed upon grounds of Truth and Verity. The way of the Spirit in comforting, is,

First, By bringing to your mind some promise of God, and so he layeth some foundation of your comfort. The promises are the Breasts of Consolation: When you are under guilt, he will bring to your mind some promise of a pardon: When you are under the fears of falling away, he will bring some promise of God, that you shall never depart from him. In time of affliction, that all things shall work together for your good.

Secondly, By enabling you to act Faith upon his promise, and to apply it to yourself; by helping you to say, Here is a promise of God, and this is

made to me, He will help you. Lean, and rest, and hope in a word of Promise, and that will comfort you.

Thirdly, By bearing witness with your Conscience, that you are specially related unto that, and that the things promised do belong to you; and by giving you some real inward taste and relish of the things that God hath promised to you.

Fourthly, By shedding abroad the love of God in your heart, by giving you a real sense and experimental feeling of the joys and comforts of the Holy Ghost. Rom. 5:5. The love of God is shed abroad into our hearts by the Holy Ghost that is given to us.

Ninthly, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your Soul, that you shall escape the torments of the damned? That though you must go down into the Grave, yet you shall not go down to Hell; the second Death shall have no power over you; if you must be reckoned among the dead, yet believing, you shall not be numbered amongst the damned. Death is terrible then, when Hell comes after it; when you are going towards your Grave, you are not going towards eternal darkness. And that you shall (if you do believe) escape damnation of Hell, is most certain.

1. In that Jesus Christ, your surety, hath satisfied God's Justice for you; he hath paid your debt; and God will not require it from him, and you too. He hath undergone what your sins did deserve.

2. In that he hath for this satisfaction of Christ, remitted your sins; and so the obligation that lay upon you to eternal torments, is removed.

3. In that God hath prevailed with you by his Spirit, to leave the broad way that leads unto damnation. He that walketh not in the way to Hell, shall

not come there. He hath taken down the dominion of sin, in a Believers heart; and when sin is not in dominion, it shall not bring damnation.

4. In that Satan, the Prince of Darkness, is dispossessed and turned out of your hearts. The Devil rules in them now, that shall be damned with him hereafter, but Christ hath come and bound him, and sealed a Lease of Ejectment to throw the Devil out of your heart. If the Devil could not keep you, when he had you in possession, he shall never bring you to damnation.

5. In that you are exempted from that condition to which the threatening's of damnation are made. God threatens the unbeliever, that he shall be damned, Mar. 16:16. But God hath given Faith to you: God threatens the Hypocrite with damnation, Matth. 24:51. but in the judgment of Charity, I believe your heart is upright and sincere towards God.

6. In that you come under the promise of Life and Glory. When you make out unto yourself the truth of your Faith, you will see the promise of Salvation belong unto you. Oh! What is sickness now, and what is death now, when you shall be delivered from the flames of Hell? It is not so much the stroke of Death, that makes many men so exceedingly fear it, as the dreadful after-clap in Hell. When a man looks upon himself as a Hell-deserving sinner, and cannot see his deliverance from it; and yet some secure sinners are not so much afraid of Hell, as the other are of the Grave. When you die (if you believe) you have God's infallible Word to secure your Soul, you shall not be damned, O let that comfort you!

Tenthly, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your Soul, that you are going home to your Father's House? There shall you see such sights as you never saw, and there shall you hear such praising's of God as you never heard; and there shall you have such joys as you never had. Can you think what a place it is you are going from, a place

of sin, a valley of tears, a world of sorrow and trouble; and what a place you are going to, and not be delighted in your nearness to it, when you come to die?

1. The very names of the place you are going to, should make you willing to be there.

First, Will you be loath to go and repose yourself in Abraham's bosom? Luke the sixteenth and the two and twentieth.

Secondly, Will you be unwilling to remove from a Cottage upon Earth, to a Paradise in Heaven? Luk. 23, and the 43rd.

Thirdly, Will you be unwilling to come out of your non-age and minority, to take possession of your inheritance among the Saints in life? Col. 1:12.

Fourthly, Shall it be said, that you are unwilling to have a Crown of Righteousness set upon your head? 2 Tim. 4:8.

Fifthly, Shall it be ever said, that you are unwilling to be possessed of an Everlasting Kingdom? 2 Pet. 1:11.

Sixthly, Will you be unwilling to go from weeping and mourning, to enter into your Masters joy? Matth. 25:21.

Seventhly, Will you be unwilling by Death to go into eternal life? Matth. 25:46.

Eighthly, Will you be unwilling to go into the new and heavenly Jerusalem? Heb. 12:22. Oh reason yourself out of this backwardness to leave this World, when you have a better place, Infinitely better, to be possessed of!

2. The properties of this place should make you willing to be dissolved, that you might be settled in it, as,

First, Heaven is a resting place; it is called Abraham's Bosom; and the Bosom is a place of Rest and Love. This is your place of work and labor;

here is various work for you to do, Civil and Religious; here you have praying work and heart-searching work to do; and humbling work, and sin-mortifying work to do. And these are the best of works and labors: But there are many others of far more inferior nature, which have nothing pleasant or delightful in them, but in the reference to your ultimate end. But you are going to your resting place, and you must not look for perfect rest, till you come thither. Your rest is not here, but it doth remain, Heb. 4:9. And is a man that hath plied his work, and been laborious all the day, loath to go to his Bed of Rest, when the night doth come?

Secondly, Heaven is a holy place, and nothing that is defiling or unclean, shall enter in thereto. Isa. 57:15; Rev. 21:27, and all that is there, is holy. The God that dwelleth there, is a holy God; and the Angels that are there, are holy Angels; and the Souls of Believers departed to that place, are holy Souls. Hell is a place where only unholy spirits are; Earth is a place of persons holy and unholy, but Heaven is the place where none but holy are. There are no Drunkards there; there are no rotten hearted Hypocrites there. This World is a place of sin; where you see your God is dishonored, your Lord's glory trampled under feet by the wicked and unholy; where you see his holy day profaned, and hear his holy name blasphemed. But when you are removed from hence, none of all this shall grieve your heart anymore; nor fill your Souls with sorrow, and your eyes with tears, as by the now beholding of the wicked conversation of unholy men.

Thirdly, Heaven it is an abiding place. Joh. 14:2. In my Father's house are many mansions, abiding places. Heb. 13:14. Here we have no continuing City, but we look for one that is to come. Heaven is a City that hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is the Lord; it is an eternal House, 2 Cor. 5:1.

Fourthly, Heaven is a large and spacious place. Capacious to receive all the elect of God, that shall live from the Creation to the Dissolution of the World.

Fifthly, Heaven is a well-furnished place; there is nothing wanting; all is there, because God in an special glorious manner is there. There is no need of meat and drink; there is no need of these outward things; there is no need of Sun or Moon, for the Lamb is the light thereof. Rev. 21:23. Nay, there needs no Ordinances there, nor Preaching there; no Sacraments there: There you will need none of all these. Rev. 21:22. And I saw no Temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the Temple of it.

Sixthly, Heaven is a glorious place. The Apostle sets it forth by the most excellent things in this World, though they come short of the glory of this place, Rev. 21:18-21. The glory of it far surpasseth the glory of the Sun in the greatest shine and luster. The glory of the Out-house is so great, that with steadfast eyes you cannot behold it. And what a darksome Dunghill doth this World seem to be, when your eyes have been dazzled with the glory of the Sun? But Oh! How would the excellency and glory of this World, vanish, disappear, and shrink up to nothing, if you had but once a view of this glorious place that is above.

Seventhly, Heaven is a privilege place. Many privileges the people of God enjoy in this life, that are great and precious privileges: But the privileges that are above are many, and all glorious privileges. Heaven is a privilege place, in regard,

1. Of the immunities from evil; from all evil of all sorts: As,

First, In Heaven you shall be free from the evil of sin. You shall there no more complain of your unbelieving, proud, and peevish heart; nor of your hard, and worldly sensual heart; nor of vain, distracting thoughts; nor of a

dull and stupid Soul. Oh how much better were it, if your work were done, to die and take possession of this place!

Secondly, You shall be free from all affliction upon your body. This is the fruit of sin; and when you shall sin no more, you shall be sick no more. There is no crying out in Heaven; Oh my aching head! Oh my pained Bowels! Oh my languishing body! There are (my Friends) no Plague sores above; no contagion nor infection there.

Thirdly, In Heaven you shall be free from the evil of Desertion: Get but thither, and God will never withdraw from you more; and so you shall never doubt more, nor be filled more with fears, that God doth not love your Soul, or that you do not love God; no apprehensions there of God's displeasure. Oh! Who would not pray much, and examine himself much, and deny himself much, that he may be received into this privilege place!

Fourthly, From the evil of temptation. The Devil crept into Paradise, but he shall not come to tempt in Heaven. He shall buffet you no more, nor molest you with his suggestions more. Oh tell me! Oh my Friend! If that will not be a privilege place, where the Devil cannot come, and when you shall be forever free from his assaults?

2. Heaven is a privilege place in regard of the good that shall be enjoyed there, above what in this World can be reached unto.

First, In Heaven you shall have perfection of Grace. Here you have but little, that makes you question sometimes, whether you have any or no. Now you love God but a little, and delight, and joy in him but a little; but in Heaven you shall have perfect love, and perfect joy, and perfect delight. There you shall love God, and do nothing else but love and praise, and admire him.

Secondly, In Heaven you shall have better company and society then on Earth: The spirits of just men made perfect.

Thirdly, You shall have communion with God and Christ, above what you ever had. Now your communion with God is little and inconstant, sometimes some warmth of heart in holy Prayer, and you lose the sense thereof. Again, you have had your heart quickened sometimes in a duty, and you grow dull again; but it will be constant and perpetual when you are possessed of this place. And who would think we did believe, that Heaven were such a place as this, that see how loath we are to go unto it? Oh how few have lively believing thoughts of this holy place, that work their hearts into a longing, breathing, panting after it!

Eleventhly, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your Soul, that Christ is in Heaven interceding for you? How do the people of God prize the Prayers of the Saints on Earth! And bespeak their Prayers for them in their sickness, and say to them that have an interest in God, Oh pray for me, Oh do not forget me, when you are upon your knees, at the Throne of Grace! And without doubt it is a singular privilege to have a share in the Prayers of the people of God. Prayers you have going for you, by them that know you, and your condition: Conscience of their duty, the love they bear unto you, the earnest desire after your temporal and eternal welfare, doth engage them to it: And by them that know you not, though not in particular, yet as an afflicted member of the Church of God. Col. 2:1. For I would that you knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh. But the greatest comfort is, that Christ at the right hand of God is making intercession for you. Did Christ suffer, and bleed, and die for you; and will he not intercede for you? Joh. 17:20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for



them also which shall believe on me through their word. And when you question, whether God will hear your own Prayers for yourself, yet you hope, the Prayers of others may prevail on your behalf. But if you question, whether God will hear the Prayers of his people for you, yet can you doubt, whether the intercession of Christ shall be effectual on your behalf, when you hear Christ giving thanks to God, when he was upon the Earth in the estate of Humiliation, that he heard him always? Would it comfort you, if Christ were by your Beside, praying for you in the time of sickness? And is it not as great a comfort, when he does it in Heaven? His heart is the same towards his people now he is in Heaven, as it was when he was upon the Earth. When you are dying, believe that Christ is praying for you, and be comforted.

Twelfthly, When you look upon yourself as a dying man, will not this delight your Soul, that the holy Angels of God are present with you to conduct it into the place of Rest and Joy? They are Ministering Spirits for your good, while you live: And they will attend your Soul for good, when you come to die. The damned Devils, and the cursed Fiends of Hell, are watching for the departing Soul of a wicked man. Luk. 12:20. Thou fool, this night shall thy Soul be required of thee: Or you may read it, Do they (that is, the Devils) require thy Soul. But the Blessed Angels of God are waiting to transport you into your Fathers presence.

But perhaps you will reply, If Christ would come and take you as you are, without the disuniting of Body and Soul, you could be willing; but that you must die before you go into this place, this is that which troubles you, to leave your Body in the dust, to put it off, and have it rot in a cold and darksome Grave.

1. And will you not be willing to go unto this blessed place of Joy, and Peace, and Rest, but upon your own terms? And will you indeed prescribe to God, and capitulate with him, when you might and should have died eternally, except his Mercy had been extended to you? And will you think it hard measure by temporal death to go into eternal life?

2. Your Body is not lost, but shall be raised again, and be really and eternally partaker of the joys and happiness of another World. Do not you yourself cast your Corn into the Ground to die, that it may be quickened with advantage?

3. Fix your eye more upon the place where your Soul shall rest, and be presently, and immediately happy, then pore so much upon the Grave where your Body must be laid. And if it be late before your Body shall be there, yet your Soul shall be there forthwith, after it is disunited from the Body.

4. Hath it not been the way that Divine Wisdom hath proceeded in from the beginning, except a few that shall be found alive at the coming of the Lord, and such that have been translated from this Earth? Is your Body better than the Body of David, or Abraham, or Paul, that you are so nice of it, above the rest of God's eminent Saints? Oh my Friends! If God will take you to himself, judge it infinite Mercy, though it be by Death, and the dissolution of the Body and the Soul. And think not that Messenger to be too harsh that comes from God, to open the door to let you in to his glorious Kingdom, where you shall be forever with your Lord.

## *PT. III. A Corrosive for Wicked Men in Dying Times.*

**D**ying Sinners,

Is death raging, and are you yet in your sins? Are you in danger of the Grave, and your Peace not made with God? Is Death dragging sinners to the Bar of God; and haling them into another World, and are you a Swearer still? And a Drunkard still? Are you a Worldling and a Sensualist still? What do you dare to be wicked, when Death looks you in the face, and doth compass you about on every side? And yet can you eat, and drink, and sleep, and do not know but the Plague may seize upon you before the morning? Oh! How hard is your heart! Oh! What security and searedness of Conscience is this, that neither the Word of God doth awaken you, nor the dreadful Judgment of the Plague doth alarm you out of this desperate Stupidity! God hath told you by his Word, that sin was offensive to him, and now men feel it by his rod. You have heard that Sin would provoke the pure eyes of a jealous holy God; and now you see it, and will not you be awakened till death arrest you, and the Devil fetch you? And will you go Hoodwinked into torments, and not perceive whether you are going, till you

be there, from whence there is no coming back? Oh! What cause have you to admire the patience of God to you, that you were not the first that died in this Visitation; and how might you fear that you might fall before the last! God might have made you a warning unto others, whereas he hath made others a warning unto you. Doth God strike your neighbors dead round about you, and do you not tremble at the stroke? Nay, is it come into your House? And you not got the reigning power of sin out of your heart? Oh! That this patience of God might lead you to Repentance! And his long suffering might conduce unto your Salvation! Oh! That you did but know how great a mercy it is to be spared but a week in such a time as this! Justice would have cut you down at first, but Mercy stepped betwixt you and Justice. Wrath would have fell upon you, and have slaughtered you amongst the rest, but Patience interposeth; Lord, let him alone one week or fortnight longer, and if he will not turn, let him die then; if he will not leave his sin, let him be damned then; but try one week more; And it may be that your week is almost out. Oh! For God's sake and for your Souls sake, as ever you would die with comfort, as ever you would look God in the face with comfort, as ever you would escape the damnation of Hell, I beseech you, as on my knees, that you would go aside an hour or two, and consider with yourself what you have been doing; How you have lived; And what your state and condition is. Dye you must, and be damned you must, if you do not speedily, really turn to God. Oh! Methinks what a pity it is that your Souls must go to Hell. That you should be separated from the glorious presence of a blessed God. Oh! How do I fear, I shall hear of your Death, before I shall hear of your spiritual birth! Every letter that I open from my friends, I fear I should hear of the Death of some that were not fit to die. And this will be grief indeed to consider a drunkard is gone down to the

grave, and his soul to Hell: Such a one that lived in the neglect of known duties, that was not used to pray with his Wife and Children, is dead and gone. As yet you are alive, as yet you have a space (though it may be but a short space) to repent and turn to God: Oh! Do not delay, you have put it off long enough already, even till you are almost entering into another World; delay but one week more, delay but one day more, and it may be you shall have no more. How know you (especially in such a time as this) that if you do not repent today, God might say, You shall not repent tomorrow. Oh! Will you have no care of your precious soul? Will you not forsake your sin to save your soul? Will you not weep and mourn upon Earth, to prevent your everlasting howling among the damned? Shall entreat so much at your hands (as it is for the good of your own soul) that you would retire for an hour or two; and seriously weigh the sad and deplorable condition you are in, if you should fall by the Plague in your unconverted state. Consider,

I. By nature you are a miserable man, because you are by Nature a lost man; that if you die in this condition, you are undone forever; till you see yourself lost, you will not value Christ, nor be sensible of God's wrath, nor truly desirous of his mercy. That you are lost by Nature, is apparent; for,

1. You have lost your chiefest happiness which is God; and what loss is this, to lose a gracious God, to lose a merciful and an all-sufficient God! For a man in misery to lose a merciful God, and to find a just God; to lose a gracious God, and find him angry; can that man be happy that loseth God. Better you had lost your riches, your enjoyments, your life, then your God.

2. You have by Nature lost the Image of God, which was your beauty and your excellency; original righteousness was lost; and original sin follows in the room thereof. The Image of God made man the best of the creation in this lower World; and sin hath made him (as a sinner) worse than the beast

that perisheth, then a toad or serpent. Your understanding now is dark and blind, your will is stubborn and rebellious, your affections are turned from God, and set upon the World, and sin, and vanity. You hate what you should love, and love what you should hate.

3. You have lost your Soul; and what will you get and keep if you lose your Soul? The loss of the soul is a dreadful loss, because the soul is a precious soul. By how much the more a thing is better, by so much the more the loss is dreadful, and the greater loss. Consider here, it is the loss,

First, Of your own Soul; to be instrumental to undo another man's soul, is to be (so far) exceeding wicked, but to lose your own, is to be cruel to yourself. Whose soul will you be careful of, if not your own?

Secondly, It is the loss of your only soul. You have but one reasonable soul to lose; and if you lose that, you lose all. God hath given you two eyes, and two hands, and other things by pairs, that if you lose one, you might have the benefit of another but have you but one soul, and will you lose that.

Thirdly, It is the loss of your immortal soul; to lose something temporal might be but a temporary loss; but to lose your soul, that must live forever, is an aggravation of your loss.

Fourthly, It is the eternal loss of your immortal soul; if you lose it finally, you lose it irrecoverably. If you had lost an estate, you might recover it again; if you had lost your credit, or reputation, you might have recovered it again; but the final loss of your soul is an irreparable loss.

Fifthly, It is a self-procured loss. You lose your soul; and this is the fruit of your sin, of your neglect of duty, of your pride and worldliness; it is the fruits of your swearing and drunkenness; you lose your soul for a lust for

the pleasing of the flesh; you lose your better part for the pleasing that part this is fleshly and brutish.

Sixthly, It might have been a prevented loss; you might have prevented it by your timely and serious turning unto God, by your closing with and accepting of the Lord Jesus for your Lord and Savior; and what do you gain by your pleasures, if you lose your soul by them? What do you gain by your riches, if you lose your soul for them? Matth. 16:26. For 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? Cast up your account, the total sum will amount to nothing.

4. You are by Nature lost; for as much as you have lost your way to Heaven, and eternal happiness; you are gone out of the way, and cannot return into it; drunkenness is not your way to Heaven, and neglect of duty is not the way to eternal glory.

5. You have lost the end for which you were created; your end was to glorify God, but you do nothing else by all your actions but dishonor him.

6. You have lost the sense of your lost condition; else can you be so quiet and merry, when you are a lost man would not the loss of outward things, seize more on your spirit, and make a deeper impression upon your heart. But that you may be sensible of your condition while you are lost,

First, Consider that your sins will find you out, if Christ doth not find you, your iniquities will. Num. 32:23. But if you will not do so, behold you have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out. God commands you to be holy, God commands you to leave your wickedness; but you will not do so; behold you have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin shall find you out. You might have some secret hopes that

though you sin, you might escape: But the Holy Ghost doth say (Be sure) as sure as you sin, so surely shall your sins find you out.

Secondly, an accusing Conscience will find you out. Though it might be long that Conscience may sleep, yet God will certainly awaken Conscience; and it shall fill you, sooner or later, here or in Hell, with gripes, and horrors, and amazing accusations. Conscience once will tell you, that you were fearless of God, and careless of your Souls, and regardless of your everlasting state.

Thirdly, Death will find you out: Can you hide yourself from Death, though you may hide your sins from men? Where can you live, or what food will you feed upon, that Death shall not find you? And who can express your misery, if Death find you while your are lost? You may say to Death, as Ahab to the Prophet. 1 King. 21:20. Haste thou found me, O mine enemy! And Death shall reply to you, as the Prophet did to him, I have found thee. I have found thee in thy sin, I have found thee in thy rebellion against the God of Heaven; now come away unto the Impartial Tribunal of a provoked God.

Fourthly, The Devils shall find you out. Death shall find you to hale you out of this World, and the Devils shall find you after Death to drag you down to eternal woe. Every Soul is found, either by Christ while he lives, or by Devils when he dies.

Fifthly, The revenging Justice of an angry God shall find you out. When Adam was lost, he would have hid himself from God; but God did find him out. When Justice shall come and say, Sinner, where art thou? Drunkard, Swearer, where art thou? Oh! Thou neglecter of duty, where art thou? If Mercy find you, it will be well; but if Justice, woe be to you.



Sixthly, You yourself shall find one day, that you were lost, and were not found; and what will you do, when you find yourself eternally lost? Then you will wish, Oh! That I could once more lose myself; so lose myself, that torment might not find me; so lose my very Being, that I might not be always found in these eternal flames! Oh! Can you read these lines, and make light of a lost condition? Will you have no Mercy on yourself? Will you shut up all Bowels of Compassion against your own lost, eternally lost, and precious Soul?

But it may be you will throw all this by, as that which doth not much concern you, if at all, because you hope, this is not your case. You may think I do proceed upon a false supposition; Suppose you to be lost, and then terrify and affright you. I pray God I were mistaken; better I mistaken, and think you lost, when you are recovered, then you mistake and think you are recovered when you are lost. But I beseech you, cast not these lines aside, till you have searched and made enquiry, whether you are lost indeed, or no. And that you may be convinced, that you are a lost Soul, take these symptoms of one that is lost.

1. If Christ be not found in your heart, you are yet in a lost condition. And was ever Christ found in any heart, when reigning sin was found? Did Christ ever dwell at the same time in that heart where sin doth rule? Sin did undo you, but Christ must recover you.

2. Where there is no saving knowledge in the understanding, there the sinner is lost; they are near to Hell, and do not see it; they are near to damnation, and do not perceive it. A blind sinner, is a lost sinner.

3. Where there is not a voluntary choice of God for the sinner's chiefest treasure, there the sinner is yet lost. Doth not your Conscience tell you, you

had rather have your sins and lusts? Do not you find your will is bent against Christ, and his holy ways?

4. Where there is no hungering and thirsting after Christ; where the Soul can be content with pleasures and profits of this World without Christ; where there is no unsatisfying desires after communion with God, there the Soul is in a lost condition.

5. Where there is no sorrow found for sin as sin, as against a good and gracious God. Where there is not found a self-loathing and abhorrency of yourself for sin. Where there is not found a universal, implacable hatred unto sin, working in the Soul a peremptory and effectual resolution to forsake all sin; there the sinner is undoubtedly a lost man.

6. Where is no delight in God to be found; you can delight in the Creature, and delight in your sinful sports; but the thoughts of God are seldom in your mind: And when they are, they be irksome, and unpleasing thoughts; you had rather be thinking upon something else.

7. In whom there is found no care to live to God, and to honor him, and to make him his ultimate end: In whom there is no care to get sin mortified; nay, if it be not your first, and main, and principal care to walk with God, I tell you, you are as yet a lost man. Whether Mercy will seek you out before you die, I cannot tell; but yet you are undone. Oh stay here before you read any further, and ask yourself whether it be so with you, or no. Do not deceive yourself, be faithful to your own Soul. Can you say it is so with you? What meaneth then that ignorance and blindness that is yet in you? What meaneth then the hardness of your heart, that you can mourn for outward losses, but not for the loss of God, and Heaven, and your Soul? If you would but see, and be persuaded that you are lost; it would give some hopes that you may recover. If you saw you were lost, you would seriously

ask after Christ: You would make it your primary, constant business, to get an interest in Christ; and cry out in the anguish and bitterness of your Soul, I am lost, I am undone. What shall I do to be saved?

II. By nature you are a dead Man. You are dead before you die; under the power of a spiritual death, before you come under the sting of Natural death. You are dead in Law; the sentence of Death is passed upon you, Gen. 2:17. In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death. You are dead by the Gospel Sentence; you are a condemned man by the Word of the Gospel, Joh. 3:18. He that believeth not, is condemned already. He is in danger of damnation; he is as sure to be damned (dying so) as if he were in Hell already. The symptoms of a dead man, are upon everyone in a natural condition. As,

1. Total insensibility, is a sign of deadness. A dead man, First, Cannot taste any relish in the sweetest dainties.

Secondly, Cannot see any excellency in the most beautiful objects.

Thirdly, Cannot hear the loudest cries, nor be delighted with the most melodious harmony.

Fourthly, Cannot feel the greatest weights and loads that you might cast upon him.

Fifthly, Cannot smell the most odoriferous perfumes. As it is with a dead man natural in natural things; so it is with a man spiritually dead in things spiritual. And though you have not the Life of Grace to be delivered from this Death, yet you have the Life of Reason; and as you are a man, you might consider and weigh the Truths of God, and he might by them quicken you and raise you unto life. Oh doth not this convince you, that there is no Spiritual Life in your Soul! For,

First, A man spiritually dead, hath not an experimental relish of the things of God. There is sweetness in a promise; but did you experimentally taste it? There is infinite goodness and grace in God; but did you ever taste that God was good? Is not Prayer a sapless thing, and a Promise a sapless thing unto your Soul? You might perhaps taste the good Word of God, and the power of the World to come; as a man would taste a thing he would spit forth again; but not as a man doth taste that also he doth digest, and live upon the food he tasteth.

Secondly, A man spiritually dead, doth see no beauty nor excellency in the most glorious objects, any farther than a speculative knowledge amounts unto. He cannot see God and Christ with a transforming view, to make him like to God and Christ. When he hears others speak of the excellency of Christ, he is ready to cry out, What is your beloved more than another beloved? Cant. 5:9. And when we see him, there is no beauty in him that we should desire him. Isa. 53:2. If it be so with you, you are a dead man.

Thirdly, A man spiritually dead, cannot hear, that is, obey the loudest calls of Christ in the Gospel: God hath called long and loud, but you have not hearkened; your heart and ear is uncircumcised; you have turned the deaf ear to all God's calls. God hath called aloud unto you by his Word, to turn unto him, but you have not hearkened to his call, nor turned to him. God hath called you by his Mercies, but you have not heard him: What hath been the voice of every Mercy you have received, but that you should turn unto the God of Mercy? But you have not turned. God doth speak and call aloud unto you by his Judgments, but you are deaf unto his call, and still you are the same that you were before: It is because you are a dead man.

Fourthly, A spiritually dead man cannot feel the heavy loads that lie upon his Soul. He feeleth not the weight and burden of his sin; he feeleth not the

loads of guilt that are upon his Soul; he is not sensible of the Spiritual Plagues that lie upon his Soul, nor the heavy Wrath of God that hangs hovering over his head. Is it so with you? Then you are a dead man.

Fifthly, A man spiritually dead, cannot have a savor of the sweetest perfumes there is in Gospel Truths. When the Alabaster Box of a holy Promise is broken open, and sendeth forth a sweet smell, a man that is spiritually alive may perceive it, because he hath his Senses exercised about things that differ.

2. Universal constant coldness, is a sign of a dead man. When he is cold within and without; Cold at the very heart; is it not so with you? Have not you cold affections? Is not your love cold towards God, when it burns towards the World? Are not your desires cold after Christ, when they are inflamed after your lusts and sins? Your very heart is cold towards God; it is because you are a dead man.

3. A dead man cannot speak nor cry out, because he is under the power of Death. He cannot so much as sigh and groan, because he is deprived of life. A man spiritually dead, cannot pray to God; he might say a Prayer, but he cannot pray. He is none of God's Family, God hath no dumb Children in his Family; when he doth complain, his complaints arise from natural, not from spiritual principles. It is the cry of a distressed man, not of a man renewed; it is for some natural good not for spiritual.

4. A universal loss of appetite, is a sign of a dead man. A man that is sick, hath an appetite to something or other that is suitable to remove hunger or thirst. No appetite, no life. Oh! How is it with you? Have you no hungering's after Christ? No thirsting's after God? No appetite to the Word and Ordinances? Or if you have, is it such as cannot be satisfied without something suitable to your Souls? Will you think that man is pinched with

hunger, that can be satisfied with pleasure? That he is truly thirsty, that can take up with Lands and Houses, without something to allay his thirst? Can you believe you hunger after Christ, when riches will serve your turn without Christ? That you thirst after God and Grace, when you take up with the pleasures of the World, without God and Grace? You are, I tell you, a dead man.

5. Universal absence of motion, is a sign of a dead man. You might call him, but he cannot come; you might invite him, but he cannot stir: When a living man is in a swoon, yet there is some kind of motion; his Pulse doth beat, though weakly; and his heart doth move within his breast: If a man spiritually alive, shall fall into a swoon, yet his heart doth breathe and pant after God; but if you have no spiritual motion, no beating of the Pulse towards God, it is a sign you are a dead man. And if you are a dead man (except you be made alive before you die) you will be a damned man. Spiritual Death is but the same with Eternal Death, only it differeth in degrees; As Spiritual Life, is Eternal Life, and only differeth in degrees. Are you dead? Oh! What wonder God hath not buried your dead Soul in the Grave of Hell! God might have said to Death and Devils, Go bury yonder dead Soul out of my sight: And do you know your misery while you are under this Spiritual Death? No; you know not, nor you cannot while you are a dead man. A dead man doth not know the excellencies of that life Death hath deprived him of: But let me tell you while you are dead, you are a stranger to the Life of Justification; to the Life of Sanctification; to the Life of Glory: You are a stranger to the Life of Grace, which is the highest Life, a Rational Creature is capable of. There is a Life of Vegetation, as in Plants; but there is a higher life than this, the Life of Sense in Beasts. And there is a Life that is higher than a Life of Sense, and that is the Life of Reason in a

Man; and there is a Life that is higher than this, and that is a Life of Grace, which is the same in kind with the Life of Glory. And higher than this you cannot go; no higher Life that the reasonable Creature is capable of but this. A man dead in sin, doth not know; you are a stranger to the sweetest life, to the most comfortable life, to the most profitable life, to the safest life, and to the longest life. This is the life of Christians, whom God hath raised from the Death of Sin. Oh that now you would sit down a while, and seriously consider, what a life it is that you have all this while led. Though I write to dead men, yet I have some hopes, that that Power that goes along with the Truths of God, which are Life, and do give life, may quicken your heart: And he that by his Word to a dead Lazarus, did bring him out of his Grave, may also by his Word raise you from the Grave of Sin.

III. A man in his Natural condition, is an Accursed Man: Abhorred and detested by the God of Heaven. Blessedness is the natural desire of every man; but the Natural man must not be blessed. Josh. 9:23. Now therefore you are cursed. You are cursed now, and shall be pronounced to be a cursed man at the day of Judgment, by the mouth of Christ himself, Matth. 25:41. who did become a curse for his people, that they might have a blessing now, and might be pronounced to be a blessed people at the day of Judgment, Matth. 25:34. You are cursed of the Lord, Psal. 37:22. They that be cursed of him, shall be cut off; and they must be cursed indeed, whom the Lord doth curse. You are cursed before the Lord, 1 Sam. 26:19. Cursed be they before the Lord. For the Lord's sake, and for your Souls sake, lay to heart your dreadful estate, while you are in your Natural condition: Consider,

1. You are under Temporal curses: You are cursed in your Body, you are cursed in your Estate. If it be taken from you, it is with a curse; if it be given to you, it is with a curse. You are cursed in your goings out, and in

your comings in; you are cursed in your eating and drinking. You are cursed when you lie down at night; and can you lie down to sleep with the curse of God upon you? (Oh cursed sleeper!) And you are cursed when you rise up. You are cursed in your Children, and cursed in your Trade. In all you are, in all you have, in all you put your hand to do. It is the Word from the Mouth of the Lord, Read and tremble, Deut. 28:15-20, &c.

2. You are all that while under Spiritual curses, and they are sorer then the former. Your Soul is a cursed Soul; you are under the curse of a hard heart, of a reprobate mind, of a seared conscience. These curses you are not sensible of; and your unsensibleness of these curses, is not the smallest curse that is upon you.

3. You shall (if you die so) be eternally accursed. Cursed upon Earth, and cursed in Hell. Cursed in this life, and cursed in the life to come, with a curse that never shall be taken off, that never shall be turned into a Blessing. Oh that such that have frequent curses in their mouths, would consider the curses that lie upon their Souls! Nay, you sinners shall be so accursed, that you shall in the anguish of your hearts, curse yourselves. Many do it now, and they shall do it hereafter. You shall curse yourselves that would not believe in Christ; that would not be warned of the wrath to come. Oh, lay this to heart; if you live and die in a Natural Condition, you live and die a cursed wretch! Oh excuse me for my plainness, I am writing now to dying sinners; and would you have me smooth you now, and tell you, You are blessed and to contract the guilt of your blood upon my own Soul, and have you curse me, when you are in Hell, for my daubing with untempered Morter!

IV. A man in his Natural Condition, is in daily danger of Damnation. You hang over the mouth of Hell by the single thread of a frail life; which if the



Plague or Death by any disease snap asunder, you are lost irrecoverably. When you walk the streets in this time of Plague, you are in danger of Death; and there is nothing but Death betwixt you and great Damnation. Oh dreadful! Are you at the brink of Hell, and not see it? At the very borders of the Lake of Brimstone, and not tremble? Almost within the hearing of the shrieking's and lamentations, and bitter groans of damned Souls, and yet secure? Tell me, I beseech you, in the fear of God, what security have you, that you shall not be damned before tomorrow? Tell me, where is the Word of Promise in all the Book of God, that you can rightly infer your safety from Damnation one hour longer? Oh! What is the matter, that you sleep securely, and eat and drink securely, when your danger is past telling how great it is? If you were careless of your Souls in times of health, yet methinks you should not now in these times of great Mortality. Oh stay here, and read no further, till you have duly weighed your present danger; and reason with yourself, Do I eat in danger of Damnation, and are my morsels then so sweet unto my taste? Do I sleep in danger of Damnation, and yet not dream I am going to it? If it be thus, I charge you in the Name of God, that you would not rest in this condition.

V. This is the misery of a Man in his Natural Condition, that he is under the power of reigning sin. This is your sin, that sin doth reign in you; and that which is your sin, is also part of your Misery. This I know is pleasing to the flesh, that sin doth reign. Corrupt Nature looks upon the reign and yoke of Christ as heavy and intolerable; but that which wicked men falsely suppose concerning the rule of Christ, is most true of the dominion of sin. For,

1. You are under the power of that, whose commands are always unlawful. If your lust command you to fulfil it, that command is unlawful:

If it doth command you to omit your duty, it is an unlawful command. The commands of sin are directly contrary to the commands of God, and therefore unlawful; and therefore greatest bondage to be subject to them.

2. You are under the power of that, whose commands are always cruel. There is no less then murder, then Soul-murder, that the commands of sin do put you to. When your lust doth bid you to sin, what is it but interpretatively to kill yourself, murder your Soul, deprive yourself of eternal life, and expose yourself to endless woe?

3. You are under the power of that, whose commands are contrary one to another. There is an opposition in all sin to Grace, and God, and Christ; there is a holy harmony and correspondence between the Graces of the Spirit; there is a blessed consistency between the commands of God, but there are downright contradictions in the commands of sin. Prodigality commands you one thing, and Covetousness the quite contrary. One Lust pulleth the sinner one way, and another Lust draggeth the sinner another way. One Lust saith, Satisfy me; another, satisfy me. Oh cursed thralldom!

4. You are under the power of that, which is a thousand times worse than all the evils in the World, if you put them altogether. Sin is worse than Poverty, Disgrace, Leprosy, Plagues, and Death itself. Nay, to be under the power of sin, is worse than to be under the torments of Hell, as they be inflicted by God. For there is goodness, because Justice in the torments of Hell; it is Punitive Justice; but in sin there is nothing good, all sin is evil. Sin might be turned accidentally, through the over-ruling Providence of God, to the good of God's Children, but it cannot be turned into good. You do look upon it as a great affliction to be visited by the Plague, and so it is; but yet to be under the power of sin, is to be under the power of that that is worse than the Plague. And that,

First, In regard of the subject which it doth adhere unto; and that is the Soul. The Plague seizeth only upon the Body, sin upon the Soul. You might have a Plague upon your Body, and none upon your Soul. Sin is a Soul-Plague, it seizeth upon the very vitals.

Secondly, Sin is worse than the Plague, in regard of the effects that it doth produce in the Soul that is the subject of it; as,

1. Sin doth defile the soul, and so cannot the Plague. When the Plague is upon the body, there might be purity on the soul. Now sin is worse in its defiling nature, then the Plague. (1) Sin doth defile in a moment. As soon as sin did enter into the Angels, it did defile them; as soon as sin did enter into Adam, it did defile him. (2.) Sin doth defile in an invisible manner. (3.) Sin doth defile eternally, except it be washed out by the blood of Christ; and so doth not the Plague.

2. Sin it doth deform the soul more than the Plague doth the body. Sin is a spot, but not a beauty spot; it takes away the comeliness of the soul. Grace might adorn the soul, when the Plague is upon the body, but sin strips it of its ornaments.

3. Sin is more spreading, and more infecting than the Plague, and that in two respects.

First, It spreads more from one unto another, then the Plague doth; the sin of Adam spreads over all mankind, and defileth all.

Secondly, In regard of the parts of the same sinner; there may be Plague sores in one part, and not in another. But sins spreads over the whole man, the faculties of the Soul; it infects the Understanding; it infects the Will; it infects the Affections, the Conscience, the Memory the Fantasie, and all the Members of the Body; it infects the Eye, the Ear, the Tongue, no part free.

4. Sin is more killing than the Plague, it doth certainly kill soul and body both. But the Plague but one. The Plague can but separate betwixt soul and body; but sin doth separate betwixt the soul and God. The Plague might send the body to the grave, but not the soul to Hell, but sin doth. The Plague may drive you out of this World, but sin doth bar you; out of Heaven.

5. Sin is not so easily Antidoted as the Plague, nor so easily cured when it seizeth upon the sinner. Antidotes for the Plague may be made of things in Nature, but an Antidote against sin must be supernatural. The Plague may be healed by the skill of men, but the soul cannot be healed of his sins, but by the power of Christ: Things that are mean may heal the Plague, but nothing but the blood of Christ can heal the sores that sin maketh in the soul.

6. Sin makes a man more loathsome unto God, then the Plague doth. A man might die of the Plague, and yet God might love him; but if he die in sin, God's soul shall abhor him. Oh! That is not so bad that might befall you, and yet God might love you; but that is worst of all, which makes you so loathsome in the sight of God. No man is so loathsome to man, when he hath his Plague sores running, as a sinner in the sores, and wounds, and ulcers made in his soul by sin in the eyes of God. Why then are you so sensible of the Plague, and not so sensible of your sins. Would it be a real trouble to you, if you were sick of the Plague; and will you make so light of it, to be under the power of sin. I tell you a godly man would not change Plagues with you; the Plague that may befall his body, and the Plague of sin that is upon your soul.

VI. A man in his natural condition hath no interest in the promises of God. For God's promises of Pardon, and of Heaven, are made to such that have these qualifications wrought in their souls by the spirit of God, which

unconverted men have not. The promise of Pardon is made to sinners upon condition of repentance; the promise of Salvation is made upon condition of Faith in Christ. But unconverted sinners have neither repentance for sin, nor Faith in Christ. If you see yourself guilty, you have no actual interest in a promise that you shall be pardoned. If you should see yourself in misery by reason of your sin, you can find no promise that you have actual interest in that you shall obtain mercy. If you feel yourself a dying man, and lay sick of the Plague, and were at the point of death, while you are unconverted, you have no promise that he will receive your soul to happiness; threatening you have enough; threatening's of judgments, threatening's of damnation; and all these belong to you in your non-conversion Oh! To be a dying man, and not to have one promise belong unto him, would terrify a departing soul.

VII. A man that is in his natural condition hath no hope; how should he, when he hath no promise; Promises of God are assurances unto his people; they build their hopes on a promise made in Christ. The wicked do flatter themselves with false hopes of Heaven; and so did thousands once that are now in Hell. How many are now in utter darkness, in the burning lake, that would never be beaten out of their hopes of Heaven, till they lost Heaven, and Soul, and Hope, and altogether? You cannot have a lively hope in a dead heart; you cannot have a purifying hope in a filthy soul. Oh consider! What will you do, when you come to be sick and die, and no hopes of Heaven! It is a saddening sight to see a hopeless man go out of this present World. Methinks when they have no hope, their hearts should break. When you are sick, how doth it strike unto your heart, if the Physician tells you, there is no hopes of life for you, when yet he may be deceived? How much more should it terrify you when you come to die, and you are told from the

infallible word of God, that dying unconverted, you have no hope of eternal life? How Lord! Must a man die without Hope? Must he go out of the World with no hope, or a false hope? Both is sad. If without hope, he dies uncomfortably; if with a false hope, he dies miserably, because he shall be damned eternally. Oh! If you could see the soul of a man that died with false hopes of Heaven one moment after death, or if you could have converse with such a Soul; what a dreadful horror hath surprised it, that but now was confident he should be saved, and now doth find he must be damned. Oh! Think of this.

VIII. A man in his Natural condition shall have no gracious audience of his Prayers; no, not in his worst condition, nor in his sorest affliction: Nay, in his great distress, his praying shall be but howling in the ears of God. Hos. 7:14. And they have not cried unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their Beds. Then God may bid you in your distress, go to your Lusts, and let them help you; go now unto the World, and let it relieve you. It is dreadful not to have a God in Christ to go unto by Prayer, in Affliction, and at Death If you lie a dying in your Natural condition, and pray for pardon of sin, God will not hear you. If you lie a dying, and pray for Heaven in an unregenerate estate, though it may be the last Prayer you are to make, God will not hear you. And that,

1. Because you cannot pray in the Name of Christ. No wicked man can pray in Christ's Name; which is not only to use the words, Oh Lord Do this for me, for Jesus sake; but to rest and rely upon the Merits of Christ for audience and acceptance: Which no wicked man can do.

2. Because you cannot in an unregenerate estate pray in Faith; and without Faith, your Prayers cannot please God. Faith is a necessary ingredient to an

acceptable and prevailing Prayer, Jam. 1:6,7. But let him ask in Faith, else let not that man think he shall receive anything of the Lord.

3. Because an unregenerate Man cannot pray for anything for a right end. Not for Grace, for a right end: Without Grace, no man can pray aright for Grace. He may pray, that he may be delivered from Hell and Misery, which is selfish, and not that he may be like to God, and bring glory to him, Jam. 4:3. You ask, and have not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it on your Lust.

4. Because God will not hear the Prayer of that man that regardeth iniquity in his heart. Psal. 66:18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my Prayer. And a wicked man regards nothing else in his heart, more than sin. He hath more regard to sin, then unto God; and will you choose that condition, in which God will not hear your Prayers? Nay, in which your Prayers will be an abomination unto God? Prov. 15:8.

IX. This is the misery of an unregenerate Man. That all the actions of his life, are so many sins.

1. All his Natural Actions are as so many sins; his speaking, is sin; his sleeping, is sin; his eating and drinking, is sin.

2. All his Civil Actions are so many sins, all his buying and selling, is sin; his ploughing and sowing, is sin, Prov. 21:4.

3. All his Religious Actions are so many sins; his praying and hearing are sins; his receiving and talking of God are sins. If he do not pray, he sins; if he do, he sinneth; so that he is in a necessity of sinning. And Oh! What a catalogue of sins is there to be produced at the day of Judgment? When so many words, so many sins; so many thoughts, so many sins; so many actions, still so many sins; and the Reasons of this, are,

First, Because an unregenerate Man cannot do any action from a right principle: He doth nothing from a principle of love to God, nor from a principle of holy fear of God. He doth not pray out of love to God, nor hear the Word from a principle of love to God. And what is from a false principle, cannot be a right modified action.

Secondly, Because an unregenerate Man cannot do any action according to a right rule: He measureth not his actions by the Word of God, which is a standing adequate rule to all our actions.

Thirdly, Because an unregenerate man cannot do any action for a right end; and the specification of Moral Actions is from their end and object. The end is one of the most principal circumstances that doth concur to the goodness or sinfulness of an action. A wicked man cannot speak a word for this end, that God might be glorified. He cannot pray, that God may be glorified. Some by-ends there are in all the actions of ungodly men.

Will you now seriously weigh the wickedness of your life; and truly judge how great a sinner you must needs be, when all ye have done is turned into sin? Is it not time for you to look out after pardon? And removal of so much contracted guilt?

X. This is the misery of an unregenerate Man, that he is liable to the sting, and hath real cause to be filled with the fears of Death. There is a holy fear of Death, which every man should have; so to fear it, as to prepare for it. There is a Natural fear of Death, which no man can be perfectly delivered from: There is a groundless, slavish fear of Death, which many of God's Children are kept in bondage by; and there is a grounded fear of Death, which should be in all wicked men. Some ungodly men, through the hardness of their hearts, through the blindness of their minds, that they see not the evil after death, through a natural heroicalness of Spirit, or through a



false hope of Heaven, fear not Death so much as they have cause and ground to do. Did they but think that they must die in their enmity to God, that they must die with all the guilt of sin upon their Souls, and be dragged to the Bar of God like so many malefactors, to have the doom of eternal death to pass upon their Souls, it were enough to make them leave this World in the horror, agony, and anguish of their hearts.

Oh! That I might now persuade you to sit down and consider with yourself, having shown you what a miserable creature an unconverted man is; and have under some of them, laid down some evidences of a man in his lost estate, of one that is dead in sin. Is this your condition, or is it not? Do you think it is no matter, whether it be your condition, or no? I tell you, your eternal estate depends upon it: If it be, and you die so, as sure as you live, you shall eternally die. If you are one of these, you cannot, you shall not escape the damnation of Hell. But is it so, and will you have it so? Is it so, and will you not forthwith, without delay, even today, before tomorrow, this hour before the next, seek how you may secure your Soul? Hoping that you will but tell me that you will gladly receive some directions, and put them into practice, I will proceed, that I might not leave you in this condition.

I. When you see yourself in this miserable condition, let it be the breaking of your heart, that you ever sinned against the Lord. Let sin be your greatest sorrow; and save those tears that you were wont to shed in mourning for outward losses, to weep for your sins, and for the loss of God, and Christ, and your precious Soul. Let it be a Dagger at your heart, that you have departed from the living God; that you have forsaken the Fountain of living Waters, and gone unto the creatures that are but Cisterns, yea, broken Cisterns. You must go through this great work of Heart-compunction, if you

will be saved from the Hell you have deserved. And let your sorrow for your sin have these qualifications.

1. Let your sorrow for your sin, be great sorrow. Your sins have been great, and so must your sorrow be; yea, if you can, Let your sorrow be proportionable to your sin, and then I am sure it will be great. Mourn for sin, more than for sickness; for iniquity, more than for poverty. Mourn as men do when they apprehend themselves undone; mourn as for an only child: Mourn more, then you would do if you had lost the wife of your bosom, or the children that proceeded from your loins.

2. Let your sorrow for your sin, be bitter sorrow; let it be bitter as well as great; and let the bitterness of your sorrow, be somewhat proportionable to the pleasures you found before in sin. Let it be a sorrow that shall forever make you to disrelish sin: Sin will be bitter to every man that doth commit it, either in bitter repentance, or in bitter torment. Sweet sin must cost bitter tears; if it were sweet as honey to you in the commission of it, it must be bitter as gall in the confession of it. Was it sweet in your mouth? It must be bitter in your belly.

3. Let your sorrow for sin, be hearty sorrow: You sinned heartily, sorrow also heartily. Your heart was filled with sin, let it also be filled with sorrow. Your sin was not only outward in the life, but inward in the heart: And let your sorrow be not only outward in appearance, but inward, and in truth. Your sins were not seeming sins, but real sins; and let your sorrow not only be seeming sorrow, but real and indeed.

4. Let your sorrow for sin be Universal sorrow. Mourn for all kinds of sins; for your sins against Mercy and Judgment; against Law and Gospel; against God, yourselves, and others. Shed a tear for every sin, bring forth a sigh, a groan for every iniquity. Mourn for your original sin, and mourn for

your actual sins. Mourn for your heart and secret sins, and mourn for life, and open sins.

5. Let your sorrow for sin, be a self-loathing sorrow. Let your Conscience blush ere you do confess your sins, and abhor yourself for all your abominations. Ezek. 36:31. Then shall you remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities, and for your abominations. If you loath yourself for sin, God will love you. When you see your sinful-self, your sinful-heart and life, be loathsome to yourself; as a man who seeth his body full of running Plague sores, is offensive to himself. Look upon yourself (as a Sinner) worse than a Beast, and Viper, before the Lord. Say, Lord, I am ashamed to consider how I preferred the World before thee; and myself, and sin, and lust, before thee.

6. Let your sorrow for your sin, be ingenuous sorrow. Mourn for your sins, not only as they have brought real evils upon your Souls, but as it hath been acted against a good and gracious God; against a patient and longsuffering God: Not only as it is destructive unto your own Soul, but as it is contrary to the nature of a holy God. With the Prodigal say, I will go to my father, and say, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee.

7. Let your sorrow for sin, be daily, constant, and lasting sorrow. It was your daily work to sin; now set it be your daily work to sorrow for your sin. There was no day but you sinned, and do sin; let there be no day in which some tears shall not trickle down your cheeks for your sin.

8. Let your sorrow for your sin be secret and manifest sorrow. Your sins have been both secret and manifest sins; and so let your mourning be. It is not convenient to confess some secret sins in company with others; do that in secrecy. It is convenient and necessary to confess other sins in the

presence of others; others have seen you sin, and heard you swear; let others see your sorrow; and lament not to be seen of others, but that you may convince others, that sin will have sorrow; and that you may bring on others that have sinned with you, to sorrow with you. You did openly dishonor God; do not stick when it is for God's glory, openly to shame yourself. Remember David's sin was public, and so was David's sorrow; his sin was registered in the book of God, and his sorrow also for his sins, stands there recorded.

And for your greater encouragement unto this, know, that if you thus confess your sin, and sorrow for it, God will give you pardon for your sin, and will have mercy on your soul. Joh. 1:9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive us our sins. Not only Mercy, but Justice will pardon you, if you thus confess your sins. Justice will condemn you, if you do not mourn, and Justice itself will forgive you, if you do. And let not the thoughts of the greatness of your sin's past, deter you from coming unto God with tears in your eyes, and sorrow in your heart. It is not the greatness of sins that are past, but the love of sin in the heart that will cause God to deny you mercy. Study well that one verse, Luk. 15:20. And he arose and came to his Father; but when he was yet afar off, his Father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. Have you been a Prodigal? Yet if you be a returning Prodigal, God will do so to you. When the Prodigal was returning, though he were afar off, yet his Father saw him. Though you have been wandering far from God, yet in the first act of your turning, the eyes of the Lord are upon you. And when he saw him, he had compassion; he was not provoked at the sight of a returning sinner. His bowels yearned towards him, his heart did work within him; and ran. The Prodigal did but go, but the Father ran. We are slow to

duty, but God is swift to mercy. When we do but creep towards God, Mercy is running towards us. And fell on his neck and kissed him. What! Did he embrace him in those filthy rags, and show him such tokens of his kindness, and his love? Oh let not sin, when seen and discovered, drive you from Christ, but make you hasten the more unto him.

II. When you see yourself in this miserable condition, you must heartily resolve to part with those sins that brought you into it, and accordingly do it; and that,

1. Speedily, without delay.
2. Universally, without reservation of any sin.
3. Sincerely, without any allowance or indulgence to any known iniquity.
4. Eternally, without a purpose to return again to them.
5. Willingly, without any grudging's for the parting with your sin. As willingly as ever prisoner parted with his Fetters; as willingly as ever any sick man was to be freed from his sickness and disease; as willingly as ever Porter was to be eased of his burden, that lay heavy upon his shoulders. For not to part with your sins, when you see yourself made miserable by them, would be as if you should say, I am miserable, and I will be so: I am undone, and I will not part with that that did undo me. It is impossible you should keep your sins, and yet get out of this deplorable condition; as it is for a man to run a sword into his heart, and yet escape the stroke of Death: Resolve then to let your drunkenness and drunken companions go; to let your sinful pleasures go, to let your pride and selfishness go, as things utterly inconsistent with your peace and good happiness.

Oh! Say unto your Soul, Shall I keep that any longer that hath brought such real evils upon my Soul? The wrath of God, the curse of the Law, and the danger of eternal death. Shall I keep that any longer which doth actually,

and so long deprive my Soul of such real good things? As communion with God, union with Christ, remission of my sins; the love and favor of God, promises and privileges of the Gospel; and will deprive me if I keep them of the Beatifical Vision, of the comfortable sight of Jesus Christ, of the Society of the glorious Angels, and glorified Saints. What! Shall I any longer love that which destroys me? And embrace that that kills me; and be kind unto my sin which will be cruel unto my Soul? Oh! Now I see the pleasure of sin it is but for a season; and the beauty I once thought I saw in sin, when its paint is washed off, is nothing but ugliness and deformity. Oh! I see that the Devil did but blind mine eyes, and befool my Soul; that he did delight me with nothing but appearances of good, when there was nothing of reality in all he set before me. Oh! Now I see I was in the way to damnation, and in the common road and beaten path that leads unto destruction: And shall I be so unmerciful to myself, as still to proceed and to go on? Shall I be such a bloody Butcher to myself, and prove a murderer of mine own immortal Soul? Oh! What patience is this of God, that I do not die in this condition? Oh! What mercy is this in God, that let me see my sinful state, before it was too late? Oh! If I had died at the beginning of this Plague, I had been in Hell before this day; and shall I see myself undone, and shall I not return? And that after such convictions as these upon my Conscience; and after such light that God hath now at length caused to shine into my understanding. I was going ignorantly to Hell, but now I cannot: I was going to Hell, when as I did groundlessly conceive I was going to Heaven; and shall I see Hell before me, and venture? Shall I see damnation before me, and yet not turn about? Oh! Now I charge thee, O my Soul, to write presently a Bill of Divorce, and turn thy Lusts away. I see now I cannot have my sins and Christ too; I cannot have my Lusts, and the

Lord of Glory too: And it will be better, infinitely better, eternally better, for me to cast away my sins and be saved, then to keep my sins a little while, and be forever damned. I had almost lost my Soul for a Lust; but now I will not do it: I had almost been everlastingly deprived of glory in the life to come; but now by the grace of God, and strength of Christ, I will not suffer it. If parting with my sins will prevent my everlasting parting with the Blessed God, I will do it. If losing of my sins would be the saving of my Soul, I would no longer delay to do it. I did not do it in a time of health, but now it is time; high time to do it in a time of general Mortality, in a time of a common Plague. Yea, I will bless the Lord that I am yet alive to do it, when so many thousands are already in another World. Oh! If I had died, as I was the other day, I had been damned, certainly damned; yea, I had been eternally damned.

Thus resolve this case with yourself, and be not weary till you work is thoroughly, and effectually done; and till you have wrought your heart to a real and unfeigned willingness to part with all gross sins in life and conversation; and all heart sins that will stick close unto you in this World, in will and affection. Say to yourself, Shall I confess my sins, and shall I return again unto my sins? Shall I condemn myself, as doing evil in the confession of my sin, and shall I after justify myself as if I had done well by the voluntary iteration of my sin? Then see a necessity of forsaking every evil way, and take heed that you do not only change one sin for another, instead of parting with everyone.

III. When you see yourself in this miserable condition, and have resolved to forsake your sin, set up a constant, diligent course of all Christian duties: As you must forsake everything you know to be sin, so you must set yourself upon the performance of everything you know to be a duty.—

Negative holiness will never bring you unto Heaven: It is not enough to cease to be and do what before you were and did, but you must begin and continue to be and do what you neither were nor did before. You did neglect to read the Scripture, to pray in your family and in secret, to hear, to meditate of God and the things to come, to live holily, and to walk with God. But all these you must now with greatest zeal resolve to practice. If you read the lives of any Converts in Scripture, you shall find them after they came to God, to walk directly contrary to all their former conversations in their sin; as Paul and Mary Magdalene. And here take heed you do not go from profaneness to lukewarmness; from open sinning to hypocritical praying; that would be to leave the broadest way to Hell, to walk thereto in some private path. Do not take up with duty done, think not you have done enough, when you have done a duty for the matter of it; but ever look into the principles, and end, and manner of every duty. Do not pray only, but pray from love to God, and for the glory of God. Be lively and through in all you do.

IV. When you have been frequent and fervent in holy duties, take heed you rest not in your duties, nor expect that from the hand of God for your duties sake, which you must receive (if ever) only for the Lord Jesus sake. You may perish by your duties, and be damned for them, as well as for your sins. By your sins, if you keep them; by your duties, if you trust to them. You must pray fervently when you pray, as if you were to purchase Heaven by your praying; and when you have done, you must deny all confidence in your own Righteousness, and rely upon Christ; as if you were to have Heaven without your praying. Study much the imperfection of your duties, and know, that God will never justify you for that in which there is enough why he may condemn you. All your duties are but fig-leaves. And though



God will not save you without your duties, yet he will not save you for your duties. You cannot prove your sanctification in the neglect of duties, neither shall you have justification before God by relying on your duties: Your very tears are no better than puddle-water in this respect. When a sinner is convinced that he is lost, he would be a Savior to himself; and when he is convinced that he cannot save himself, he must then look out unto another; and therefore,

V. When you see yourself in a lost estate, and all your Prayers cannot justify you; and all your tears cannot wash you, then fix your eye upon the Lord Jesus Christ; and cast yourself at his feet for mercy, and role yourself on him, expecting to be justified by his merits, and no otherwise; to be saved by his blood, and no otherwise; if you see your sin in its aggravating circumstances, you will despair and sink under the guilt thereof. If you see your sin, and fix your eye of Faith upon the Lord Jesus, you will have ground of hope, and that because Christ is.

First, A full and able Savior. Heb. 7:25. He is able to save all to the uttermost, that come unto God by him. Your sin would have destroyed to the uttermost; and the law would have condemned you to the uttermost: And if you had been cast into Hell, you should not come forth till you satisfied to the uttermost; but Christ he is able to save you to the uttermost. You had committed mighty sins, and God hath laid help upon one that is mighty, Isa. 63:1. That Christ is able to save, appears,

1. In that he was able to make satisfaction to divine Justice.
2. In that he by death hath overcome death, and sin, and Devils.
3. In that he hath risen again from the dead; for if he had not satisfied perfectly for our sins, he had been kept under the power of death and the

grave. Christ's resurrection from the dead, is as the Fathers acquittance that our debt is discharged, and he satisfied.

4. In that he hath ascended up into Glory, and taken possession for us, and taken up room in Heaven for as many as shall believe on him.

5. In that his merit and his death is of infinite value; and therefore his sufferings are of so great value in regard of the excellency of his person.

6. In that he is able to work all those works in us, which are necessary to Salvation. He can soften your heart, and he can bow your will; and he can spiritualize your affections, and he can awaken your conscience.

7. In that he hath saved as great sinners as you are. I speak not to flatter you, after I have dealt plainly with you; not to extenuate your sin, but to heighten Christ's sufficiency to save you, upon conditions of the Gospel. He hath saved Mary Magdalene, and Paul who accounted himself the chief of sinners.

Therefore if God awaken your Conscience, see there is a fullness in Christ to help and to recover you; there is in him a fullness of merit to justify you, and a fullness of spirit to sanctify you. And that though you have been rebellious, yet Christ undertaketh to conquer Rebels against the God of Heaven, and to give gifts of Repentance and Faith unto them. Psal. 68:18. Thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also.

Secondly, Christ is a free and a willing Savior. Many sinners under guilt do not question Christ's power, but his will. They will say to Christ as the Leper. Matth. 8:2. Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. Lord if thou wilt, thou canst soften my heart: but will he do it? Tell me, for now I suppose that you are willing to come from a state of sin, to a state of grace, tell me;

1. Can you hear that Christ came down from Heaven upon Earth, and yet question whether he be willing to save souls? Why, it was his very business, he came on that very purpose.

2. Can you read the invitations of Christ to burdened sinners, and question whether he be willing? How often doth he call you, saying, Come? How earnestly doth he entreat you saying, Come unto me? Matth. 11:28.

3. Can you read the strict commands of Jesus Christ commanding you to come to him, that you may be saved, and yet question the willingness of Christ? Doth not he charge you upon pain of Damnation, that you should look after Heaven. Yea, and will really damn you, if you do not; and yet think that Christ is not willing.

4. Can you read the promises that Christ hath made to sinners, if they will come unto him that they may have life, and yet question it? He calleth you, and promiseth you pardon for all your former wickedness, drunkenness, and oaths, if you will now come to him. He calleth you and says, I will give Heaven to you, if you will come, and eternal life unto you; and my robe of righteousness I will put upon you, if you will come. Oh! Would you sin so much, and sin so long against such a Savior as this, and now when you have thoughts of coming, question whether he be willing to receive you?

5. Can you hear what complaints he made in the days of his flesh, when sinners would not come to him, and yet doubt of his willingness? He stood weeping over sinners, and groaning over them, and grieving at them for the hardness of their hearts. Matth. 23:37; Mar. 3:5; Luk. 19:41,42.

6. Can you hear what he suffered, and how he bled and died to save sinners; and yet question his willingness? Look into his sides, and behold the wound, and be not faithless, but believing.

7. Can you feel how he striveth with you by his holy spirit to bring you to salvation, and yet question his willingness? How oft hath Christ been working at your heart, to soften it, and to sanctify it, and to bring it out from sin?

8. Can you consider how long Christ hath kept off the blows of justice from your soul, and borne with your provocations; and yet question his willingness? If he had not been willing you should be saved, he might have damned you long ago; He might have cut you off with the cup at your mouth, with sin in your hand, but that he waited to be gracious to you. Oh! Weep and grieve you stood it out so long against such a Savior; and say if your sins were to do again, you would not do them.

If you say, This demonstrates fully that Christ is willing to save some, but not that he is willing to save me: Oh! That he would, but still I doubt he will not.

Answer, First, Why do you exclude and shut out yourself from mercy; when God nowhere in his Word hath done it?

Secondly, How came you at last to be willing, to take this Christ upon his own terms? Were you not unwilling? Who made you willing? Yourself? That you could not. You are willing because he first was willing.

Thirdly, This savors too much of pride in your own goodness, and speaketh out, you have too hard thoughts of Christ, that you should be more willing to receive good, then he is to do it. Question rather your own willingness then his; if you are unfeignedly willing, he is undoubtedly willing. And then no sin nor evil shall hinder the happy closure betwixt Christ and your soul.

Thirdly, Christ is a fit and suitable Savior. He is a Prophet to cure your blindness; he is a Priest to make a Covenant with the Father for you; He is a

King to subdue your will to himself, and all your spiritual enemies under you.

Thus have I shown you your Misery, your Remedy, and the terms upon which you must be partakers of this remedy, that you may be brought out of this misery; and lead you from sin to Christ: and if you do indeed according to these few directions, and take him for your Lord and Savior, and persevere so to do, in closing with him upon Gospel conditions, and walking holily before him, whether you live or die, remain after this Plague, or be taken away by it, you shall be safely lodged in the bosom of your Lord, and enjoy him in his everlasting Kingdom: Which is the real desire of your unfeigned friend that is affectionately desirous of the Salvation of your Souls.

FINIS.