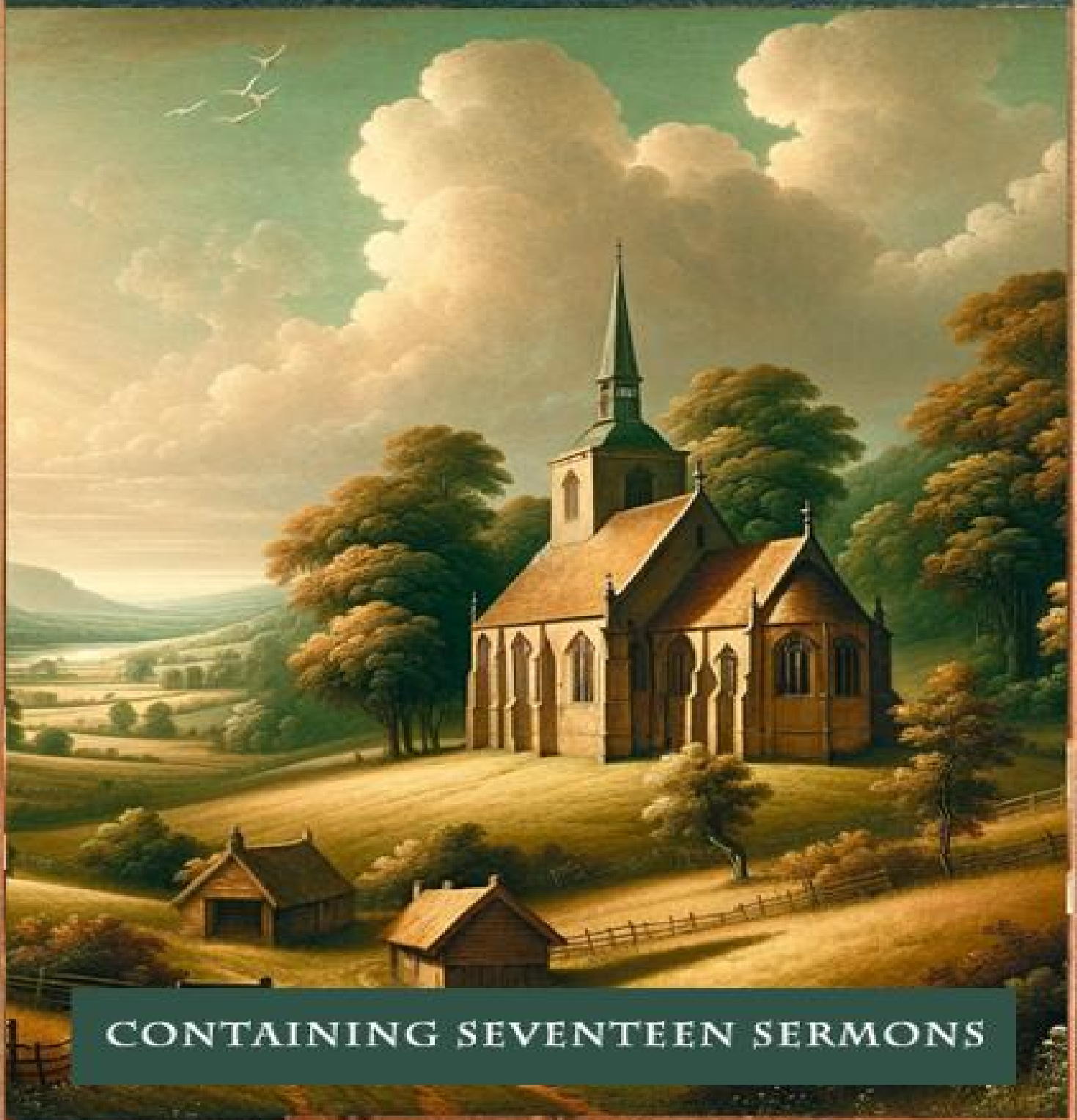


THE WORKS OF  
**RICHARD GREENHAM**  
VOLUME 3



CONTAINING SEVENTEEN SERMONS

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# THE WORKS OF RICHARD GREENHAM

## - VOLUME THREE -

THE THIRD PART OF THE WORKS OF THE REVEREND AND  
FAITHFUL SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST,  
MASTER RICHARD GREENHAM, MINISTER AND PREACHER OF  
THE WORD OF GOD,  
CONTAINING SEVENTEEN SERMONS.

BY RICHARD GREENHAM

ED. BY HENRY HOLLAND

PROV. 10:7.

The memorial of the just shall be blessed: but the name of the wicked  
shall rot.

VERS. 11.

The mouth of the righteous is as a wellspring of life.

This text has been initially updated from EEBO-TCP by Project Puritas (Logan West, David Jonescuc, Alex Sarrouf)

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Editor's Note - During the TCP Transcription Process, all the text was hand transcribed according to visual representation; and as such, sometimes the letters s, l, f & t are misconstrued with each other, these letters regularly being almost illegibly similar in the original facsimile script. Though it is rare for these errors to remain post-edit, unfortunately they may remain if uncaught. My apologies in advance where such errors occur. Also, the symbol <H&G> signifies omitted Hebrew & Greek. Because a majority of

readers are not fluent in the original languages; it was thought best to omit, instead of possibly misconstrue; since most original languages are written in antiquated script in the original facsimiles. Lastly, some archaic words may be updated to more contemporary terminology; but changes have been kept to a bare minimum.

# **SERMON I**

## **OF QUENCHING THE SPIRIT**

Quench not the spirit.

1 Thess. 5:19.

All the doctrine of the Scriptures may be briefly referred to these two heads. First, how we may be prepared to receive the spirit of God. Secondly, how the spirit may be retained when as we have once received it. And therefore Saint Paul having labored to instruct the Thessalonians, in the former part of this Epistle, how they may receive the spirit, doth here teach them how to keep and continue this spirit unto the end. And this the Apostle doth by giving them a charge and commandment, that in no wise they do Quench the spirit: thereby doubtless teaching, that as the shunning of evil, is the first step unto goodness; so the ready way to continue the spirit of God in our hearts, is to labor that it be not quenched. Now the Apostle upon great and weighty consideration, doth here deliver this precept: For first of all, though all those be worthily and justly condemned, that

never tasted of the spirit of God: yet as our Savior Christ saith; A more just and fearful condemnation is like to come upon them, that having once received it, do afterward lose the same again. Moreover, without this spirit of God, no holy exercise can have his full effect: for the word worketh not, where the spirit of God is wanting; prayers have no power to pierce into the presence of God: the Sacraments seem small and silly things in our eyes, and all other orders, and exercises which God hath granted and ordained for man, they are unprofitable to man, where the spirit is not present to convey them into our hearts, there to seal up the fruit of them. Last of all, we are fit to receive no good grace at God's hand: nay, we do not esteem God's graces, when we have not the spirit to teach us to set a due price upon them: for speak of the Law, or of the Gospel; of sin, or of righteousness: speak of Christ, or of our redemption, and justification by him: yea, speak of that huge and heavy weight of glory, wherewith the elect of God shall be crowned, all this moveth not, we are little affected therewith, unless God give us of his good spirit, to profit by the same. The Apostle therefore with good reason, gave this precept, and we, for many great causes, are to listen unto it, least by any means the spirit of God be quenched in us, and so we deprive ourselves of all these fruits. Now, whereas the Apostle saith, Quench not the spirit, it may appear that he speaketh to those that had already received the spirit: For, as the fire cannot be said to be quenched, where it is not: so they cannot be said to quench or lose the spirit, which have not as yet received it. Then know, that this precept doth properly belong to them that have received the spirit of God, and they especially are to make a special use of it: for the other, it cannot profit them, unless that, as the seed lying in the ground a long time, doth afterward bud and become fruitful; so this continue in their minds, till they have tasted (in some good sort) of the spirit of God, and then breed in them some carefulness that they do not quench it. Well then, to them that have felt and found the spirit of

God in them, to them saith S. Paul in this place, Take heed that ye quench not the spirit. Of this, if we do somewhat seriously consider, these two questions will offer themselves, and soon arise in our mind. First, how we may know whether we have the spirit of God, or no. Secondly, if we have it, whether it may be lost again, or no: which if they be well and sufficiently answered, they will doubtless give great force unto this precept For the first then, if we will know whether we have the spirit or no; we must surely understand, that as he knoweth best that he hath life, which feeleth it in himself: so he best knoweth whether he have the spirit of God, that feeleth the spirit working in him. And if we will further know this by the peculiar working and effects of the spirit, then let us mark these.

First of all, if there be nothing in man but the nature of man; if nothing but that may be attained by the art and industry of a man; then surely in that man is not the spirit of God: for the spirit is from God, it is from above, it is above nature: and therefore the Apostle doth set the spirit of God against the spirit of the world, when he saith: We have received the spirit, not of the world, but of God. 1 Cor. 2:14.

Besides, the spirit of God is eternal, and endureth forever: but all the doings and devices of men they perish, and in time they have an end. Therefore though a man have wisdom with great knowledge, though in wit and skill he pass and excel the common sort of men: yet, if from above he hath not been enlightened; if from heaven his wisdom hath not been sanctified, his knowledge shall decay, his wisdom shall wither like grass; he hath not as yet tasted of the spirit of God, that endureth forever. And therefore saith Saint Paul: We teach the mysteries of God, which none, no not the Princes, and the men of this world, which are above others most excellent, are able to understand.

Secondly consider, whether there be in thee any alteration or change. For the wise men which were expert in nature, could say, that in every generation there is a corruption. And we see, that the seed sown is much changed before it grow up and bear fruit: Then needful it is that in regeneration, there be a corruption of sin, so that as seed in the ground, so sin in our mortal bodies may decay, that the new man may be raised up, the spirit of God taking possession of our souls. Therefore the Evangelist John doth make this, the first work of the spirit, that it shall rebuke the world of sin: and this is so needful, that without it, there is not the spirit of God, neither yet can Christ come and enter into that man. Here of it was that Christ compared the Jews to children in the market place, who would not dance, though they were piped unto: and the reason was, because they had not first learned with John to mourn: for they that by the preaching of John, learned to lament their sins, and for their sins were pensive in their own souls, they received Christ, they danced and did rejoice to hear the joyful tidings of the Gospel. Therefore Christ saith, That whores and harlots entered into the kingdom of heaven, seeing they lamented their sins) before the proud Pharisees, which were touched with no remorse for their sins. And for the same cause it is, that Christ calleth unto him, them only that labor and are heavy laden: teaching, that if they find not sin to be a heavy load and burden to them, they have not the spirit of God, neither are they fit to receive Christ. Then to be rebuked of sin, is the first work of the spirit; which the spirit worketh in us by these degrees. First, it raiseth up in us a great and general astonishment, by reason of all those great and enormous sins that we have committed, and this doth strike us down, it doth terrify us, and hold us amazed wonderfully: then it dealeth with us more particularly; it bringeth us unto a special grief for special sins, it doth bereave us of our chief desires, and bringeth us out of conceit and liking with the best things that are in us: for then it doth display before us the vanity and darkness of our



understanding, how unfit and unmeet we are to understand and conceive those things, that do above all others especially concern us: then doth it let us see the perverse corruption of our judgment, and that before God, and in things belonging to God, we be as brute beasts, not able to discern things that differ, nor to put a sound difference between good and evil: then doth it let us see that our reason is unreasonable, nay, that it is hurtful unto us, a great enemy to faith, and a great patron of infidelity and unbelief. When it cometh to our affections, it turneth them upside down, it turneth our mirth into mourning, our pleasure into painfulness, and our greatest delight into most bitter grief. If it do proceed further, and come once to the heart, and to the stomach and courage that is in us, then it cutteth us to the quick, then doth it at once cast us down in humility under the hand of God: for while we had to deal with men, we were as stout as any, and would not start for the best. We had reason to say for ourselves, and courage to defend ourselves against all them that did deal with us: but now the spirit draweth us into the presence of God, it letteth us see that we have to do with God, and that our strength is weakness in respect of him. Then doth our heart begin to fail us, then do we lay our hands on our mouths, and dare not answer: nay, then do we quickly take up our cross, because the Lord himself hath done it. Behold here how the spirit worketh, behold how sin is corrected: and who so can behold here this in himself, may assuredly say, that the spirit of God is in him, that it is not in vain within him, nay, that it is mighty and lively in operation in his heart. (Joh. 16, Matt. 11, 1 Cor. 2:14, Phil. 1:9-10)

The third note and effect is, the bringing on forward of this work unto justification: for when the spirit hath brought us thus far, then doth it begin to open unto us a door unto the grace and favor of God: it doth put into our minds, that there is mercy with God, and therefore stirreth us up to seek mercy at his hands: afterward, it doth

let us see how Christ suffered, to take away the sins of the world, that in the righteousness of Christ, we may look to be justified before God. And this it doth not let us see only, but doth effectually work a sure persuasion of it in our hearts, and confirmeth the same by two notable effects. The first is, a joy most unspeakable and glorious, wherewith our hearts must needs be wholly taken up and ravished, when we see ourselves by the righteousness of Christ, of the free mercy and grace of God, redeemed from death, delivered from hell, and freed from the fearful condemnation of the wicked. The second is the peace of conscience: which indeed passeth all understanding: While sin, and the guilt of sin remained, there was no peace, nor rest, nor quietness to be found, but fear within, terrors without, and troubles on every side: but when sin is once nailed to the cross of Christ, when the guilt of sin is taken out of our consciences, and the punishment thereof far removed, then must needs ensue great peace: for our accusers dare not proceed against us, our sins are forgiven us, and God is at one with us: and for this, we have the warrant and testimony of the spirit. Can flesh and blood persuade us of this? Can any creature assure us how God is affected towards us? No doubtless. And therefore where this joy and peace is, there must needs be the holy Ghost, the author and worker of the same. For as no man knoweth what is in man, but the spirit of man which is in him: so none knoweth the will of God, but the spirit of God, and therefore it is the spirit of God that must certify our hearts and spirits of the same. (Psal. 130:4, Rom. 5:1-2, Rom. 9:1, Phil. 4:3-5, 1 Cor. 2:14-15)

And hereof there doth arise that, which we take as the fourth note, when we find it in ourselves: to wit, the life and nimbleness that is in us to do good: for when a man doth find favor from God, for the forgiveness of sins, then the love of God constraineth him, that joy which he conceiveth enforceth him, and putteth life into him, for the performance of those things, which are pleasing unto God: then he

beginneth to find himself not only reclaimed from evil, but also applied and framed to that which is good; then is his understanding enlightened, to see into the mysteries of godliness, and into that great work of his redemption, and into whatsoever concerneth the saving health of his soul: then is his judgment reformed, and he is made able to judge between false religion and true, between the works of the flesh, and of the spirit, between that which is good, and that which is evil and displeasing in the sight of God. Then are his affections in some good measure altered, his desire is set, not upon earthly, but upon heavenly things; his joys are not in the earth, but in the heavens; his anger is wasted and spent, not upon his own private cause and quarrels, but upon his own sins, and upon whatsoever hindereth the glory of his God. This is the life of God in him; thus he liveth that hath received the spirit, and thus he leadeth his life continually: for they that have received the spirit, are led by the spirit, and do live accordingly, bringing forth the fruits of the spirit. But this hath weakness joined with it, and men through frailty may soon fall, and therefore their life is said to be hid in Christ, because in full and perfect manner it doth not appear. Therefore, if notwithstanding these frailties and falls, we will know whether we still retain the spirit of God, we must search ourselves, and try our hearts by these rules. First, if through frailty we have fallen (for who is he that falleth not?) we will then know whether by our fall we have lost the spirit of God or no, let us see what liking, or misliking we have of sin: for if after our fall, we do hold our former hatred of sin, and the oftener we fall, the more thorough and deadly hatred we conceive against sin, undoubtedly that frailty hath not as yet deprived us of the spirit. Secondly, come and see how it standeth with thy sorrow: for so long as thy sorrow increaseth for thy sins, it cannot be thought that sin and the flesh, have overcome and utterly quenched the spirit in thee. Thirdly, try thy care: and if thou grow in a godly care, both how thou mayest be able to wage battle against sin

in the plain field, and how thou mayest prevent sin in all his policies, then thou hast a further assurance, that sin, although it be as great as Goliath, yet it hath not hitherto prevailed against thy poor and little David, I say, against those few and small graces, which the good spirit of God hath bestowed upon thee. But the last is most certain, and that is this: When thou art careful to redeem that, which by the fall thou hast lost, and hast a care to run so much faster forward, by how much more thou hast been letted by thy fall; then it doth appear that the spirit is in thee, yea it is lively and mighty in operation, and such as shall never be taken from thee, until the day of Christ. (Eph. 4:18, Rom. 8:2, Gal. 5:22)

Thus may we in some good and competent measure try and prove, whether we have the spirit of God or no: for where these fruits are to be found, there is also the spirit of God. For further confirmation whereof, we may note the manner of speech, where he saith, Quench not the spirit, We do commonly use to say, the fire is quenched, when the light and heat thereof is taken away: and indeed nothing can properly be said to be quenched, but the fire. Now whereas the Apostle saith, Quench not the spirit, he giveth us to understand, that the spirit is in some respect like unto fire: therefore if we do but a little consider of the nature of fire, we shall a great deal better judge of the spirit And among others, these properties we find to be in the fire. First of all it will burn up, and consume things that may be burned and consumed: and therefore lighting upon straw, stubble, sticks, or such like, it bringeth them to ashes, and doth make them as though they had not been at all. Secondly, it doth purge and purify those things that can abide to be purged: and this it doth, first by taking away the superfluity of dross, that hath overcovered the thing to be purged. Then by fining the thing itself, and by making it purer and purer. Thirdly, it giveth light even in the most dim and darkest places. And last of all, it giveth heat, and withal, doth as it were put

life into those things which are capable of life: for whilst a man is frozen and starved for cold, he is numbed, and as it were without life: but being brought to the fire, he is heat, he is revived, he is cheered, and then becometh active and nimble. These are the properties of fire, and these do in some manner resemble and shadow out unto us the works and effects of the spirit. For first of all, when the spirit of God seizeth upon a man, and entereth into his soul, then it beginneth to burn, to waste and consume in him, those things that will be wasted: after this sort evil affections, noisome lusts, and other stubble which is in man, by the spirit of God are consumed and burned. Secondly, it doth purge us from gross sins, and daily more and more doth purify us, that we may be a clean and holy vessel and temple for him to rest and dwell in. Thirdly, it is a shining lamp, ever burning and continually giving light unto us, in that way which we have to walk. And lastly, it doth set us on heat, and inflameth us with a zeal of God's glory, with a care of our duty, and with a love of all mankind: yea, withal it putteth life and lust into us, to walk in that good way which leadeth unto life, and to do all those good works which may glorify God, or be commodious unto men.

Thus we see what likelihood there is between the spirit and fire, for which cause the spirit in the Scripture is compared unto fire: nay it is sometimes called fire: for John saith, That our Savior should baptize with the holy Ghost, and with fire: that is, with the holy Ghost, which is like unto the fire. Therefore, as truly and as certainly as we may say that there is fire, where we see straw and such like things consumed, or gold and silver finely purged, or great light in dark places, or great heat in bodies that were numbed before: even so truly we may say, and so certainly we may persuade ourselves, that the spirit of God is in us, when we see our corruption consumed, our souls purged from the dross of sin, our hearts enlightened and made hot in walking, and working according to that light.

The second question to be considered is, whether that man which once thoroughly tasted of the spirit, may lose it, and have it quenched in him. To this it may be said, that because the spirit of God cometh to, and worketh in diverse men, diversely, in diverse measures: therefore we must consider of the diverse working of the spirit, and then frame our answer accordingly. First then, there is a lighter and lesser work of the spirit, which may be quenched in them that have it: and that this inferior or lesser kind of working may be taken away, appeareth plainly by the parable of the seed which our Savior Christ propoundeth, for that, besides them that receive the word into good ground, and bring forth fruits, some an hundredth, some thirty, some sixty fold: he doth also make mention of some others that received the word and yet continued not. And what, had not these the spirit of God in them? Yes doubtless, for they received the word: yea, they received it gladly, and that which is more, they believed that which they had received. Behold then three fruits of God's spirit in these men, and yet they continued not: for they believed indeed, but their faith was temporary, it lasted but for a time, and after a time it vanished away, and the spirit departed from them: for either the pleasures and profits of this life did drive out the graces of God, and dry them up, or else the fiery heat of persecution did quite consume them. (Matt. 13, Luk. 8, Mark 4, Heb. 6)

More plain and notable for this purpose is that, in the sixth to the Hebrews, for there the Apostle saith, That some may taste of the holy Ghost, and thereby be made to taste of the good word of God, to be enlightened to receive heavenly gifts, yea, and to taste of the power of the life to come. And what then? Surely the Apostle saith, That if such fall, it is impossible they should be renewed: giving us to understand, that even they which have received the holy Ghost, that have been enlightened, that have received heavenly gifts, and have

tasted of the power of the life to come, even such may fall away, and the spirit may be quenched in such. (Heb. 6:1-5)

There is a second kind of working of the spirit, which is a more thorough and effectual working, which can never be taken away from them that have received it. This the Apostle Peter describeth when he saith, That the chosen of God, are begotten again of the immortal seed of the word. This is not a bare receiving, or a light tasting of the word: but it is a deep taste of the same, whereby we are begotten and born again. The Apostle S. John setteth down another note of it, saying, That they that are thus born again, cannot sin: that is, they cannot make an occupation of sin, they cannot fall flat away by sin: and why? Even because the seed of God abideth in them, even that seed, wherewith they were begotten to a lively hope of life, even that seed doth abide, and will abide unto the end. Who so is begotten again by this seed, and hath this seed abiding in him, the spirit hath wrought that in him, which shall not be taken from him: and therefore our Savior Christ saith, The word that I speak, is spirit and life. And in another place he saith, That none shall take his sheep from him, for the father is mightier than all: and therefore in another place he saith, That it is impossible that the elect should be seduced. (1 Joh. 3:7-8, Joh. 10:28-29)

Thus then we see the question answered: namely, that there is an inferior working which may be lost; and a more effectual working of the spirit which can never be taken away from them that have it. And this must not seem strange to us, neither must we be offended that the Lord should take some, and leave others: or that he should begin in some, and not bring his work to perfection: for so he dealeth with other things in the world. Some corn is sown and never riseth: some springeth, and yet shortly withereth: some groweth up to an ear, and yet then is stricken or blasted: and othersome (at his good pleasure)

doth come to a timely ripeness. In like manner, some trees are planted and never take root: some take root, but yet not blossom: some blossom, and yet never bring forth fruit: and othersome through his goodness do bring forth fruit in good season. If the Lord deal so with the plant and herb of the field, why may he not deal so with us, the sons of men? If we cannot conceive the reason of this, we must hold our peace: for all the works of God are done in righteousness, and all our knowledge is imperfect: therefore we must herein rather accuse ourselves of ignorance, than the Lord of unrighteousness: nay, we ourselves do deal in like sort with those things which be under our hand. In Colleges, Fellowes are first chosen to be Probationers, and if they be then approved, they be made full fellows, otherwise they are not. If a man being childless, do take some friends child to make him heir of all his goods: he will keep him upon liking, if his manners be honest he shall be preferred, yea it may be set over all his house, and yet afterwards for some fault committed, quite cast off. Some other man taketh another child to the same end, and maketh him heir indeed: so then we must think it righteous in the Lord to deal thus with us, seeing we are in his hand: and we must not be offended, though he call some, and do not enlighten them: and although he enlighten some, and do not continue them, and do of his great mercy continue some even unto the end: let us rather see what use we must make of this doctrine.

First, we must take heed that we never quench any grace or gift that God bestoweth upon us. Secondly, we must still labor to have greater measure of gifts: for the wicked may come to have some small gifts, and such as may be quite taken away from them. Lastly, it doth put a plain difference between the godly, and the godless, between them that bear a show of holiness, and them that are indeed the holy ones of the Lord: for the one endureth but for a time, and the other lasteth forever. Now if we require a further trial, whereby we may know



whether we have received that spirit which lasteth but for a time, or that which will abide forever with us: then let us mark these rules, which put a plain difference between them. First, we must mark that enlightening and insight we have into the word of God. Certain it is, that both the godly and wicked are enlightened, but the enlightening of the godly is one, and the insight of the wicked is another: for that knowledge and insight which the godly have received, is certain and distinct: and therefore in particular things, they be able to apply the threatening of God's judgments to the humbling of themselves, and the promises of God to comfort themselves. Again, their knowledge is sufficient to direct them both generally, and in every particular duty. And last of all, it never faileth them, but directeth them unto the end: but the knowledge of the wicked is not so; for it is confused, general, and uncertain. And therefore though they have a general knowledge of the threatening's, and of the promises of God, yet can they not make particular use of the same. Their knowledge is insufficient, not able to direct them in their particular actions, and therefore it doth leave them in the end. Therefore as the knowledge of the godly for the clearness, the certainty, and the sufficiency of it, is compared to the Sun: so the knowledge of the wicked, is compared to the lightning, which doth not give any certain light, it doth not continue any time; and when it is gone, men are worse than they were before. So doth it fall out with the wicked: for beside that their knowledge doth soon vanish, there is also in them afterwards, greater and more dangerous darkness than there was before: herein then we do see one plain and manifest note of difference. Secondly, we come to our affections. Certain it is, that the wicked do desire the help and the favor of God: but look to the cause, and that will show a difference between them and the godly. The wicked do only seek help, because of some extremity which they suffer; they only desire to be in the favor of God, because they would be freed from grief: and therefore it is common with them to say; Oh that I were out of this pain! Oh that

this my sorrow were taken from me! By which speeches they show, that so they might be at rest, or live at their ease, they would little weigh of the help or favor of God. But the godly find such sweetness in the favor of God, that for the desire thereof, they can be content to forgo all the pleasures of this life, yea they can be content to suffer much, and endure the cross patiently, so that at the last they may assuredly enjoy God's favor. Not the godly only, but the wicked also, are grieved when they have sinned: but the wicked do therefore sorrow, because their sin hath, or will bring some punishment upon them: and the godly sorrow, because they have offended God, and given him occasion to draw his favor from them, therefore his correction do they bear patiently: but the remembrance of their sin, that toucheth them still at the very quick. Then in their joy, and in their sorrow, may appear a second difference.

The third difference is in love: for though both of them do love God, yet it is after a diverse manner; the one of sincerity, the other for wages. A poor child that is taken up, fed, and clothed, will love him that doth thus feed and clothe him: but if he received no more of that man than of another, he would like him, and love him no better than another: even so it is with the wicked, if their bellies be filled, their barns stuffed, and they have their hearts desire, they love God indeed, but yet only for their belly, and their barns. Thus did Saul love God, but it was for his kingdom: thus did Achitophel love God, but it was because he was advanced to be a Counselor: and thus did Judas love God, but it was because he was chosen to be an Apostle, and carried the bag. But what became of their love the histories do testify: Saul was a little afflicted, and forsook God: Achitophel somewhat crossed in his devises, hanged himself: and Judas for gain of money, betrayed Christ. Some experience of this we may see among us; Courtiers will be professors, and Scholars of ripe wits will be religious, if that Courtiers may become Counselors, and if

Scholars may be preferred to the chiefest places: but if promotion come, then their profession is forsaken, and their religion laid aside. And yet that is not all, for either they wax profane in their life, or heretical in their opinions. Do the children of God love on this manner? No, the holy Ghost which they have received in effectual manner, doth shed the seed of love in their hearts, and doth work in them a special liking of his goodness, of his righteousness, and of his holiness: and therefore of sincere affection they love him. As the natural child loveth his father naturally, and though his father bear him, yet beareth he it, and still loveth him: so do the children of God deal; They have poured into them (as Saint Peter saith) a godly nature, so that they do freely love God their father: and though he afflict them, or cross them in their desires, yet they love him, and in love perform their obedience unto him continually: therefore Job saith, Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him: They therefore are said to have received a free spirit, and to serve God in the liberty of the spirit. And who seeth not this to be a plain and manifest difference between them? Therefore we may well take it as a third mark or rule, whereby to prove and try ourselves. (2 Pet. 1-4)

The fourth and last rule is, in considering the work and effect which God's mercy received, doth work in us: for, herein do the wicked show their wickedness two ways, First, on the right hand, the mercies of God do work in them a wonderful contentation: but not such as causeth them to return the glory unto God, nay rather it is such, as causeth them to take all glory to themselves: for the graces of God do puff them up, and make them proud, and conceited in themselves. Here of there ariseth a great security, which bringeth first neglect, and afterward contempt of all good means, whereby they should grow up in goodness. On the left hand others offend, being never pleased nor contented with that they have: nay indeed forgetting and lightly esteeming that they have, and still desiring new. These men

besides that they be unthankful, they do also murmur and grudge against God, and are never pleased with him Between these two, do the children of God hold a middle and even course: and therefore we shall see these things in them. First, a sight and an acknowledging of the wants which do move them, as S. Peter saith, Like new born babes, to desire the sweet and sincere milk of the word, that thereby the graces they have may be increased, and their other wants may be supplied: and so far are they from being puffed up with pride, that they rejoice when their pride may be pulled down, or their haughtiness abated, either by some sharp rebuke, or by some fearful threatening, or by some moderate correction from the Lord. For they know, that if it were needful for S. Paul to be buffeted, and that by the minister of Satan, to the intent that his pride might be beaten down: then it is much more needful for them, after sundry ways to be humbled. Besides, they do not only desire the word, but they also wait upon the Lord, until it please him to work further in them thereby: and this waiting is as earnest as is theirs, who having watched all the night, do wait and look for the dawning of the day.

Secondly, as they see their wants, so also they see that grace they have received, and are for that time well appayed, and contented therewith: and therefore as their wants do humble them, so the graces of God received do comfort them: and as their wants do call upon them, and cause them to seek more, so that they have, doth provoke them to be thankful for that they have received. See then a quite contrary course of the wicked, and those that of sincerity do worship God: see I say, how contrarily the graces and gifts of God do work in them. And therefore from the consideration hereof, we may well draw a fourth rule whereby to make trial and examination of ourselves.

So to conclude this point in a word, when a man by the spirit of God hath been enlightened unto a certain and sufficient knowledge of God's will: when he findeth his affection, chiefly and above all other things set upon God: when he findeth a pure and sincere love of God in his heart, not for wages, but for the work of grace, which after an unspeakable manner doth move him thereunto: and when he doth thankfully acknowledge mercies received, as he doth carefully attend and wait upon the Lord: till he bestow some greater measure of graces upon him; then may he be undoubtedly persuaded, that he hath found the spirit working in him in a more effectual manner, and that therefore it shall never be taken from him. But what then? May such men cast off all care? No, for unto them doth S. Paul give this charge, That they do not quench the spirit. And not without cause doth he give them this charge: for though the spirit itself can never be taken utterly from them, yet doubtless if they wax proud, if they grow secure, if they fall into sin, then the graces and gifts of the spirit may decay and die in them, their clear understanding, their feeling, their affection and all may be gone; so that in their own judgment and in the judgment of others, it may seem that they have quite quenched, and put out the spirit. Neither must this seem so strange; for if the image of God, which was more perfectly placed in Adam, than it is now in us: If I say, this image might quite be lost and blotted out, as we see it was; then no marvel if the graces of the spirit of God be for a time, as it were dead and drowned in us. And that we may be the less offended herewith, the Scriptures do offer unto us such examples of men, as having been once effectually called and truly born again, have yet afterward through some sins, lost the graces of the spirit: such were the Galatians, for they were truly called, and effectually regenerate by the spirit and Gospel of God, as may appear by this, that for the words sake they revered the Apostle as the Angel of God; yet they were snared with false doctrine, and fell very dangerously to the choking and quenching of the graces

of God's spirit in them. The spirit itself was not taken from them, nay, Christ did still continue in their hearts: but yet for want of godly graces, he was as it were without fashion or form: so that the Apostle did as it were travel again, until Christ was fashioned anew in them. David also upon the committing of his sin, was brought into the like case: therefore in the 51 Psalm he prayeth, That God will create in him a new spirit. What? Was the spirit quite gone? No, for by and by in the same Psalm he prayeth, That the Lord would not take away his holy spirit from him. How can these two stand together, first to pray, that a new spirit may be created in him; and then, that the spirit of God may not be taken from him? Surely the spirit itself was still in him, and therefore he prayeth, that it may not be taken from him: but the graces, and gracious working of the spirit they were dead and gone; and therefore he prayeth that they may be renewed in him. By this then we see that the very chief graces of the spirit may be quenched, even in the most godly, when they fall into sin. But yet that no liberty may be taken hereby, let us a little consider what grief and punishment they procure to themselves, that do by any means lose the graces of the spirit. First of all we must know, that though the spirit of God cannot be gotten by our labor, yet it costeth us much labor, and we must undergo much travel, and suffer much trouble, before the spirit of God do take possession of us: now when the graces of the spirit are lost, all this our labor seemeth to be lost, and what grief is it to see the whole labor and travel of a man to vanish and come to nothing? Secondly, when a man receiveth the spirit of God, and by the same spirit is assured that his sin is forgiven him, and that he is in the favor of God; there doth arise in his heart a great joy in the holy Ghost; a joy I say, that is unspeakable and glorious: and this joy is lost and gone, when the graces of God's spirit are gone, with how great grief and woe, they know, that in any measure have tasted of it. Again, when the graces of the spirit are choked in men, then they have no heart to do good, they have no affection to

goodness, but all is gone; and they are made for the time, as it were an unprofitable burden of the earth. What grief can be greater than this? What sorrow can sink more deep, than that a good man should be clean withholden from doing good. Moreover it is sure, that when the gifts of the spirit are in this sort gone, then he that was most righteous before, may soon fall into great sins, yea and which is more, they shall also suffer the reproach of their sins. For this is a part of the covenant that God made with his. That though he will not take his mercies utterly from them, yet he will visit their sins with the rod, and their iniquities with scourges: and what grief this is, the example of God's children may show us. What grief was it to Noah to become a laughing stock to his own son? What heart-breaking to David, by his own son to be thrust from his kingdom? So grievous were those punishments laid upon them, that if without any respect of hell or heaven, we could consider of them, we had rather want all the pleasures of sin, which they enjoyed, then we could bear the reproach and feel the pain which they suffered. Last of all, when the graces of the spirit of God are once decayed, they can never be repaired and recovered, but with much sorrow and great danger: for it cannot but breed much sorrow of heart, to remember his former sins, to examine and see the greatness of them, to apply God's judgments to them, and to provoke himself to sorrow for them. This is as it were to go through the pikes, and through a purgatory in this present life; and yet this must be done, before we can recover God's graces again. Again, it is a very dangerous thing: for in such cases men are brought as it were with Jonah, into the bottom of the sea: and as David saith, into the deep waters, so that all the surges and waves do pass and flow over him. Now we know what danger it is for a man to be thrust overhead and ears into the deep waters: and therefore they that are in such a case, are in great danger. Wherefore all these things considered, the loss of all our labor, the loss of all true joy, the unfitness to do good, the readiness to sin; the grief and

danger that ensueth thereof, will, or at the least wise may cause us to beware how we quench the spirit. And this is the use of the doctrine, in humbling of us: which also doth furthermore serve to comfort us, knowing that we may suffer a great decay of God's graces; yet by the rod, or by the word of God, or by both, they shall be renewed in us again. And thus much of this commandment that the Apostle giveth here, that we should not quench the spirit.

## **SERMON II**

### **OF MURMURING**

Exo. 16:2.

And all the congregation of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron.

Many men nowadays hearing the often murmurings of the children of Israel, do even spit at them, and account them as the worst people under the Sun, which would so often and so obstinately rebel against the Lord. But these men do little consider either the temptations, wherewith the Israelites were provoked to murmur, or the corruption of their own hearts, which will as bitterly murmur upon less occasion. For albeit they were an obstinate and stiff-necked people, as Moses witnesseth of them, ever since they came out of Egypt until now: yet here no doubt they were vehemently tempted, when they from the plenty of all things, which in Egypt they enjoyed, were brought into a rough and desert wilderness, being six hundred thousand men, besides women and children, and great store of cattle, having neither meat nor drink, wherewith they might be nourished. Wherefore let us cease to wonder at this people, and let us in them see our own corruption, and we shall find it to be as great as



ever theirs was. For do not many men, I pray you, even among us, beholding the riches of others, or the plenty of things which the Lord bestoweth upon his Magistrates, or ministers, for the faithful discharge of their duties, do they not, I say, murmur against God's servants set over them? And are they not more grieved for the want of such things, than thankful for that the Lord hath freed them from such troubles, which others have, or given them sufficient to live upon? True it is, notwithstanding the greatness of this people's temptation, yet their sin was wicked in them, and great and heinous in the sight of God, because that whereas they had often times manifold ways, and after a wonderful manner felt and tasted of the goodness of the Lord, in so much that the very unthankfullest of them all, had been driven to confess it: (for wonderful was their deliverance out of Egypt, so miraculous was their preservation at the red sea, and infinite mercies more above hope and expectation bestowed upon them) yet now forgetting all his former benefits, would so grudge and murmur for the want of meat, that rather than they would continue still, they would wish again to return to bondage. And indeed such is the nature of murmuring, that it will cause a man not only to forget God's benefits, but to forget that he is a man. It prevailed so much with this people, that they wished themselves again in Egypt, although they knew that there they were most miserably afflicted: and that the Lord in carrying them thither at the first, did in justice punish them for their sin. And this wish of theirs is as much as if they should have said, would the Lord had at once cut us off and destroyed us, rather than left us in this case. Thus they were contented to do, so that they might have their bellies full, and rather than they would depart from their flesh-pots and other pleasures, which in Egypt they enjoyed: Many are like minded to these people nowadays: for we see diverse upon their death-beds very senseless and secure, who can be contented with open mouth to record the goodness of God towards him in things concerning this

present life: but in the meantime, being without hope, sense or feeling of the sweet joys to come, do die thus by their fleshpots. Othersome, if they be brought to any misery, as poverty, sickness or such like, do bear it so impatiently, that in their hearts, and oftentimes in open speeches they wish they never had been borne: showing thereby that their flesh-pots do more like them, and their health doth better please them, than the goodness and loving countenance of the Lord. None of all these do ever consider what they have received of the Lord, but their eyes are still upon their wants; and the want of one thing that they do desire, though it be but small, is more disquietness unto them, and maketh them to murmur, more than the enjoying of many benefits which they have, can quiet their hearts, in the trust of God's providence, or make them thankful. Now if any of us shall be brought to wish our death by the grief of any affliction, let us shake it off, and put it far from us, the desire is evil: for it is better (as Solomon saith) to be a living dog, than a dead lion. For be we never so miserable whilst we live, there is a time left for repentance, but after death there is none: therefore in thy life time labor to feel God's mercy in Jesus Christ, and then no misery shall ever hurt thee, till thou be gathered into his kingdom.

This shalt thou learn to do if thou canst receive the favor of God for itself, though it come alone, yea though trouble do come therewith, knowing and persuading thine own heart, that having it thou hast all things; and if thou want it, yet in greatest abundance thou hast nothing. Again, if thou have it, no manner of misery can make thee miserable: and if thou have it not, in greatest felicity thou art most miserable. But the Israelites dealt hereafter a clean contrary manner: for the want of bread here in the wilderness, being put for their bodies, did make them to despise their great and wonderful deliverance out of Egypt, which was unto them a sign of their spiritual deliverance. And this is the nature of all natural and worldly

men, so basely to estimate God's graces, that they had rather forgo many richer spiritual benefits and blessings, then one worldly and corporal commodity: for the want of riches doth vex and trouble them, more than the want of spiritual and heavenly graces: and the having of riches doth more rejoyce their hearts, than the burden of sin, which procureth God's wrath, doth work their grief. Such men know not that riches are no sure signs of God's favor, though he in the abundance of his mercy doth let his Sun shine upon the wicked and upon the good: so that the having of riches is no argument that he loveth us; nor the want of them is any argument of his displeasure towards us. Who so therefore seeketh God in these outward things only, and bindeth his favor unto them, doth neither with them, nor without them, duly esteem of the favor of God, but setteth light thereby: which although in plain words he speaketh not, (for the children of Israel here did not flatly speak against the Lord, but against his Ministers Moses and Aaron ) yet whilst he is careless of the word, prayer, and Sacraments, and despiseth and grudgeth against God's Ministers and servants, he manifestly declareth what price it beareth in his heart. It standeth every man in hand then, in his own heart to feel his sin, and to be sorrowful for it; to know it is in him, and then to leave it: least the god of this world whom he serveth, do for a while give him his desire, that in the world to come he may have him for his portion: and to such as acknowledge this murmuring to be a sin, and be grieved for it, there followeth remedies to help out of it.

For as much as impatience and murmuring proceedeth from infidelity, the remedy therefore must be fetched, first from faith in God's mercies, and in the benefits which Christ hath by his death purchased unto us, and in the hope of the Resurrection to everlasting life, and in God's fatherly providence: which things if we do believe, we must also believe that God in this life will sufficiently minister

unto all our wants: and unless we do believe them, we do not, neither can we believe with assurance that the Lord will preserve us. But if we doubt whether the Lord will help us in earthly things, we must needs much more doubt of his favor in spiritual benefits First therefore the great and rich mercy of the Lord, and his favorable dealing with us, being duly considered, shall be very profitable to work in us patience: for if we see how the Lord forbearth us, and rewardeth us, not according to our sins: nay, if we see that when for the ripeness of our sins he might confound us, yet he doth not so much as punish us; and when he might justly punish us, yet he dealeth mercifully with us, and bestoweth his mercies upon us. If (I say) we can acknowledge this to be his ordinary dealing, that by his long suffering he doth lead us to repentance, and by his manifold mercies he doth as it were wean us from our sins, this would much bridle our murmuring, and instruct us to patience. And yet we see a further thing then this in this people of Israel: for the Lord doth not only bear with their sins, and bestow many mercies upon them; but to help them, and to do them good, he doth use extraordinary means; as to bring down bread from heaven, to make water gush out of the Rock: where he showeth, that for the safety of his people, even when all means do fail, and when to man's judgment there is no way to find out help or deliverance; yet there will the Lord magnify his mercy towards his servants, and will work wonders for their preservation. He doth not thus deal with the Israelites only, but he maketh this his ordinary dealing with his servants from time to time. As Moses applieth this place, when he saith, The Lord hath fed thee with this Manna forty years, that thou mayest know that man liveth not by bread only: and Christ in our person, being tempted to use unlawful means, overcame the devil with this answer, Man liveth not by bread only. Teaching us, and leaving us an example to have the same answer in readiness, in the like temptations: knowing and assuring our hearts, that the Lord will by one means or other, do good unto

his children, and dispose of all things that shall befall them for the best: only let them take heed of this, that they rest in his word, and go no further, but by faith wait on him therein, and he will give that shall be sufficient for them, if not in earthly benefits, yet in spiritual graces. (Rom. 2:3, 4; Deut. 8.)

The second help which we must use to refrain our murmuring, is the lively faith of our redemption wrought by Christ, which consisteth in the free forgiveness of our sins, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness unto us, and in the sanctification which is by his holy spirit. First then, if we can steadfastly believe, that God for Christ's sake hath freely forgiven us all our sins, yea that he hath given us his only beloved son, that we might be beloved in him, we shall without any great ado believe that the Lord will not suffer us to want anything, but with him will give us all things: for seeing sin, which is the cause of all misery, is taken away from us, that so we might be with Christ inheritors of the heavens, we may be sure that in the meantime no misery shall hurt us. (Rom. 8)

Thus Abraham having received a promise for seed of his son Isaac, doubting nothing but that the Lord would provide means to bring the same to pass, in the assurance hereof sent his servants to his own people to provide a wife for his son. And these children of Israel no doubt, if they had believed that the Lord had delivered them out of Egypt, that he might bring them to the promised land, they would never have doubted of his merciful preservation, neither here in the wilderness, nor elsewhere, till they had come to the land of promise. And again, if we could firmly believe that God the Father for Christ's sake doth not only not impute our sins unto us, but that he doth also accept us in the righteousness of his Son, imputing the same unto us, how should we doubt of meat or raiment, or any such other thing? For by this means he is made our merciful and loving father, which

knoweth perfectly what things we stand in need of: and for his power is able even in greatest extremities to help us, and for his love and good will towards us will help us: and thus doth he abide forever, and is never changed. For though a mother should forget her children, yet will the Lord never forsake those that love him, and in faith call upon him. To this free forgiveness of sins, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness unto us, there must be added the sanctification of the spirit, as the second part of our redemption: which if we be once thoroughly persuaded of it, it shall be a special help unto us against all impatience and murmuring against the Lord: for it is a greater thing to turn a sinner, than to work wonders in nature. And therefore if in our hearts we can believe that God hath made us of sinful and wicked men, just and righteous; of vile wretches, the vessels of righteousness; of the mansions of the devil, fit temples of his holy spirit; if we do believe that he can make of covetous men, liberal men; of whoremongers, chaste persons; of oppressors, upright dealing men: yea, if we can believe that the Lord both is able, and willing also to deliver us from any sin that is within us, be it never so strong either by nature or by evil custom: and last of all, if we can believe that he is able to make the wolf and the lamb to lie together, the leopard and the kid; shall we ever doubt that he will once fail us, or suffer us to want the thing that is meet for us, seem it never so impossible to be attained unto? (Gen. 24, Isa. 11.)

Thirdly, if we believe that with Christ we shall be raised up at the last day, we shall as steadfastly believe that he will preserve us: for it is a greater matter to raise up our bodies being dead and consumed to dust, than to preserve them whilst they are alive: if he can do the greater, he can do also the less. Moreover, if we be persuaded that our heavenly father hath prepared a kingdom for us in the heavens, we must needs believe that in this life he will not leave us nor forsake us, but will mercifully provide for our necessities: for if he will give us

the greater benefits, he will also give us the less, if he in wisdom see it fit for his glory, and profitable for us.

The fifth thing we must stay ourselves upon, when murmuring doth assail and tempt us, is faith in God's providence. This providence is general or particular, in both which we must be thoroughly grounded, if we will withstand all occasions of murmuring, and not break out, in temptations, into impatience. The general providence of God must be considered, first in creation of all things: secondly, in preserving them. Do we then believe that the Lord made all things of nothing, and shall we not believe that he will preserve them? Now seeing they are made, do we believe that God made all men, and shall we then stand in fear of men? When God created light, before the Sun, the Moon and the Stars; and when he made grass to grow upon the earth, before there was either rain or dew to water them, he did thereby teach us: first, that we should not put too much trust in them whilst we have them: and again, that rather than we should suffer hurt by the want of light, grass, or other such things, the Lord both could and would provide for us without them. Yet now if we should not have the Sun, we would think that light were taken from us; and if we wanted rain, we would soon think we should neither have grass nor corn, nor any fruit of the earth: but the Lord hath ordained these means to serve his providence, not for himself, for without them he can as easily help us, but for our weakness, which otherwise could not easily be assured of his goodness. Secondly, we must believe that God preserveth all, as well as he created them: yea the small sparrow doth not fall upon the earth, without his providence, and he hath a great care over the very beasts of the field: doth the Lord provide for these, and will he not also provide for man? Hath he care of beasts? Yea indeed he hath, because they were made for man: and shall he not much rather have care over man, for whom things were made? Men say they do believe all this: but whilst there is such doubting of

God's providence, and such repining against God, they do plainly show, they do not believe this first article of their faith, neither in creation, nor in the universal government and preservation of all things.

Hereunto we must join the particular providence of God, which if we can be once thoroughly persuaded of, then shall we easily overcome the grief of all our wants. Hath the Lord made anything in vain? Hath he not made all things for his glory? Then if we believe that he hath made our bodies, shall we not also believe that he will provide for them, seeing the creation thereof is more wonderful, than the preservation is? As appeareth, Psalm. 29:139. Hath he care over the wicked to do them good, and will he not much more rejoice over his children to do them good? If the Lord loved us when we were his enemies, will he not provide for us being redeemed by the blood of his son? Did he good unto us when we sought him not, and will he not much more when we seek him by prayer in the blood of his Son, as he hath commanded? If he hath done us good when he might have punished us for our sins, will he not be much more favorable unto us now, seeing he hath by his holy spirit sanctified us? O that men had hearts to believe this, they would then give glory unto God in their distresses, putting their trust in him, and looking for help at his hands in his convenient time. This providence of God must be confirmed unto us by the examples of God's children in all ages, whose examples are set down in the Scriptures, that we by them might learn patience. If the fathers before the flood eating nothing but herbs, yet lived some 700 years, some 800, some 900 years, and some more; shall we not learn thereby, that man liveth not by these means? And again, if he nourished them 900 years, and that with herbs, we may be sure he will feed us 90 years with flesh and fish, and other greater means. When he fed the Israelites forty years with Manna from heaven, which after such a sort was never seen before,



whereof if they reserved any without the Lord's commandment, if straightway putrefied and was corrupted: but when by the commandment of God it was kept before the testimony, it was not corrupted. The Lord left us a lesson that we must learn thereby, namely, that it is not the means, but the blessing of God upon the means, that nourisheth us: and therefore if we have them, we must not put our trust in them: and if we want them, we must not distrust in God. Did Moses and Elijah live forty days without meat? And did the Israelites walk in the wilderness forty years in the same apparel which waxed not old; whereas othersome having meat in abundance, yet are hunger-starved, and being laden with clothes, yet quake for cold: shall we not yet learn that the blessings of God are all in all, and that the other are but means provided for our weakness? David proved by experience, that the righteous seed of the righteous parents, were never forsaken, nor begged their bread. If we no doubt could come to such measure of obedience as they did then, and if we could be righteous as in his time men were, the Lord would provide for us as well as he did for them, and we should have as good experience hereof as ever had David. To this providence of God, we must bring a patient mind, which first must be contented with whatsoever the Lord sendeth, and always acknowledge godliness to be great riches. For we ought not to seek great matters, nor suffer our desires to be carried after high things: for this did the Lord by his Prophet Jeremiah rebuke in Baruch. And Christ giveth us another rule, when he teacheth us to pray for daily bread; which when we have, then must we be contented. This mind was in our father Jacob, when he prayed for nothing else but meat and clothing. And this doth Paul generally command to be in all, saying, When we have meat and clothing let us be contented. We must first therefore seek the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof: we must first labor for the forgiveness of our sins in Christ, that so we may be in the favor of God, and enjoy the light of his loving countenance; which

when we have, and feel, let us esteem it above all earthly treasure, as David doth: let us receive it though it come alone, yea, though it bring troubles with it, and then for outward things, we shall possess our souls in patience. If the Lord give plenty of them, we shall take it as an overplus of his favor: but if he give the less, yet shall we be contented, because we bind not his favor to these outward things: but if we cannot rest in the favor of God, though we want these outward things, it is certain we never truly esteemed the favor of God, neither did we ever feel the forgiveness of our sins, if we could not when we felt it be therewith contented, and ready to forgo all other things. (Psal. 37, Phil. 4:11, Gen. 18, 1 Tim. 6, Psal. 4)

The second property of a patient mind is, simply to give up itself unto God, and commit itself into his hand, waiting at all times for help from him, who only is the author of all goodness, yet neither prescribing the means, nor appointing the time, nor in any case indenting with him: for the Lord will have the disposition of his mercies free unto himself, to give and to bestow, when and where, and how it pleaseth him, and as it may most make for his glory. We must then evermore and with our whole hearts, desire and crave of the Lord, that his blessed Name may be glorified, that his Kingdom may be enlarged, and his holy will performed: but the means to bring these things to pass, we must wholly leave unto him, who knoweth what is best: and in other things which concern our outward estate, we ought always to rest in his good pleasure. This, if we can once do, so mercifully doth he use to deal with us, that when we least desire them we shall have them: and when we freely give them up to him, he will soonest give them us again. Solomon desired wisdom of the Lord, but for outward things, his prayer was that he might have a mean estate; then the Lord gave him wisdom, which his heart so much desired, and riches also which he did not once desire Oh happy man if in his heart he had desired to walk before the Lord in fear!

Abraham gave unto the Lord Isaac his son, which when the Lord did behold, he quickly gave him his son again: even thus also must we think it standeth now with us. The readiest way to obtain life, is to be heartily well contented either to live or to die, and to commit ourselves unto the Lord, knowing that nothing ever perished that was committed to his keeping: so is it also in all other outward things, the ready way to obtain them, is to give them up wholly into his hands. But yet we must not commit these things to the Lord with this condition, that he should give them us again, for that were to mock the Lord: but without all care to have them, we must give them to him, being (in respect of his glory, and because his good pleasure is so) heartily well content to forgo them, and then if they be good for us, we shall receive them again; if not, we shall receive some spiritual grace, which better shall supply the want of them. Yea, the infinite wisdom and mercy of God doth wonderfully appear herein: for sometimes he keepeth us long without these things, because that if we had them, he seeth we would abuse them, and would prefer them before spiritual blessings. And sometime the Lord seeing our small regard and accompt of spiritual things, will by the want of these outward things, bring us to make greater accompt of them, that when we can well want the one, and highly esteem the other, we may have both together. Let us therefore reverence this great goodness and wisdom of the Lord, and be content with the use of life which he in mercy granteth us, knowing that it is better to be a living dog then a dead Lyon. For whilst we live we have time to repent, and time to glorify God: but after death there is no time left for repentance. Whosoever then doth not account the use of life a singular benefit, though he do even want things necessary for the same, he is unworthy of life, or of any other the blessings of God therein. (Prov. 30)

The end of all then is this, that patience is wrought in us, and strengthened by the assurance of God's mercies, by faith in Christ, by hope of everlasting life, and by trust in God's providence: and therefore the carking care of these things is left to the Gentiles, which are ignorant of the forgiveness of sins, of God's providence, and of everlasting life: so that if we be like them in these greedy desires, it argueth that either we know not these things, or if in judgment we do conceive them, yet in heart we do not believe them. By meditation therefore of these things we must learn patience, whereby we may overcome our murmuring and grudging nature, whensoever our flesh by any occasion is provoked thereunto.

FINIS.

## **SERMON III**

### **OF ZEAL**

Rev. 3:19.

Be zealous therefore and amend.

As Zeal can never be sufficiently commended, so much less may it effectually be persuaded to many: howbeit, that we may shadow out some Anatomy thereof, let us first see how God commendeth it, then how he rewardeth it, that so we may the more freely with greater authority speak of the thing itself. What is the use of the first four Commandments, but that we should with zeal worship the Lord? The first precept chargeth all men with the matter of God his worship, showing what it is. The second chargeth us with the manner, prescribing how we must use it. The third imposeth on us the right end of his worship, and teacheth why we must do it. The fourth

commandment pointeth the time, and instructeth us when we must solemnly profess and exercise this worship of God. Concerning the large promise offered to pure zeal, what is greater than that the Lord should bind himself to advance them into the chair of honor before all the world, who will honor him? Again, that he will defame them most surely with some notable mark of infamy that dishonor him: yea, and he will vomit them up as a loathsome burden, to testify his utter misliking of them. First now let us consider how true zeal beginneth in ourselves, and taketh his proceedings to others. For never can that man be zealous to others, which never knew to be zealous to himself. And as zealous men in their ascendent begin at themselves, and go to others; so in their retrograde they come from others, and end in themselves. If we consider the zeal of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Daniel, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, we shall never see expressly in the word, that at any time they were more zealous to others than to themselves. We see on the contrary, how it hath been a fearful note of hypocrites, and such as have fallen from the living God, that they have waded very deeply into other men's possessions, and gored very bloodily into the consciences of others, who never once purged their own unclean sinks at home, nor drew one drop of blood out of their own hearts. How zealous (as woeful and late experience still crieth in our ears) were some great reformers of the Church, who were ready to burst their bowels with crying against disorders abroad, and yet never reformed their own consciences at home, nor found themselves any whit grieved for their own sins? These men being so zealous to others, but only through some secret love of the world, when they had that they sought for, made known their hollow and rotten zeal, in that without any grief of conscience, they could rush into a profound worldliness, and without all godly sorrow, could after they had satisfied their greedy and fleshly zeal, not only more hardly sear up their own consciences, but also be so changed that they sow up their lips, and spare their words

from speaking in the like manner again to others, and so are neither zealous to themselves nor others. True zeal casteth the first stone at ourselves, and plucketh the beam out of our own eyes, that we may the better draw the more out of another's eye. And this is the condemnation of the world, that every man can pry, and make a privy search into the wants of others but they account the same wants no wants in themselves. The father saith, thus the child doth: so the child saith, in this duty doth his father fail: the husband knoweth what the wife should do; the wife seeth the duties of her husband: we think in this particular another should behave himself; but yet the father repenteth not of the sins which he did being a child, the child repenteth not of his sins being a father, we call not in our consciences for those things which we dare challenge and one out for in others. (1 Sam. 2:30, Matt. 7)

Here offereth itself the second property of zeal, that it is sincere, and in the truth, it urgeth ourselves more than others, it maketh us the most severe censurers of our own souls it is strictest to ourselves, and offereth liberty to others: and this simplicity appeareth either in inward corruption, or in the liberty of outward things: the first whereof doth so humble us in the wants present, and in those corruptions, which hang behind us, that we are zealous of those secret evils which are not only unespied of others, but even unknown also to ourselves. Although the whole world cannot charge us with want of duty, yet considering our privy corruptions, we daily declaim against ourselves, and say with the Apostle, though our consciences do not oppress us, yet herein we are not justified. Yea such ought to be our familiarity and acquaintance with secret infirmities in ourselves, so grievous ought they to be in our eyes, in our ears, to our faces, that where we shall see, hear, and behold the sins of others, they may be more tolerable, and so learn by the sense of our own sores, to deal more mildly and meekly with the sores of others.

Neither do I mean, that we should make other men's sins no sins, and that we should have no kind of censure unto others, but that there should be that holy mixture in us of the zeal of God's glory, and sight of human corruption, that for the one we may not spare to rebuke any sin; and for the other we may moderate our rebukes with mildness and meekness Abraham was so strict to himself, that he would not take of the King of Sodom so much as a thread or a latchet, and yet he would not deny Aner, Echol and Mamre their liberty. Job would not permit to himself, nor deny to his children their liberty of feasting: so that it is rather a Pharisaical pride than a Christian zeal, to be too tetricall in urging of others so far, that whosoever in every point is not pure and precise as we, we cast them off as dogs and profane persons, and such as are unworthy of any account or countenance. (1 Cor. 4:4)

This then must be our pedagogy in this point, that as for the glory of God which is deer unto us, we are not to leave the least sin unespied, or the least means unattempted to advance the glory of God. So for the grievousness of sin, for the easiness to fall into sin, for the vileness of corruption which we have observed in ourselves, for the knowledge of the wrath of God for sin in us, we are loath, for love, to see our brother either so vilely infected, and so perilously endangered, to go without our loving admonition, both to draw him out of his sin, and to rescue him from the wrath of God due to his sin.

Further, this attribute of true zeal maketh us as willing to be admonished, as careful to admonish: and that not only of our superiors, which is an easy thing, because it is a thing whereto of necessity we must yield; but also of our inferiors, whom we may seem to contemn. For all men will grant that a child ought willingly to be admonished of his father, or a servant ought obediently to be reprehended of his master: but few will in practice give this, that a

father should listen to the advertisement of his son, or that the master should receive an admonition of his servant. Howbeit, Job saith, he durst not condemn the judgment of his servant or of his maid when they did contend with him, because in a duty of piety he looketh to them not as servants, but as brethren; he looked not to the speaker only, which in respect of his calling was his inferior, but unto the things spoken in the ordinance of God, unto whom Job himself was an inferior, and before whom Job knew there was no respect of persons. Howbeit, to correct the preposterous boldness of some, we rather add this much, that inferiors must rather advise than admonish; advertise rather than reprehend their superiors, that so still they may offer their pure zeal of the glory of God in unfeigned humility, least through their corrupt zeal they do not only not profit their superiors, but most justly exasperate them against them. For as Magistrates, Ministers and masters by God his ordinance, are to admonish, rebuke and reprehend: so subjects, inferiors and servants, by the same rule are to advise, obey and advertise. Thus zeal goeth from respect of the person to the truth of the cause. (Job 31)

Another property of zeal is to be constant, not to be hot by fits, cold in the end, and only so long as the world favoereth, it must not be earnest in the beginning and secure in the ending, but keep a continual tenor and temperature. Job's wife seemed to go far so long as she could wash her paths with butter. Saul and Pharaoh had some good motions by fits, and upon some occasion could play fast and loose, being of a strange complexion, that they could be hot and cold in a moment. This property of zeal teacheth us how to be affected, in the prosperity and afflictions of the Church, namely, that the public prosperity of Zion should comfort us, and cause us to rejoice when our private crosses might make us sad. As Paul being imprisoned was not so grieved at his own bonds, as he rejoiced at the liberty of the Gospel of Christ. Again, that the affliction of the Saints should move



us to a godly grief, even when in respect of ourselves we might greatly rejoice. As Daniel could not find comfort in his private prosperity, though he were in great authority, and exempted from the common calamity, because he knew the Church of God to be in misery.

But to go forward, pure zeal is not blinded with natural affection, but it discerneth and condemneth sin, though it be never so nearly resident in our kindred. Many offend against this rule, who never will rebuke sin in their friends, even until God revenge it from heaven, where they are far from true friendship: for whereas they might by admonishing them of their faults in time, prevent the judgments of God, they do through a false love and manifest hatred pull the judgments of God upon them, whom they love most dearly. He loveth most naturally, that hath learned to love spiritually; and he loveth most sincerely that cannot abide sin in the party loved, without some wholesome admonition. But do not many nowadays zealously mislike sin in strangers, who will not mislike the self-same sin if it come to kindred, if it be in our wife, in our children, or in our parents, as though the diversity of subjects could make the self-same thing sin in some, and not in other some. This blind zeal God hath punished, and doth punish in his children. Isaac did carnally love his son Esau, for meat and for a piece of venison. David was too much affected to Absalom for his beauty, and to Adonijah for his comely stature, so as his zeal was hindered in discerning sin aright in them. Now Jacob was not so dear to Isaac, and Solomon was more hardly set to school and to take pains. But behold God loving Jacob, and refusing Esau, howsoever Isaac loved Esau better than Jacob; made Esau most troublesome, and Jacob more comfortable unto him. Absalom and Adonijah brought up like cockuies, became corrosives to David's heart, Solomon more restrained of God, less set by of David, was his joy, his crown, his successor in his kingdom. This

disease is so hereditary to many parents, loving their children in the flesh rather than the spirit, that the holy Ghost is fain to call upon them more vehemently, to teach, to instruct, and to correct, as knowing how easily nature would cool zeal in this kind of duty. Indeed many will set by their wives, children and kinsfolk, if they be thrifty, like to become good husbands, witty and politic: or if they be such as for their gifts can bring some revenue to their stock, or afford some profit unto them, how deep sinners soever they be against God, that maketh no matter, it little grieveth them: whereby they bewray their great corruption, that they neither are zealous in truth or God's glory, nor lovers aright of their children, because they can be sharp enough in reprehension, if they fail but a little in thriftiness, and yet are cold enough in admonition if they fail never so much in godliness. Well, let these fleshly zealous men lay to their heart the blind affection of Heli, who being the dear child of God, was severely punished of the Lord, for that he was not zealously affected to punish sin against God in his dear children: but blessed are they that can forget their own cause, and even with jeopardy of nature can defend the quarrel of God, henceforth laboring to know no man after the flesh, but to endeavor spiritually by faith to see and know Christ Jesus, so as no outward league do blear and dazzle our eyes, as that we should not espy sin in the nearest kindred to correct it: or that we should not discern virtue in the greatest aliens to reverence it. Casting off then this veil of fleshly love, we must labor to love most where the image of God appeareth most, and there show our affections in less measure, where sin may be as a mark whereby God restraineth our love, even to them where nature may soonest deceive us.

Now whereas many have great courage to rebuke such as either cannot gainsay them, or gainsaying them, cannot prevail against them, here cometh another property of zeal to be spoken of, and that

is, that it feareth not the face of the mighty, neither is it dismayed at the looks of the proud and the lofty. Such a courage was in Job, who besides that he made the young men ashamed of their liberty and afraid of his gravity, made even the Princes also to stay their talk, and to lay their hands on their mouths. And yet here we must beware of their hasty zeal, who will not stick to charge the children of God to be without zeal, if presently and abruptly they rush not into an open reprehension of men that are mighty in authority, as though no regard of place, time and persons were to be had: which opinion many by weakness of judgment defending, find neither fruit in others, nor comfort in their own consciences, when they do admonish in that presumptuous manner: for that hunting after ferventness without the spirit of meekness, and casting off all consideration of a godly opportunity, they rather exasperate than humble the parties admonished, and they themselves rather depart with confusion and shame, for such posting on without warrant of wisdom, and not according to knowledge, than with comfort of heart for any duty done. Neither am I here ignorant how great danger of trouble of mind cometh to many, in that they being so curious observers and waiters of opportunity, do for some ease of the flesh, under the cloak of this wisdom, altogether leave off that godly duty. Wherefore as we affirm that wisdom and love mixed together, do deeply enter into the most prefract and prodigious spirits: so we mislike their fearful delay of duty, who having a mean occasion offered them from the Lord, do not earnestly pursue the quarrel of the Lord, and earnestly rebuke sin though in some higher personages. (Job 29:8, 9)

Out of this may issue another fruit of right zeal, namely, when we are zealous in their behalf who can never recompense us again: for flesh and blood will easily admit to rebuke the injuries, and revenge the oppressions used to men of credit and ability, because it is a wary

wisdom to patronage them in lesser things, who can be our patrons again in greater things. Thus Job delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless and him that had none to help him, he was the eyes to the blind, the foot to the lame, at whose hands no hope of reward was to be looked for.

But to draw to the last and most glorious property, this thing in zeal is most commendable, when we are humbled in our own souls for those sins which we espy and censure in others, even as though we ourselves for want of instruction or prayer, were in some sort guilty of their sins. If this rule were received in judgment, and revered in practice of Ministers, Magistrates, and masters, when they are to admonish their inferiors of sin, it is sure it would breed in them great conscience and religion. Alas we see many who can mangle and martyr a man for some offense, who never learned for conscience sake to mourn for those infirmities which so bitterly he would inveigh against in others. Let us consider this in ministers, how the Apostle saith to the Corinthians: I fear least when I come, my God abase me among you, and I shall bewail many of them which have sinned already, &c. Which no doubt he did as thinking that he did not duty enough, but that there was even some cause of grief in himself. Did the Apostle who had so little or no cause so to do, thus lament and suspect himself, as though he had not used all good means, or with the means good affections; and should the ministers of our time, whose gifts and pains are far inferior, nothing be moved for the sins of them for whom they ought to care and mourn? Well, I hope that even at this day there are some that fear they have not in preaching publicly, opened all the mysteries of God to them, they think they have failed in private admonition, they suspect themselves of want of praying for them, they are ready to accuse themselves, that they have not walked so wisely and warily in using their liberty before them, or that their life hath not yielded that example of

godliness to them, as they ought to have done. And so in the whole discourse almost of the sins of the several Churches, the holy Ghost runneth on in this tenor, that whatsoever is spoken of the Church, is spoken to the Angels, that is, to the ministers of the Church, who are said to have this or that sin, which indeed was in the people. (2 Cor. 12:21)

In the Primitive Church when the credit of the Apostles was called into question, they might seem to have been much troubled about the matter: but they were much humbled by it, they examined themselves, they accused themselves, and afterward they instituted a new ministry. But doth not this duty as deeply charge Ministers and Masters to mourn for the sins of their people? Yes doubtless, and for good reason. For if they will confess that they must rejoice in the good things that befall their children and families, they must also lament the evils which betide them, so long as they are under their tuition and government.

FINIS.

## **SERMON IV**

### **OF A GOOD NAME**

Prov. 22:1.

A good name is to be desired above great riches, and loving favor above silver and gold.

All that is to be desired of a man is this, that he be virtuous, godly, and truly religious. This, because it is in itself most excellent and most contrary to our nature, therefore the Scripture useth many

arguments and reasons to persuade us thereunto: as in this place, where the Wise man would stir us up to the love of virtue, by setting before our eyes two principal effects and fruits which we may receive by it. The first of these is, a good name: the second is, loving favor: both which as they do proceed from virtue and godliness, so they do maintain and increase one another. For as a man findeth much favor with those that do speak and report well of him: so those that will show a man loving favor, will, or at least ought to show it in this, that they may willingly afford him a good report. Now both these are preferred before great riches, both these are accounted better than gold and much silver: and surely whosoever is truly wise will make this account of them, whosoever doth rightly know to discern what is good, he will first and especially labor for them: for a good name doth commend us to God and to his holy Angels, in whose eyes those virtues whereof a good name doth arise, are most acceptable. But riches are not able to do this, no, the abundance of silver and gold is often an occasion of sin, whereby we are most out of the favor of God. Again, whereas riches, especially if they be evil gotten, do cause men many times to hate us, this good name and loving favor doth win the hearts of many, yea it doth sometimes cause our enemies to be at peace with us. And this ever hath been and ever will be most certain and true, whether we look to prosperity or adversity, whether we look to the common callings of this civil life, or the callings of the Church. For such is the corruption of man's nature, that naturally they do not love the Magistrates, that God hath placed over them: but when the Magistrate hath gotten a good report by the due execution of justice, by his pitiful dealing with the poor, and by his fatherly favor to all that be good, then will his subjects love him, then will they embrace him, then will they willingly commit their matters into his hands, and then will they with faithful and friendly hearts clean and stick fast unto him. To be short, that Lawyer hath most clients, that Physician hath most patients, and that Merchant most

customers, whose virtuous and godly dealings have gotten them a good report.

In the callings of the Church this also is true: for if any preacher by the faithful discharge of his duty, and by his godly life, have once gotten the favor and friendship of men, how gladly will men hear him, how quietly will they be ruled by him, in what simplicity will they make known their griefs unto him, and how careful will they be to procure his good. The Schoolmaster also that hath the name of learning to teach, of discretion to rule, of godliness to train up his scholars in the fear of God, he never wanteth scholars, but the most and best men of all will flock unto him. Contrariwise, if any of those be discredited through any evil name, if the Magistrate be accounted an oppressor or a tyrant, the Lawyer be reported to deal deceitfully, if the Minister be corrupted either in doctrine or life, if the Schoolmaster be once known to be insufficient in learning, unwise in government, profane and of no religion; then will all men be afraid to have any dealing with them. Those things are often found true in peace and prosperity: but in adversity, as in the time of war, in the time of sickness, and in the time of want and poverty, they be found most true. Will not all the poor commonalty in the time of war, seek some aide at that Magistrate, who in the time of peace did good unto them? Nay rather will they not all with one consent come together, to help and defend them even with all their might, and with life itself, seeing that he hath used all good means to save and defend their lives? Contrariwise, how many Kings, how many Captains, how many Magistrates have even in their greatest need been left and forsaken of their subjects and soldiers, because they have too sharply and unmercifully ruled them? And which is more than this, the subjects have even procured the death of their princes, the soldiers have laid violent hands upon their captains, and the tenants have been the first that have sought the death of their Landlords, because no pity, no

compassion, no friendship and loving favor hath been showed unto them. Again, if Magistrate, Minister, Master, or any other man by executing the duties of love, have won the hearts of the people, and gotten a good name among them; then in his sickness they will pray for him, they will visit him, they will bear with him a part of his grief. Again, what can be more comfortable to a man than this is, this will glad him at the heart, and this will turn his bed in all his sickness. In poverty also he is soonest and most holpen which hath the best name, and hath obtained through virtue most favor with men. For good men do consider their own case in him, and therefore are most ready to help him: yea even the evil and ungodly men, although they bear him no great good will, yet they are forced to help him, partly because his godly life doth witness unto their souls, that he doth deserve to be holpen, and partly because the Lord doth turn their hearts to favor him. The widow therefore that came to Elijah for help, used this argument to persuade Elijah; O man of God (saith she) my husband is dead, and died in debt, yet he feared God; therefore help I pray thee, seeing the creditors are come: and immediately Elijah helped her. On the other side, if a man be evil reported of, if he be an adulterer, an Atheist, an Idolater, a riotous person, or a man of hard dealing, and if such a one be once brought into some low estate, if he once fall into poverty and need, then the hearts of men are shut up against him, no man will pity him, and all men will see and say, his own sin is brought upon him. And thus hath the testimony of the Prophets, who did often threaten such kind of punishments to ungodly men, so that no man should say, Ah my father, or ah my mother: but the whole city should be glad of their departure. This did the heathen people see in some part, and therefore all of them did greatly desire a good name: and as every one of them did excel in strength and in courage, or in wit, or any kind of knowledge; so they did labor by that thing to get some credit to themselves. And to conclude this point, though a man have many good things in him,



though a Magistrate do fear God greatly, though a Minister be excellent in many points, though a Physician or Lawyer be skillful in their profession, yet if they have not a good name, they can do little good with their gifts. All this doth teach us that indeed to be true which Solomon here saith, that a good name is to be chosen above great riches, and loving favor above silver and gold. Now the instructions which we may gather out of this place are chiefly two. (Psal. 40:1)

The first is, that we ought not to hurt our neighbors above all things in their good name: and therefore the Lord in his law hath ordained, that he which doth such a thing, should have the same punishment which he purposed to bring upon another. Men would be loath to steal the goods of any man from him and yet the name of a man is more worth than all things in the world: therefore if any man by raising up false reports do impair his brothers credit, he doth hurt him, and sinneth more grossly and more grievously, than if he had taken away his lands or his living, his corn or his cattle, or any other thing that he hath. And though the thing be false which he reporteth, yet he sinneth nevertheless: for after that time even good men will be more suspicious, and the wicked will not let it go out of their minds: But if this be against a Preacher, or professor of the Gospel, then the sin is the greater, because God and his word becometh dishonored thereby.

The second instruction is, that we must be careful by all good means to get and maintain our good name. For if it be a sin to discredit another man, then much more is it a sin to discredit ourselves: if we be charged to further the good name of our brother, then are we straitly commanded to help forward our own as much as we be able: then it cannot be without great sin, that a man should cast off all care of his own credit. The very Heathen saw this to be a fault, and they

did commonly say, that whosoever regardeth not the reports of men, he is dissolute indeed, and hath in effect lost the nature of man. And therefore we may well say, that he is without all hope of amendment, which is not brought to some remorse and sorrow, which with a shameless face can face out sin, having adders cares and will not hear, charm the charmer never so wisely. As then a shameless face openeth a door to all ungodliness, so due care of credit causeth a man to be very careful of his ways: whosoever therefore will live godly, he must safely provide for his good name. Seeing these things be so, it shall be profitable to consider how this good name may be gotten and preserved: and again, if we be discredited, what use and profit we must make of it. For the first, it is certain that seeing fame and honest report are good things, therefore they must needs arise and spring of those things that are good, as of virtue, godliness and good religion. Now whereas Turks and such ungodly men have great favor amongst the people, and be well reported of, this indeed is no good name, because it ariseth not of goodness, it is only a vain applause of the simple people: nay, it is even the great and fierce wrath of God upon them, though they neither see nor perceive it, when they be well spoken of for their evil deeds. For by this means they be hardened in their sin, by this means they be hindered and holden from repentance, then the which there is not a greater punishment under the Sun. Such a name then is not to be desired, nay we ought rather to pray against such a name. And if we will purchase a good name and be of good report, then let us take heed that we seek it by goodness and virtue, and then it will be a good name indeed. But let us weigh these things more particularly, and let us know that the first step to a good name, is the careful and continual avoidance of evil, both outward and inward. In outward and gross evils we must first beware of all evil generally: which thing if we be not careful to do, then will our good name be soon impaired. Secondly, we must narrowly look unto some special sins, whereunto

our nature is most inclinable and subject: For as one dead fly corrupteth a whole box of ointment, though it be most precious; so some one sin doth often crack the credit of a man, though otherwise he have been very well reported of. And if it behooveth every man thus nearly to look to his ways, then much more is it needful that every child of God should so do. For the world, through the hatred it beareth to them, dealeth with them as it dealeth with witches and Physicians. The witch though she fail in twenty things, yet if she do someone thing aright, though it be but small, the world loveth and commendeth her for a good and wise woman. But the Physician, if he work six hundredth cures, yet if through the waywardness of his patient, or for the punishment of his patients sin he fail but in one, that one fail doth more turn to his discredit, than his manifold goodly and notable cures do get him praise. In this manner doth the world deal with men, if a worldly man have but an outward gift of strength, of speech, or of comeliness, he shall be greatly praised and counted a goodly man, though he be an Idolater, or a profane person, and though he swim and flow over in all manner of vices. But let the child of God be truly zealous in true religion, let him be honest and holy in conversation, yet if there be but one infirmity in him, or if he have through weakness fallen once into some one sin, that one infirmity against which he striveth, or that one sin for which he is grieved, shall drown all the graces of God in him be they never so great, and the world will account him a most wicked man. Seeing then this is the enmity of the world against God's people, how warily ought they to walk in so crooked and froward a generation? And hereof they must be so much the more careful, because the wicked by such slips and infirmities, will not only take occasion to discredit them, but even to speak of all their profession, yea and to blaspheme the glorious word of God and his eternal truth. Then if we be careful of our own good name, nay if we have any zeal of God's glory, if we have any care of the word, if we have any love of the Saints; then let

us carefully shun all and every infirmity, whereby God's name is dishonored, his glorious Gospel blasphemed, his children grieved, and we ourselves discredited amongst the wicked. And thus much for the open and outward sin. (Ecc. 10:1)

As open sin committed in the sight and view of men hath always the punishment of an evil name joined with it: so also secret sins which are hidden as it were in the dark corners of our hearts, do bring us out of favor and credit with God: and when we be once out of credit with him, then doth he make our sins further known unto men. For nothing is so hidden that shall not be brought to light, and nothing so secret that shall not be discovered in the sight of the world. And that we may the better be persuaded of this, let us all know of a surety, that the Lord hath many means to bring such things to light: for he can make the fields to have eyes to see our wickedness, he can make the woods to have ears to hear our ungodly counsels: yea he can cause the walls of our bedchambers to bear witness against us for the sins committed upon our beds. If this will not serve, he can go further, and cause our friends to fall out with us, and the men of our counsels to bewray our wickedness. And though he hath not any such purpose when we make him privy to our naughty devices, yet in displeasure the Lord doth cause him all at once to lay open all our secrets. Yea rather than thou shouldest bear no reproach for thy secret faults, the Lord will cause thine own mouth to testify against thee, and thine own words shall get thee discredit: for either unawares thou shalt bewray thyself, or in thy sleep by dreams thou shalt make the thing known, or in thy sickness thou shalt rave of it, or in some frenzy thou shalt vomit it out, or else the torment of thine own conscience shall be so sharp, that even to thine own shame thou shalt confess thy fault. Last of all, when thou thinkest or devisest evil against thy neighbor, though it be never so secretly, yet besides all the former, the Lord hath another means whereby he will bring thee

to discredit for it. And this is a very vehement suspicion raised up in the heart of him, of whom thou devisest this evil: for as it oftentimes comes to pass, that good motions which arise secretly in thy mind for the good of another, do cause the other man to think well of thee, though he did never hear of them: so doubtless doth it often come to pass in evil motions. Thou devisest evil against another, he in some strange manner hath a heartburning in jealousy over thee: thou thinkest hardly of another man, and he also is hardly persuaded of thee. Thus the Lord doth cause thee to be discredited in the hearts of others, as thou imaginest some evil against others in thine heart. True it is, that the party may sin and do very ill if he suspect without just cause, in as much as he doth thus suspect through an immoderate love of himself: yet the work of the Lord is here to be considered, who seeing the cause to be so just, doth stir up such suspicions in his mind.

Then to return to our purpose, if we will avoid an evil name, we must avoid all evil surmises and devises against others. And this the Scripture doth also forbid us: for the Wiseman from the mouth of God doth forbid us to think evil of the King in our bedchambers, because birds and other dumb creatures shall disclose the thing, rather than it shall be kept close. This then must make us afraid to do evil, or to imagine ill in our beds, or to declare our deep counsels even to them that lie in our bosoms. And this, as it is a good means to provide for a good name, so it is a special rule of all godliness, not when we be afraid of open sins alone, but of secret evils: not of acts alone, but even of the secret cogitations and thoughts of our hearts. Thus we have heard the first step that leadeth to a good name. (Ecc. 7)

The second remaineth to be declared: and that is a godly jealousy over a man's own doings, that they may not breed suspicion of evil.

For it doth often come to pass, that albeit a man do not that which is simply evil, he may justly be suspected, and suffer some blemish in his good name. And for this cause doth the Apostle charge us to procure honest things in the sight of God and man. For this cause he commandeth us, that if there be anything honest or of good report, that we must follow, and that we must embrace. It is not enough therefore that men did say, I did think no evil, I did mean no harm: for if through want of care or discretion thou hast ventured upon the occasion, thou hast given great matter of evil speeches to thy great discredit. If then we will avoid this evil name, as our proverb is, we must avoid all things that bring it. For when men will care little to give occasion, then the Lord causeth an evil name to be raised upon them, that those which indeed are desperate may suffer just discredit, and they that are otherwise may be reclaimed from the same. And surely such is the crookedness of man's nature, that if the Lord should not take this course, even his children would fall into many sins. Therefore it is most requisite that men be mindful to avoid occasions, and so much the rather, because it is commonly said, either God or the devil standeth at their elbow to work upon them. Let us see this in some example of our common life. Thou art accustomed to walk abroad at inconvenient times, at that time something is stolen, and thou art burdened and charged with it. Again, thou usest to deal too familiarly and lightly with a maid, she is gotten with child, and the fault is laid on thee. Hereof thou hast given suspicion, because thou hast been a night goer, and such a one as hath dealt want only with the maid, albeit thou be free from the very act. Now if thou be the child of God, and if thou be guided by his holy spirit, then will he teach thee to take profit by this false report, and to say with thyself, Lord thou knowest that I am free from this very act: yet it was my sin to give any such occasion whereby men might suspect me: this sin, O Lord, I am guilty of, and I know thou for this sin hast justly afflicted me. Yet dear father, I see thy mercy in this,

that whereas indeed I have committed many sins, thou hast passed over them, and taken this whereof I am not so much guilty: so that now (most merciful father) I do rather suffer for righteousness, then for my transgression and sin: yea dear Father, I do behold thy tender mercy in this towards me, that by this evil report thou goest about to stay me from that sin, and to prevent me that I may never fall into the same. Wherefore, seeing it hath been thy good pleasure to deal thus with me, behold Lord I do repent me of my former sins, and promise before thee even in thy fear, never to do this, or the like sin ever hereafter.

See here I beseech you the good profit which a good child of God, through God's spirit, will take of this slanderous reproach, after he had received some godly sorrow for giving the occasion of that report. But behold the contrary work of Satan in the heart of unbelievers, for he will soon teach them this lesson, and cause them to say thus: What? Doth the churl accuse me without a cause? Doth he father such a villainous act upon me, who never deserved it at his hands? Surely he shall not say so for naught, I will make his sayings true, and will do the thing indeed. Consider then this ye that fear the Lord, and see in how fickle a state they do stand which have given occasion, and in what great danger they be to be brought to commit the same or the like sin afterward. Therefore if any will be sure to keep his good name, then must he be sure to avoid all such occasions as might in any wise impair and hinder it. And thus much for the second step, whereby we arise to a good name. Thus we have heard of two degrees toward a good name, in the avoiding of evil, and the occasions thereof. And these indeed have a great force to stay an evil name, but sure they be not able to build up a good name and credit among men.

To these therefore there must be added a third thing, which hath most special force for this purpose, and that is, that we be plentiful in good works. This doth our Savior Christ charge us to be careful of, when he saith, Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works. Many repine at the good report of another man, and they be greatly grieved, because they themselves be not in the like or some better credit. But alas, they should rather be grieved at themselves, because the fault is in themselves, for they regard not to do good, they are careless of good works, and therefore the Lord is as careless of them and their credit. Well, he that will be commended, must do the things that be commendable, he must do good works, yea, he must do good and pursue it. Yea, we must know that it is not one good work, nor two, nor three, that can gain us a good name indeed: but it is required at us, that we be rich in well doing, and continually given to every good work. For as a precious ointment (whereto a good name is compared) is made of many and most excellent simples: so a good name cannot be gotten but by many most excellent virtues. Now when we feel ourselves affected to goodness, then we are warily to see to two things: First, that all our works be done with a simple and sincere affection: Secondly, that they be done with good discretion. For when a thing is done indiscreetly and without advise, it loseth the grace and beauty of the deed: and therefore though the thing be good, yet no great praise doth come of it, because it was not done with good discretion. Likewise, when men do things with sinister affections, and to some other end then to the glory of God, they do commonly lose the price of their doings. And hereof it cometh to pass, that many men which do good works to merit by them, or to win the favor of their superiors, or to be of good report among the people, or to some such other end, when (I say) men do things to this end, the Lord punisheth them with the contrary, and instead of deserving glory, he poureth confusion upon them; instead of honor, he giveth contempt;



and instead of riches, beggary. And albeit men may pretend the glory of God, and face out their wickedness with a fresh color, yet the Lord will bring their wickedness to light. And truly it is marvelous to see how the Lord layeth folly upon such men: so that although in their wisdom they think to blear the eyes of all men, the simple soul doth see their shifts to their discredit. Therefore, when thou hast done well, and yet art ill reported of, do not straight way storm against him which hath raised up this report against thee; neither do thou over hastily clear thyself: but rather before the Lord examine thine own heart, and see with what affection thou hast done it. And if we find wickedness in our hearts, then let us be humble before the Lord, and know that he hath caused us thus to be spoken of: first to correct us, and secondly to try us. For when the Lord doth see us like Scribes and Pharisees, seeking rewards, then he doth punish us with the loss of our labor, and with shame amongst men, to see if thereby he can bring us to the sight of our sins, which before we neither would nor could see. And again when we have thus done, he doth try us whether there be any goodness in our hearts, which may move us to continue in well doing, notwithstanding we be evil spoken of. Here then we may see what fruit we must make of such reports: namely, they must first bring us to a sight and feeling of our sins: and secondly, they must cause us with greater uprightness to continue in well doing. True it is, a man may be accused to have this or that purpose in his doings, although he have done the thing in the simplicity of his heart. But when a man through examination doth find his heart upright, then he receiveth great comfort by it: then he may commend himself unto the Lord, and his cause into his hands. For the Lord maintaineth good tongues and hearts, but he will cut out the tongues of them that speak lies. He will cause the righteousness of the righteous to shine as the noon day, and as the Sun after a cloud: but the wicked shall be covered with their own confusion as with a cloak. This shall the godly see and rejoice therein, but the mouths of the

wicked shall be stopped. Thus we have run through the things whereby a good name may be gotten, and not only that, but also whereby a man may be preserved in a good name and credit: and therefore surely the more to be observed and regarded of us. For first of all, we see what force the good continuance of the Churches beyond the Seas hath to persuade men to embrace the truth, and how soon some men will be moved to continue steadfast, when they see the steadfast constancy of good men in all kind of godliness. Again, we know what great offenses are given to the weak, when whole Churches, or some particular persons of some good place and credit, do not stand in that credit, nor maintain by goodness their good name, which they had gotten by great virtues? The very Heathen did see this, and therefore they said that it was as great a praise to keep praise, as to get it: yea, and when they saw what great inconveniences would arise when men did not satisfy the expectation of the people, they thought it much better never to have any good report amongst men, than to lose it after it had been gotten. Therefore to shut up this whole matter in one word, if any man, if any household, if any town, if any country, be careful to have an honest report amongst men, then must they eschew evil and do good, then must they seek peace and pursue it: and if once having gotten a good name, they would gladly keep it, then they must use the same means, so shall we have it both of God and man. (Psalm. 37:5, 6.

Now because men do suffer very much discredit, and are very ill reported of amongst men, it shall be good to consider what profit and use we may make of such reproaches and evil reports. And this shall we do the better, if we know upon what grounds those reproaches do arise. First therefore we must learn, that men may be evil reported of, either for evil, or for well doing. When men therefore are ill spoken of, they must first try whether it be for evil or for good: and if it be for evil, then must they go a degree further, to find whether it be

for some evil work which they have committed, or for some occasion which they have given. When a man is evil reported of for some evil deed which he hath done, that evil deed of his is either manifestly known, or else it is unknown. And surely it is a thing most common amongst men to suffer discredit for open and gross sins, yet very few do rightly profit by it: for some are shameless and care not what men say of them, and therefore indeed they are unfit to receive any profit by such reproaches. Therefore after the most sharp and severe censure of the Church, they must be committed to the hand of the Magistrate, to be punished in the purse and in the body. And yet surely such are their whorish faces, that there is small hope of their amendment: for it doth often come to pass, that they which will not profit by the Church, cannot receive profit by the Magistrate. Therefore after all this they must be left unto the Lord, to work, if it be his will, by some extraordinary means upon their hearts which are exceedingly hardened.

Othersome there be: who being put to open shame, are sorrowful indeed: but this is because they have sustained open shame, rather than because they have sinned against the Lord. These are in some degree better than the former, and yet they go not so far as they ought to do: for the devil having bewitched them, doth persuade them it is no such matter as men would make them believe it is, and that as a wonder lasteth but nine days, so this shall be of no long continuance. Thus they are letted, so that the shame cannot enter into their hearts, there to work godly sorrow which may bring forth unfeigned repentance. This is daily seen in whores and thieves, and such like male factors, who although they make large promises of amendment, yet the punishment being passed, they fall into the like filthiness again. Some think that they do dissemble and deal deceitfully: but I think that they think as they speak, and speak with sorrow and grief. For will a thief purpose to steal again when he is

ready to be hanged? Will a child purpose to play the wanton when he is a beating? No doubtless, but in the one there is a childishness to speak without advise; in the other is a servileness to be moved with nothing but present fear. I grant indeed there is hypocrisy in them, yet the gross hypocrisy whereby men labor to deceive others, is not in them; but the close and most dangerous hypocrisy whereby the devil hath beguiled their own hearts through his subtlety. This witchery of the devil (I say) is the cause why many promising amendment, do not perform the same. Thus we see how men do miss of that profit which ought to be reaped of open shame: we therefore are to take a better course, and to labor, that as our faces do blush before men, so our souls may be confounded before the Lord, that being thoroughly humbled under his hand by godly sorrow, it may please him in mercy to raise us up. Now if we doubt in this case whether our sorrow be sound or no, let us try it by these two rules. First, whether we can with contented minds take the punishment as a correction from the Lord, and yet mourn and be grieved for the sin: but in such a manner as giving place to God's justice in punishing, we labor for mercy in the forgiveness of sins. Secondly, whether when we could keep the sin close, we can yet with David freely confess and say, Against thee O Lord have I sinned? This if we can do, it is a sure argument that our sorrow is godly, and that we have well profited by that reproach which our sin did bring upon us. As the sin is sometime so evident that it cannot be covered, so indeed the sin may be committed, and yet either not known nor suspected at all, or else by probable suspicions. When the sin is in this case, the Lord may cause a man that hath so sinned, to be accused or evil spoken of for that sin. Here the party offending must first learn to deal wisely and in such manner, as the sin may be kept close still, if it may be done without another sin: But if an oath of the Lord be required, then ought we to give God the glory, though it be with our own shame, and confess the fault. Secondly, for the profits which may be made by such reports,

we must learn with thankful hearts to receive this merciful chastisement of the Lord, and acknowledge it to his praise: for he might have punished us for those sins which were manifest, yet he hath passed over them: he might have made these known, but he spared our name and our credit. Therefore for a second fruit this mercy of the Lord must lead us to repentance, and to an earnest sorrow for all our sins: for it were too too gross that we should continue in sin, because we cannot be convicted of sin: for if the Lord did not mislike thy sin, why should he raise such a report of thee? Why should he save thy good name, if he were not minded to show thee mercy? And if he would not have thee with all thy heart to repent thee of thy sin, why doth he whip thy naked conscience for sin? Therefore if by this loving kindness we be not led unto repentance, verily it will be a sin that shall not escape unpunished. Thus we have heard how an evil name doth arise of sin committed, and what profit must be taken hereof. (Josh. 7)

Now let us further consider how a man must profit by an evil name, not when he hath by some sin deserved it, but when he hath only failed in this, that he hath given occasion to be suspected of evil. This occasion is of two sorts. First, when good duties are either altogether omitted, or done with a grudging mind, or else as it were of constraint. This report must teach thee, that although thou be not so evil as men would make thee, yet thou art not so good as thou shouldest be. Therefore by this thou must learn, as to be more careful of doing good, so to do it with greater and better courage: for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver.

The second occasion is inward, which although no man can find out, yet the Lord for thy good doth cause men to speak evil of thee for it. This inward occasion is, when thy heart hath either given some full consent to do evil, or at the least hath much wandered in thinking of

it. Here the Lord doth take thee betime; and suffereth men to report of thee that thou hast done that, which indeed thou hast not done, yet in thy heart thou hast taken pleasure in it. Then the way to profit by this, is to confess the goodness of the Lord, who will not have thee to fall into such sin, as might deserve discredit. For such is the nature of man, that if any evil thought do long tarry in the mind, it will hardly be restrained before it come to the outward act. Again, by this report raised on us, we must take occasion to call back ourselves, if we have consented to evil, and with grief to be sorrowful for it: or if we have not as yet consented, we must labor to repress the heat of our affections, and quench them by the moisture of the word. And thus much shall be sufficient for those reports which arise of some just ground and occasion.

The last point to be handled in this whole case, is to see what use must be made of those reports which be altogether false, and have neither ground nor good beginning. For it may come to pass, when a man hath avoided evil, and done good; when he hath shunned the occasion of evil, and done all good with a cheerful heart, yet he may be very ill reported of, and his good name hindered. Now if this doth befall any man, he must know that it is the Lord's doing, and that the Lord doth it either to correct sin, or else to prevent it. The Lord (I say) doth by this means correct sin sometimes, either in the same kind, or in some other. In the same kind he dealeth thus, he suffereth thee to be counted an adulterer, yet thou dost now live chastely, and hatest filthy sin: but then he seeth that thou hast either been an adulterer, and hast not repented at all: or if thou hast suddenly repented, yet now thou beginnest to fail, and to cool in the hatred of that sin. Again, if after examination thou find thyself clear in that sin, yet know that the Lord by that report doth correct some sin quite contrary unto it: as if thou shouldest be accused because thou lovest not thy wife, whereas indeed thou lovest her too well: or otherwise he

causeth thee to be counted an adulterer, that thereby thou mayest be brought to see thy covetous heart. And to say all in one word, we shall never make true use of reports, until we have been brought to see and repent of some particular sin, which either we saw not before, or else had not thoroughly repented of. Furthermore, it may come to pass, that we having done all good duties, avoided all evil, and examined our repentance even for particular sins, yet shall we be evil spoken of amongst men. Here we must know that the Lord by reports doth forewarn us of evil to come. We are reported of to be of the Family of love: hereby we are forewarned to take heed that we fall not into that sin, and so forth of other reports. When any such reports are carried about of us, we must be made so much the more wary that we fall not into that sin. And according to the Apostles rule, we must labor to finish the course of our salvation in fear: which that we may do, the Lord grant for his Christ's sake, to whom be praise forever in the Church,

Amen.

FINIS.

## **SERMON V**

### **OF HUMILITY**

Prov. 18:12.

Before destruction the heart of man is haughty: and before glory goeth lowliness.

This Scripture agreeth well with that of our Savior Christ, Whosoever exalteth himself shall be brought low, and he that humbleth himself

shall be exalted, as also with the testimony of the Apostles of Christ: God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Examples further to prove this are plentiful in the word, whether we look to the godly or to the wicked. And first we shall see how a haughty mind goeth before destruction, by Adam and Eve our first parents, who for that they could not content themselves of all creatures of the earth to be most excellent: but through a haughty aspiring mind desired to be like God the Creator in heaven, were cast down into a miserable estate, and did suffer both in themselves and their posterity the shame of so horrible sin. When the mighty men of the earth willing to have gotten the glory of all ages to come, by some noble enterprise, had in the pride of their hearts purposed to erect a tower to heaven, and so to have been accounted fathers of great renown: The Lord meeteth with them, and where they looked for most glory, there he recompenceth so arrogant attempts with most confusion. At what time proud Pharaoh thirsted most for the destruction of the Israelites, (promising unto himself the triumph of so great an overthrow) behold contrary to his hope, the triumph most gloriously was returned to God's people: but the terror and shame was rewarded to Pharaoh and all his company. That haughty minded Haman accounting of nothing surer than the executing of Mordecai and the death of the Jews, through the just judgment of God was hanged shamefully upon the same gallows which he had provided for another. Again, Nebuchadnezzar advancing himself as a Monarch and peerless prince in his glorious palace, not long after had the heart of a beast given him, and for a time had his portion among the beasts of the field. If we peruse the histories both of the Kings of Israel and the Princes of Judah, we shall see how Amaziah refusing to hear the Prophets, prospered not: but continuing in that contempt, and suffering himself to be puffed up in his own pride, was brought to the gate of destruction. As also how Achab growing in some disdain after his victorious conquest, and nothing fearing the



time that was to come, even in his deepest policy received the foulest foil. To shut up this matter, we know that when Herod seemed to have won the garland, and by a solemn oration to have carried away the praise of God, and not of man; because he challenged the whole glory to himself, and robbed God of his honor, was most shamefully dishonored, and fearfully devoured with lice consuming his bowels. Neither are we to observe this in the wicked alone, who when they looked for greatest glory, had the greatest shame, but in the godly also, as Abraham, Asa, Hezekiah David, who when they were most humbled, were most exalted, and when they thought themselves to be most exalted, were most humbled. Asa notwithstanding he had some season continued constant in the reformation of religion, falling at the length to reprehend the Prophet, and declining from his former humility, fell into sickness, and in his sickness trusting to the help of man more than to the Lord, received the sentence of death: and to save his soul by cutting off his days, it pleased God to visit him in the flesh. Hezekiah obtaining his health, and having received a glorious deliverance from the host of Zenacharib, in that he rendered not the glory due to the Lord, received not long after heavy tidings, how both he and his lineage should descend captives into Babel. Josiah that holy pattern of godly princes, not asking counsel at the mouth of the Lord when he should enter battle, was mercifully punished in this life, that he might escape the fearful punishment of the wicked in the life to come. David thinking in his prosperity to be built upon an unremovable rock, and to be as a walled city, suspecting nothing and being out of the watch, he fell into a grievous sin, whereby the latter part of his life was more reproachful than glorious. The Apostle Peter after he was exalted to the dignity of a faithful pastor, and for the notable profession of his faith, was pronounced blessed by the Lord Jesus Christ; beginning to leave too much to his carnal reason and his strength, was called Satan, and not knowing what corruption was in his heart, when he most magnified

his constant love to the Lord Jesus, he fell to deny him thrice, and the last time to curse himself if he were the man. But to leave ancient and former examples, and to turn the edge to ourselves, woeful experience, by diligent observation of their own hearts, hath taught many, that after some sweet and plentiful measure of God's mercy received, they have waxed less careful and jealous over their own affections, and so for a time have been left of the Lord: whereby though not some fearful destruction, yet some grievous fall hath ensued upon them. It is good therefore for us to keep a careful watch over ourselves, and to see whether after we have been refreshed with some special graces of God, in preaching, praying and admonishing, we have not been less careful, and so the nearer to some fall, and unfitter to receive some new benefit, until the Lord by humbling of us hath prepared us with some new desire. And hereupon cometh it to pass, that when we have been some long time bathed, and as it were enbalm'd, with some inward feelings and outward fruits of the holy Ghost, we have been corrected for that self-love, and buffeted with some privy pride dwelling in the flesh, by some grievous deadness and dullness of the spirit, humbling us under the hands of God, as it did the Apostle Paul. Now as we have by these examples of others, and experience in ourselves proved, that a haughty mind goeth before destruction: so on the contrary we will prove, (using none other order but that before set down) that before honor goeth lowliness. Saul before he was exalted and advanced to the scepter, hid himself in great humility, as one that thought himself unworthy so great a dignity, and so afterward was exalted. Ahab though a most wicked man, humbling himself at Elias rebuke, was not punished in his own person, but in his posterity. Rehoboam being humbled with his people, was exempted from that plague, which otherwise was like to have fallen upon him. But this we may behold more lively in the godly, whether we respect those revelations and apparitions of Angels, which in former times happened to the fathers being

humbled: or whether we consider other graces of God in like estate bestowed upon them, Abraham was humbled, Isaac was humbled, Jacob was humbled; then came the promise, then appeared Angels, then received they visions. Joseph though he had good graces of God, yet least the violence of unbridled youth should carry him away, he was humbled, the iron pierced his soul, his feet were in the stocks, his place was among the imprisoned: yet after some time of trial he was exalted, not meanly, but very highly. Moses albeit he had some instinct of the Lord that he should be the governor of the Lord's people, besides his forty years in the court, had forty years travail in the desert, and afterward was advanced. After that David had received many pledges of God's favor towards him, as being anointed king, and in that he obtained great victories in overmatching the Bear and the lion, in over throwing the furious Philistine, after he had cured the raging spirit of a mad man by his sweet music: yet as one not sufficiently prepared for the work of the Lord, he was preferred by humility. If we consider of all the Kings of Judah and Jerusalem, as of Hezekiah, Josiah, Asa, and others, we shall see how Hezekiah wept sore, confessed his sins, and was much humbled, before the health of his body was restored unto him. Josiah before the Lord did use him in the reformation of his Church, had his heart broken. Yea, before the Apostles received that great gift, the sending down of the holy Ghost upon them, they were humbled with the Jews, they were shaken with a great wind, and after so solemn a preparation, they were endued with sweet graces of the spirit. And throughout the whole volume of the book of God it is manifest, that when the Lord would appear by visions or Angels to his holy people, he humbled flesh and blood before, as we see in Jacob, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Elizabeth, and Marie the blessed virgin. (Luk. 14:11, Jam. 4:6, 1 Pet. 5:5, Gen. 3, Gen. 11:7, Exo. 14, Est. 7, Dan. 4, Amo. 7, 1 Kin. 20:22, 2 Kin. 23, Act. 12:23, 2 Chron. 16:10, 12; 2 Kin. 20, 2

Chron. 32:37, 2 Chron. 35, Matt. 16:17, Matt. 26, 2 Cor. 12, 1 Sam. 9:12, 10:22; 1 King. 21:27, 29; 1 Kin. 12:24, Isa. 38, 2 Chron. 34:19)

Now to come to the reasons why the Lord in wisdom useth to deal with his on this manner: we must know that therefore the Lord refuseth the service of the proud, because then we are unfit to glorify his name, we are unprofitable to do good unto our brethren, we are unprepared by pride to receive any mercy at the hands of God. And no marvel, for how should we look that God should put honor upon us in using us and our service, when we refuse to give the glory of his own graces to him again? And why should not he dishonor us with the want of his graces, when we so dishonor him with abusing his graces? Again, seeing usually such is our well-doing to others, as is our affection and compassion to them that need our help, and the pride of our own abundance benumbeth us, and maketh us senseless in the wants of others; how can we find our hearts aright to any good duty to our brethren's necessity, when for want of humility and tender affection we have no regard of their wants, nor feeling of their misery? Besides, if when we are puffed up with a persuasion of perfection, and rest in the security of our present safety, we are entangled and fettered, that we cannot humble ourselves in prayer before the Lord; how shall we think ourselves to be capable of any blessing from the Lord, whose due time of helping is in the day of want, and who refuseth to give to none but to such as in the pride of their hearts refuse to do so much as to pray unto him? On the contrary part, when the Lord shall see us good and faithful servants, in returning the gain and advantage of all his gifts unto himself, and that we are content with his honor, that we are his stewards; when the sense of our own misery hath taught us to show mercy unto others, and the conscience of our own unworthiness hath emptied us of all opinion of ourselves, and hath driven us in our begger-like necessities to crave for every little supply of wants at the throne of

mercy; then is God most near at hand to put us in credit with his graces, then are we most prepared to minister to the wants of others, and then are we fit to be filled with the hid treasures of the Lord for our comfort. And hereupon it cometh to pass, that many having had a large measure of God's graces, through pride have suffered them to rot and consume away. Hereof it cometh, that many have labored much, spoken abundantly, and travailed in great eloquence, and yet have neither gained glory to God, nor afforded fruit to the hearers. Hereupon it is, that some that have been as full as the vessel that hath no vent, have become as barren as the flint-stone is of water, because they have sought glory but not by humility; they have shunned destruction, but not left their pride. Contrariwise, we shall observe how many speaking in the singleness of their heart and humility of their spirit, have won many souls to the rich enlarging of God's honor and kingdom. Many using few words, with a pitiful and fellow feeling affection, have comforted afflicted consciences, instructed ignorant souls, thrown down proud spirits, confounded haughty hearts, and profited abundantly them with whom they were to deal. Many being lowly in their own eyes, have not so much gloried in, nor received glory for their great gifts which God hath bestowed upon them, as they were comforted in their own consciences, with a rich testimony of the sanctifying spirit, who wrought in them some careful usage of the gifts received, to his glory that gave them. The Lord refuseth the service of wicked men, he will not use a proud spirit in his work: and therefore if we shall see that God doth not bless our labors, let us suspect ourselves to lie in some sin, let us fear our own hearts that they be not humbled before the Lord. And here it is good that we should be forewarned what lowliness it is the Lord requireth of us, least we deceive our own souls in a false and fantastical humility. Wherefore as all men will grant humility to be void of murmuring and grudging: so we affirm, that that is not a mind rightly humbled under the hand of God, which

is still perplexed and affrighted with immoderate fear of the danger of some evil to come. For as we condemn that hellish security which is void of all fear: so we mislike that abject mind which is oppressed with too much fear, still breathing out of such trembling voices: Oh what shall become of me? I am afraid that some evil will befall me, I shall never be able to bear it, I had rather die than feel it. When we thus distrusting the Lord, begin to teach him what he shall give to us, or what he shall take from us, we are in the hie way to meet with the evil we feared, and nothing in the world will sooner bring the danger upon us. We therefore commend and affirm that to be true humility, which as it repineth not grudgingly against the Lord, so it shrinketh not too distrustfully before the Lord: but as on the one side we are ready to be thankful, if it be the good will of the Lord to deliver us; so on the other side we are willing to lay our head to the block, and offer our body to the striker, if the Lord in wisdom should make trial of us. This will teach us to possess our souls in meekness and patience; this will strengthen us to say boldly, Lord if thou send this deliverance, thy name be praised; if thou shalt further try me Lord, thy holy will be blessed; Lord here I am, spare me if thou wilt, try me if thou pleasest.

This humility was in Abraham, Isaac, Moses, David, Daniel, Azariah, Sidrach, Abednego, and others of the Saints and servants of God. Abraham when he was most ready to offer up his son, even then the Lord gave him his son again. David when he was prepared to surrender both life and living to the Lord, obtained both life and kingdom for longer time. At what time Hezekiah had resigned himself to die at the will of the Lord, the Lord gave him his health again, and made him as it were a lease of his life for fifteen years to come. And surely there is no readier way to obtain life, than to offer ourselves unto death: no better mean to avoid sickness, poverty, reproach, or banishment, than to have our wills wholly resigned to

God's will, as willing to bear the cross as to be freed from it. For as the more we strive against the will of God, the less we prevail: so the sooner we yield, we shall the sooner be delivered. And yet I mean not that yielding which the Lord by his threatening's or judgments, as by strong hand getteth of us, which is no voluntary submission, but a violent subjection, and constraineth us rather than allureth us to obey the will of the Lord: but I mean that willing humbling of ourselves before the face of God, which cometh from an heart bleeding at the conscience of his own unworthiness, and bruised with the sense of the Lord's undeserved goodness: and that more kindly, than if it were threatened with all the judgments of the wicked, and were brayed and broken with all the plagues of hell. (Gen. 22, 2 Sam. 15)

The other extremity which agreeth not with true humility, is blockish senselessness, and that dead and devilish apoplexy of the mind, which runneth without all foresight, as neither caring for good nor bad, sweet nor sour, heaven nor hell. They that labor of this disease, think it a high point of humility to say, I am at a point, let God do what he will, I care not, if he save me, so it is, if I be damned, what remedy? Let men injury me as they will, come what come will, I pass not. And these kind of men as past all feeling, and now more brutish and blockish than any brute beast, in their life, neither tremble at God's judgments, nor rejoice in his promises; in death they fear not hell, they desire not heaven, they are not grieved if they be damned, they are not comforted to hear they shall be saved, they confess not their sins, they profess not their faith, they show not their hope, they live like stocks, and die like blocks. And yet the ignorant people will still commend such fearful deaths, saying, he departed as meekly as a lamb, he went away as a bird in a shell, when they might as well say, (but for their featherbed and their pillow) he died like a beast, and perished like an ox in a ditch.

But to come to the use and fruit which we may gather out of this doctrine. First let us consider that if we be come to have such a brawned and thick skin over our consciences, as neither by public preaching, nor private reading, as neither by the Law, nor by the Gospel, as neither with threatening's nor promises, as neither by praying nor meditating, we can find neither matter of comfort, nor humbling; we are so far from humility, that we are as men rather dead than humbled, and our case is most fearful. For in this Stoical apathy and want of feeling, we fear nothing; fearing nothing, we are easy to be deceived; being easy to be deceived, we may soon be hardened, and so by security being deprived of all heedfulness, we are snared of the tempter ere we can be aware.

It remaineth to speak somewhat of these observations, which may fitly be drawn out of the general speeches of the holy Ghost, either to our comfort or humbling. Let this be our first lesson then, not too greedily to desire prosperity, nor being in some good case either of body or mind, to be too quiet in ourselves, as resting securely in the good thing possessed: but rather let us learn in most ease, to watch most over our own hearts, in the greatest testimony of God's grace and favor towards us, to be most humbled in ourselves, to be most jealous and suspicious over ourselves, least our hearts being by some privy pride stolen away, we give not God that glory which is due unto him, whilst unthankfulness breedeth security, security bringeth privy pride, and privy pride prepareth us for destruction. True it is, that prosperity in itself is the good gift of God, and never hurteth but when our own sin in immoderate desiring it, or our corruption in vaingloriously possessing it, do abuse it to our hurt, and so turn it to our harm. And surely besides that, in long prosperity we contract and gather much dross of security, we shall find that the long want of adversity, meeting with security, will flatter us and blindfold us with a persuasion of impunity, and so infatuate us, that we shall think



how that because we have long escaped, we shall never be punished. But seeing we learn to judge no otherwise of sin, but by the punishment of it, we must mark this strain, that God doth no more punish presently every sin, than he doth reward presently every good deed: and by how much his long suffering striveth the more with us, and his mercy tarrieth the longer for our repentance; by so much when they fall, his judgments are more fearful and sudden, coming as the lightning out of the clouds. And so far off it is that our long prosperity should either shadow us from the plaguing hand that we should not be espied, or shelter us that we should be spared; that rather as high Oaks amongst low shrubs, we lie more open to be seen, and the more ready to be stricken when the Lord shall send forth his thunder-bolts. Hereupon it cometh, that so many are either stricken suddenly dead in the streets or in their houses, or else have their hearts hardened on their death-bed. And here let all men beware in time of that secret and dangerous corruption of nature, that a man should be touched with the word, and his own conscience tell him, that the power of God in his will revealed by God's minister, hath surely stricken him: and yet (such is our pride) closely will not only at that time hide all tokens of repentance, and bury all remorse of conscience; but also under hope of having sorrow for sin at a beck, and when he lust, he will refer it forsooth, because he will not be thought by his present repentance, that the word came so near him; he is loath to give the minister of God that honor that he should wound him; he is ashamed to shame himself, as guilty of such a sin. Who so thus deferreth in the haughtiness of his heart (seeing repentance is not at our call) let him fear that his heart shall be hardened for the contempt of the loving patience of the Lord, which day by day leadeth us to repentance. (Rom. 2:4)

In this first strain let us further learn especially to beware of pleasing ourselves too much in well-doing, because as all other sins are

occupied in vile and wicked matters, this creepeth even into the best and most excellent things. So that experience shall teach many corruptions, that the better they have been occupied, the more subject men are to fall into it. Whereby there groweth not only a haughtiness of mind in rich men, men of authority, and such as excel others in outward things: but more perilously there springeth up a spiritual pride in the excellency of wit, wisdom, knowledge, utterance, gracious speeches: and even herein are we often proud, In that we see our pride more than others can do. And many of the dearest children of God often find, that when God hath most assisted them with the spirit of prayer, exhortation, admonition, interpretation, or such like, which be all gifts of the sanctifying spirit, the more they have been puffed up with this pride, either in the present action, or afterward. Which thing no doubt proceedeth from hence, that men please themselves too much in the thing done, and do not return the whole glory to God. This is noted to us as it were by examples in the word of God: Noah, whom a holy fear of himself preserved from the corruptions of the old world; by want of fear, and because of unthankfulness for his deliverance, was overtaken of drunkenness after the stood. Lot, who suspecting himself being among the Sodomites, was preserved from sin even in the sink of sin? Afterward waxing remiss in this godly jealousy, fell grievously into incest, even there where he desired to go for his safety. David, so long as he was exercised and kept under the hand of God with fighting the Lord's battles, prevailed against many and mighty sins: but when he received some breathing time of the Lord from his former troubles, he was quickly overcome of a woman, that could not be overmatched of many men. Especially then (that I omit the examples of Hezekiah, Peter and Paul, of whom I spake before) let us look to our hearts, after we have received the best gifts, and let us consider the great wisdom of God providing for our infirmity, in that prayer of our Savior Christ, where immediately after that we have

prayed to have our sins forgiven, we crave, not to be led into temptation. Which would seem strange to a man, that there should be a commixtion of two such requests, were it not that through corruption we were then most ready to be tempted, when we have tasted of the greatest mercy. And surely as this was the first sin whereby Satan fastened upon Adam: so it is the last sin which the most godly fall by. For when all sins are as it were wounded, and all graces begin to abound? Even out of the ashes of those sins ariseth this monstrous sin of vain-glory. And when Satan can find courteous entertainment, now he will not doubt to prevail by egging us to this one sin, that is, to be proud for overcoming so many sins, and excelling in so many graces. Surely if the devil mistrusted not this weapon of proof, even in paradise, and that upon man, being in his innocence; we must think that he hopeth as well now to get the victory in this wicked world upon man so sinful, who now is as tender and as apt to receive the least spark of vain-glory, as the enemy is both strong and subtle to strike it on us.

Yet further observe, that when our Lord Jesus Christ was most full of God's spirit, he was then led to be tempted in the wilderness; when he was most furnished, he was most tried. On like manner, when we have received some great gifts, we must look both that the Lord for his part will take some trial of them, and that Satan also watching for the richest pray, and gaping for a man when he hopes to have the best spoil, will for his part there use the most force and cunning, where he findeth the rarest and most notable servants of God: partly because he most envieth them, and partly for that by pride he thinketh soonest to inveigle them. Wherefore if God's children shall truly examine their own hearts in this sin, they shall have some testimony and trial in themselves, whether they be thankful for God's mercies in truth or no, if having received much they fear much: and by how much the more they increase in gifts, by so much they grow

the more jealous over their thoughts, words and deeds, and sit as it were in the watch-tower of their hearts, viewing to espy even their least declining's. Which thing if we could do in truth, he should not so have the graces of God and feeling of the spirit by fits, but both in greater measure and longer continuance: the want of which heed taking to ourselves, constraineth the Lord to punish us (as I said) with dullness and deadness of spirit, thereby to preserve us from viler sins, which otherwise our pride and security would carry us headlong into. And were it so that in reverence and fear we could attend more on the Lord, we should not have his good spirit so rare a guest unto us, and we should find the increase and return of greater consolations than we have. Why do men then so much marvel at the dullness of mind coming on them after some rare feelings of the spirit, and when they have tasted joys glorious and unspeakable, and think that now all the fruits of God's grace are as clean gone away in them, as if they never had tasted of the power of regeneration, seeing unthankfulness is so ordinary and usual a sin with us? But admit we have some good witness of conscience, and our heart telleth us that we have been thankful, then must we think that the Lord doth try us, and will bring us to acknowledge that the thing we had, was his only gift to give and take away at his pleasure, and that it came not from ourselves as a thing to command at our beck. Howbeit usually and for the most part our unthankfulness is the cause of this dullness. Now, albeit this kind of buffeting be grievous unto us, yet we must not desire utterly to be freed from it, because by it our pride is cured. For if that chosen vessel and servant of the Lord, Paul, so abounding in graces of the spirit, so frequent in fasting, so often in prayer, watching's and temptations, could not prevail against this sin: seeing by all these former ways he could not subdue this corruption in the flesh, we must not dream and delude ourselves, that we using nothing so many helps of mortification, should utterly be rid from the same. When the Lord then shall exercise us with this prick in the

flesh, although it is the messenger of Satan to buffet us: yet we must take hold on this to our comfort, that the Lord disposeth and moderateth it: and though we be often and long assaulted with it, yet still we must mislike it, we must still be grieved for it, and pray in Christ against it; we must tremble and be humbled in ourselves, that we should have such strange and doubting thoughts of God's wisdom, power, majesty, and providence, &c. and yet in such manner and measure as knowing it to be God's mercy, that by these means the Lord would keep us from more vile and enormous crimes. Further and besides this, the Lord giveth us to see such monsters of the mind, to forewarn us, and to make us more afraid of falling into the outward action of sin. Thus we have often temptations of unbelief, to make us to fear the falling from the faith; we have privy discourses of Popery, to show what a dangerous thing it were to be given over unto Popery; we have often vile thoughts of adultery, murder and theft, to drive us more earnestly to pray that we never fall into these sins in action. And for this cause they that will not make some wholesome instruction of their inward temptations, nor suspect their falling into the action of sin by the affection of sin, often fall for their pride suddenly into adulteries, murders, thefts, heresies, popery, and such like. Thus the Lord cometh by the messenger of Satan, the prick of the flesh, to try us, whether we will stick to the word preached, or to such suggestions ministered, to try our faith, to confirm us in the favor of God, when we shall obtain the favor of God, who often assisteth his children being humbled, even in most dangerous assaults, and leaveth them being puffed up in the least temptations, so as they fall, that thereby they may know what help is of God and not of man. And howsoever flesh and blood counteth this but a paradox, yet sure it is, that our case is worse when the Lord ceaseth by such means to sift and fan us, than when he holdeth us from some profitable temptation for our exercise. For we shall see many, who desiring rather to be freed from the cross, than to reap

the fruit of it, although for the time, wherein they endured their temptations at the first they were clear and innocent: yet afterward have fallen most grievously, because they would not profit by those temptations which the Lord sent, either to punish some sin past, not thoroughly repented of, or to correct some sin present not espied, or to forewarn us of sin to come not suspected of us. Some have been tempted to heresy, some to pride, some to worldliness, who disdainfully looking at such thoughts, as matters of no importance, though they were before unattained of these evils, yet now have come to be heretics, proud persons, and worldlings. This ought to teach us then most to suspect ourselves, when we think our estate safest: And blessed is the man that feareth always. This numbness of the soul, striveth and striketh deeply even against the ordinance of God for our salvation: (I mean the word, the Sacraments and prayer) so that oftentimes our case standeth thus, we thus say in ourselves; If I hear the word, so it is, I feel no great want of it; in receiving the Sacraments I have no pleasure; in not receiving them I have no grief. If the exercises of religion private and public be used, there is not much good done; if they be omitted, there is no great hurt done; if I have spare time I can go unto them, if I have never so little business I can keep me away from them and be glad of such excuse. Surely this estate bewrayeth a proud heart, blessing itself with a fullness and cloyedness of the means, and either showeth us to lie in some sin presently, or that we are like to fall into some sin hereafter and that shortly. Howbeit being absent, if having these or like affections we can mourn, beat our own hearts, and judge ourselves, enquiring of the things spoken at their hands, that have been at the congregation; if being absent in body with an humble sight of our want; we are as present in spirit; if even in time of exercises we bestow the time in prayer, in reading, or in meditation, the Lord will shield us from sin, and the shame of sin. Again, if we shall find ourselves subject to peevishness, concupiscence, or covetousness, with less power to

prevail against them that we have had; let us fear least some pride hath gone before: If we cannot recover ourselves out of these evils by prayer or mourning, let us suspect our own hearts, that some security in the means hath overtaken us, the Lord for a time hath left us, the devil hath foiled us. It is a blessed thing to get the victory of our faults, before they be joined with the offenses of the world, with the grief of the godly, with the reproach of our adversaries, with the trouble of our own consciences, with the hazard of God's glory. And therefore if it be so the good will of God, let us earnestly desire him that our trials and temptations may be inward, that they may be stayed and stented when they begin, that they break not out abroad to the greater dishonor of the Lord, and our further discomfort: which surely they will do, if by cherishing them, and not checking them, we strive not for some safety against them. Let us humbly therefore long before, fear this reproach to come, and pray with the Prophet, Lord keep me from the reproach which I fear: least otherwise the Lord seeing us make no conscience in these cases, be avenged of us, who surely will dishonor them that stick not to dishonor him. Cease then to gaze at the work of God, and labor to gage the pride of your own hearts in affection, which the Lord is constrained to shame us with, for the abuse of his graces, for the discredit of his word, the contempt of his glory, and for the neglect of our own salvation: which being before purposed, rather than it should be unaccomplished, we shall have shameful Sergeants sent unto us; as fire on our houses, wars to spoil our goods, sickness to weaken our bodies, and torment of mind to scourge our consciences, which will draw us out by the ears from the heavy slumber of sin, wherein we snorted. And thus fitly, though suddenly, we are slipped into the second point and observation of this doctrine, which is, that we should not be too hie to enter into the gates of adversity, nor being entered, to behave ourselves unpatiently, as though it would undo us to sit in the house of mourning a while: rather we must

rejoice in it, and be thankful for it, saying with the Prophet: It is good for me ô Lord that thou hast afflicted me, &c. because the holy Ghost here telleth us that lowliness goeth before honor, and in the school of humility, we shall learn the way to true glory and Nobility. Neither do I here mean, that affliction in itself hath of itself such virtue, as to humble us truly under the hand of God: but when the spirit of God worketh with it, that then it will breed in us the fruits of righteousness, repentance, faith, and holiness; it will drive us to seek comfort in the world, to ask comfort by prayer, to yield comfort by compassion on other men's evils. And therefore it is necessary against the policy of Satan, who would discourage the Saints of God in their profession, by dressing them with afflictions, to stay ourselves in this testimony of the holy Ghost, that before glory goeth affliction, and after lowliness cometh honor, either in this life, or in the life to come, or in both. This must further teach us to profit by the threatening's of God publicly preached, not to threaten them, or to murmur against them that lay the judgments of God against us in the law: this must cause us to make much of them, that by sharp censuring of us, will soonest draw us out of sin. This must work in us a desire to reap some fruit by private admonitions; yea, and to call on others to admonish us that we may still be kept in some good course of humility. (Prov. 28:14, Psal. 119)

Further and besides this, it is profitable for us to frequent them that are sick, ready to die, perplexed in spirit, imprisoned in chains, and oppressed with misery, that in them we may see ourselves, as in a mirror: and so with Moses to choose rather to suffer afflictions, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a time. This acquainting ourselves with the judgments of God, will both rub off security, and stir us up to greater thankfulness for ourselves, and pity towards others. Wherefore, they are not in the way of humility to obtain glory, who are so tender sighted that they cannot abide to see the judgments of



God: they are too dainty eared, that cannot, or that will not hear the threatening's of the Law: saying, oh I cannot abide to hear one in desperation, I cannot away to hear such fearful speeches, to hear the devil speak in one; I love not to see one lie gasping and panting in death; These things would deprive me of all mirth, breed melancholy, and stir me up to madness. Nay, this delicateness to fly from the Lord thus drawing near us, will hasten these things upon us, which we will not profit by in others. Such eyes to see, such ears to hear, such hearts to be humbled, it becometh God's people to have, that as they love nothing more than glory, so they labor for nothing more than humility: as they shun nothing more than confusion, so they avoid nothing more than pride of heart. Which that we may do, let us cast down ourselves before the throne of mercy, in the name and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior. (Heb. 11:25, 27; Heb. 12:2, 3.

O eternal God and our most loving father, behold us in thine own covenant, &c.

FINIS.

## **SERMON VI**

### **OF THE GOOD EDUCATION OF CHILDREN**

Prov. 17:21.

He that begetteth a fool, getteth himself sorrow, and the father of a fool can have no joy.

The holy Ghost speaking in the Scripture of foolish sons, (as that he that begetteth such a one, getteth himself sorrow, and that the father

of a fool hath no joy) meaneth it not so much of natural idiots, and such as are destitute of common reason (although it is true, that this is a lamentable judgment of God, and a heaviness to the parents of such a child) as of wicked children, such as are either ignorant in the word, not knowing how to order one right step to the kingdom of God: or else having some knowledge of God, ungodlily abuse it, to maintain their carnal lust and appetite. For this cause as it would grieve parents to have natural fools to their children, or such as either through some imperfection of nature are dismembered, or deformed, and misfigured in the parts of the body: so much more should it grieve them to have such children, as either for want of knowledge and heavenly wisdom, cannot walk in the fear of God: or abusing the knowledge given them, prostitute themselves to all sin and wickedness.

It is marvelous to see how greatly parents can bewail the want of one natural gift proceeding of some imperfection, and how easily they can pass over without any grief, the want of all spiritual graces, springing from corrupt education. In like manner, it is strange that men can take the matter so heavily, when their children break into such offenses, as either have open shame, or civil punishment following them, and yet can make no bones, but pass over such sins as are against the majesty of God, accompanied with everlasting confusion and unspeakable torments: wherein what do most part of men bewray, but their great hypocrisy, in that neither their joy nor their grief is sound to their children, and that they love themselves more in their children, than either their salvation, or the glory of God? The tender love and care whereof no doubt did increase the sorrow of David for the death of his son Absalom, who was not so much grieved for the loss of a son, as for that untimely end of his son. Let us learn therefore to correct our affections to our children, and be grieved for our ignorance, impiety and sins: whereof either our

carnal compassion, the not lamenting of our own natural corruption, the want of prayer for a holy seed, or profane education armed with the wrath of God, may be a most just occasion. Can a man hope for a holy posterity? Or do we marvel if the Lord cross us in the children of our bodies, when we make as bold and brutish an entrance into that holy ordinance of the Lord, as in the meeting of the neighing horse with his mate, when being joined in that honorable estate of matrimony, either as mere natural men without all knowledge of God we beget our children: or as too carnal men without the fear and reverence of the Lord, neither bewailing our corruption which we received of our forefathers, nor praying against our infirmities which may descend to our posterity, we abuse the marriage bed. Lastly, when having received the fruit of the womb, we have no care by virtuous education to offer it to the Lord, that our child by carnal generation may be the child of God by spiritual regeneration? Surely no. And yet men without all looking up to God's providence and secret counsel, without all bethinking themselves of their corrupt nature, from which their children are descended, without all looking back into their wicked and godless bringing them up, will fret against their sins, and fume against their children: yea often they will correct them, and that to serve their own corruptions, not so much grieved for that they have sinned against God, as that they have offended them. Christians therefore must know, that when men and women raging with boiling lusts meet together as brute beasts, having none other respects than to satisfy their carnal concupiscence, and to strengthen themselves in worldly desires, when they make no conscience to sanctify the marriage bed with prayer, when they have no care to increase the Church of Christ and the number of the elect, it is the just judgment of God to send them monsters, untimely births, or disfigured children, or natural fools: or else such as having good gifts of the mind, and well proportioned bodies, are most wicked, graceless, and profane persons. Again on the contrary side,

we shall find in the word of God noble and notable men commended unto us for rare examples of virtue and godliness, who were children asked and obtained of God by prayer. Our first parents Adam and Eve being humbled after the birth of their wicked son Cain, obtained a righteous Abel, of whom, when by his bloody brother they were bereft, they received that holy man Seth. Abraham begetting a child in the flesh, had a cursed Ishmael: but waiting by faith for the accomplishment of God's covenant, he obtained a blessed Isaac. Jacob not content with one wife, according to the ordinance of God, was punished in his children: yet after being humbled, he received a faithful Joseph. Elkanah and Anna praying and being cast down, had a Prophet that did minister before the Lord. David and Bathsheba lamenting their sins, obtained Solomon a man of excellent wisdom. Zechariah and Elizabeth fearing the Lord, received John the Baptist and forerunner of Christ. Look what sins we have naturally, without God's great blessing, without prayer and humbling of ourselves, we shall convey them to posterity: and although the Lord do grant sometimes natural gifts unto the children of carnal and natural men, yet for the most part they receive their natural sins withal. But if the children of God by regeneration do see into themselves, and lament their sins of generation, praying that their natural corruptions may be prevented in their posterities, they shall see the great mercy of God in some measure freeing their posterity from their sins.

Now when thou shalt see such sins to be in thy children, enter into thine own heart, examine thyself, whether they are not come from thee, consider how justly the hand of God may be upon thee, and when thou wouldest be angry with thy child, have a holy anger with thyself, and use this or such like meditation with thine own soul: Lord, shall I thus punish mine own sin, and that in my child? Shall I thus prosecute the corruptions of my ancestors? Nay I see, O Lord, and prove that thou art displeased with me, for the too carnal desire

of posterity. I lay then in some sin, I asked not this child of thee by prayer; be merciful unto me O God, and in thy good time show some pity upon my child. Thus thinking when thou goest about to correct the corruption of nature in thy child, which he could not help, arming thyself with prayer, repenting with Jacob, thou shalt be so affected, that as thou art desirous to draw thy child out of sin, so yet to do it with the mildest means, and with least rigor. And one thing is most wonderful, that some will teach their children to speak corruptly, and do wickedly whilst they are young: and yet beat them for it when they are come to riper age. Again, some will embolden their children to practice iniquity towards others, which when by the just judgment of God, they afterwards practice against their parents themselves, they are corrected for it. And yet deal with these and such like men, for the evil education of their children, and they will answer, do not we as much as is of us required? We send our children to the Church to be instructed of the pastor and to the school to be taught of the master; if they learn, it will be the better for them; if not, they have the more to answer for another day, what can we do more? But remember O man, consider O woman, whosoever thus speakest, that for thy sins sake, and thy want of prayer, there may be a plague upon the pastors pains, and a curse upon the teachers travail: If parents would have their children blessed at Church and at school, let them beware they give their children no corrupt examples at home, by any carelessness, profaneness, or ungodliness; otherwise parents will do them more harm at home, than both pastors and schoolmasters can do them good abroad. For the corrupt example of the one, fighteth with the good instruction of the other, which is so much the more dangerous, because that corrupt walking is armed with nature, and therefore more forcibly inclineth the affections of children to that side. And further, experience teacheth us, that children like or mislike more by countenance, gesture and behavior, than by any rule, doctrine,

precept, or instruction whatsoever. Some there be also, that will not have their children taught, until they be ten or twelve years old: because (as they say) before that age, they have but an apish imitation. To whom I answer, that although indeed they cannot then deeply discern, nor profoundly conceive things; yet how many things before those years both will they receive and remember? And I demand, if children being apish in imitating evil whilst they be young, which they will have the habit of when they be old, why may they not much more better do apishly good when they are young, which they may do carefully when they are old? Besides, let them so go untaught, and they will grow so headstrong, that they will sooner be broken than bended. And sure it is, that one stripe or two words will do more good to a child in the beginning, than an hundred stripes afterward. And here let parents be admonished of their indiscreet correction, who do their children more harm in showing a merry countenance after their discipline used, than they do good by their chastising, although in their anger they be corrected. Neither do I purpose to take away natural affections and a Christian kind of compassion in all our censures: for it is my great complaint of the brutish unmercifulness of many parents herein; but I would wish Christians to correct their indiscreet affections herein by heavenly wisdom. Neither am I so Stoical as to deny a more mild and affable kind of speech, to be both lawfully and conveniently used to children: but yet I wish it to be void of all unseemly levity, and without all show of foolish, vain and unnecessary behavior. To be brief, how needful household government is towards our children, it may appear by the slender thriving and small profiting of religion and virtue, either in the Church or Common-wealth. For complain men, and preach they never so much abroad, unless they will begin to reform their own houses, and give religion a room at home, especially in their own hearts, they shall travail much, and profit little. And surely if men were careful to reform themselves first, and

then their own families, they should see God's manifold blessings in our land upon Church and Common-wealth. For of particular persons come families; of families towns; of towns provinces; of provinces whole realms: so that conveying God's holy truth in this sort from one to another, in time, and that shortly, it would so spread into all parts of this kingdom. Well I say, let there be never so good laws in cities, never so pure orders in Church, if there be no practice at home, if fathers of families use not doctrine and discipline in their houses, and join their hands to Magistrate and Minister, they may, but most unjustly (as many have done) complain that their children are corrupted abroad, whereas indeed they were before, and still are corrupted at home. Alas, if parents to whom the comfort of their children well brought up, is a precious crown, will not inform and reform their children in the fear of God, whom it doth chiefly concern; how should hope sustain these men, that others will perform this duty to them, for whom the charge doth far less appertain? Lastly let parents remember, that therefore oftentimes they have disordered and disobedient children to themselves, because they have been disobedient children to the Lord, and disordered to their parents when they were young; wherefore because they have not repented, the Lord punisheth their sins committed against others, with the like sin in others against themselves.

Wilt thou know then O father, how thou mayest have that blessing, to be the blessed father of a blessed seed? Wilt thou know O mother, how to avoid that curse, to be the cursed mother of a cursed seed? Then bring thy children within the covenant, endeavor to make thy son by nature, the son of God by grace; and thy daughter by nature, the daughter of God by grace: and remember that God which on his part protested to our father Abraham, that he was all sufficient for the accomplishment of his promise, in giving him a blessed seed,

required also of our father Abraham for his part, that he should walk before him and be upright.

Wilt thou then have the one part of this covenant, that is, that God should bless thee in thy seed? Then remember thou also the other part, that thou walk before the Lord and be upright. Wilt thou have thy children as the blessed seed of Abraham? Teach them with Abraham the commandments of God, pray for them with Abraham that they may live in the sight of the Lord; be ready to offer them with Abraham, that they may be an holy sacrifice to the Lord; It is thou O man, O woman, that mayest do thy child the greatest good and the greatest harm: if thou prayest for him, and repentest for thyself, the Lord will bless thy care, the pastors pains, and the teachers travail. But if thou despisest these duties, the Lord will deny thee those blessings, and the curse of God will be upon thy child at home in thy house, abroad in the Church and in the school. And seeing that the Lord hath promised that he will be thy God, and bless thy seed, if thou be faithful: thou mayest both hope, that thou art of the faithful, if thou have a blessed seed, and fear that thou hast not as yet the blessing of the covenant, when thy seed is cursed.

But some will say, had not Jacob wicked children, and David godless sons? And doth not daily experience teach us, that wicked men have godly children? Yes: for besides the secret counsel of the Lord herein, we must know that neither the promise of the Lord is so universal, that every particular child of a faithful man should be within the covenant: for if of many there be but one blessed, the promise is performed. Yea which more is, though that a faithful man have never a good child, yet if unto the thousand generation there be but one good, the covenant is not broken. Neither must we tie the Lord's work so much to man, that a good man may not have an evil son, seeing though the Lord visit not his sins, yet he may visit the sins of



some of the forefathers, to the third and fourth generation going before.

To the second I say: that an evil father having a good child, though the Lord show not mercy to that particular man therein, yet he may remember his promise to some of the forefathers in the thousand generation going before. And though that an evil man have no cursed child, yet the curse may be accomplished in the third and fourth generation following. Wherefore not speaking of election or reprobation, which we leave only to the Lord to make good or bad, according to the good pleasure of his own will, I exhort parents to use the ordinary means to bring up their children, so as they either by some good tokens may see them the children of God, and heirs of the covenant: or at the least be comforted in their own consciences, if the Lord refuse their children for some cause unknown, in that to their ability they have used all good means to bring them up well, and offered them to God. And if parents have cause to be grieved, when thus travailing in good education, they cannot see good in their children; how much more cause of grief may they have, when they have used no labor at all to bring them up in the fear of the Lord? And yet many will be grieved for the one, that will not be grieved for the other. Wherefore let us learn (if we will convey God's blessings to our posterities) to use all holy duties thereunto: and on the contrary, if we will be loath to convey God's judgments to our children, let us carefully avoid all means that lead unto them. And surely as it is a blessed thing in the hour of death with Simeon to depart in peace, leaving our wife, children and servants spouses to Christ, children to God, and servants to the Lord: so in death no one thing will be more grievous to a man, than, the Lord's having given him the charge and dignity of so many souls, to be furthered to salvation, that his own tormented conscience shall press him, how, in as much as he could, he hath helped them forward to their damnation; and so, which is

more fearful, he shall have them spuing and foaming out in his face continual curses, in hell accusing him forever to be the murderer of their souls. Howbeit, I do not exempt children from all blame, so charging the parents, as though the children were free from all guiltiness herein: for I am not ignorant, that as in the time of Ezekiel, so in our days, youth is ready enough to take up this Proverb, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But I affirm, that though the occasion be offered of such wicked parents, yet the cause of destruction is still in the children themselves. And besides that, it is sure that the soul which hath sinned shall die the death. Seeing also there be some young men, who notwithstanding the great profaneness of the most, the manifold corruptions offered abroad, the ungodly examples abounding at home, are so mightily preserved by the seed of grace, that they escape safely in an holy course of life, lamenting when they see the least occasion of evil, rejoicing in the least occasion of good things: the rest who please themselves, and hope to shelter their sins under their parents defaults, are plainly left without excuse, and are justly guilty of the blood of their own souls. Labor therefore ye young men to wipe away the tears of grief from your fathers eyes, and stay the sorrowful spirits of your tender mothers, and consider with yourselves, if you have any good nature in you, and have not buried the use of common reason, what a shame it is to be a shame unto your fathers, to whom ye ought to be a glory: and think ye wanton wits, that have not cast off all natural affections, what a contempt it is to be a contempt unto your mother, to whom ye have offered as it were a despiteful violence, in that ye are as it were a corrosive unto her heart, when as ye should have been a Crown unto her head.

The end of all this briefly is thus much, that parents having children not walking either in knowledge or in a good conscience, must make some use of so just a cause of grief, examining themselves, and

accusing their own souls before the Lord; either for that their meeting was profane to so holy an estate; or brutish, because they desired rather a seed like unto themselves in flesh and blood, than such as might be like to Christ by grace and new birth; or that they begat their of spring, as mere natural or very carnal men; or because they either profanely neglected all education, or monstrously misliked that in their children which they liked in themselves, and punished in them their own corrupt precepts; or for that they suffered injuriously their children to do evil unto others, which they could not suffer them to do unto themselves: or untaught that at home which was taught abroad; or in that they do lie in some sin unrepented of; or else because they never made conscience to bring their posterity within the covenant of salvation: but still loved their flesh in their children, and not their souls. And children must here also learn, that it is one special property of a liberal and ingenuous nature, to be careful so to live, that in time they may be a glory to their fathers, and a joy to their mothers: which the Lord grant to us all for his glory, and our everlasting comfort: through Jesus Christ our Lord and only Savior.

FINIS.

## **SERMON VII**

OF REPENTANCE, AND TRUE SORROW FOR SIN

Acts 2:37, 38.

Now when they heard it, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter, and the other Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Then Peter said unto them, Amend your lives, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, &c.

In this portion of the holy book of God is set down to us an effect, or rather a fruit of Peter his sermon, which he made for the answering of the slanderous reports of the Jews, at what time they saw the wonderful gifts of God sent down upon the Apostles. In which Sermon, the Apostle had pricked their consciences with showing them their sins, telling them of a surety, that their iniquity was the cause of Christ his death: whereby a certain care began to be wrought in them, in so much that being thus troubled, they inquired and said, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Whereupon afterward followed the second Sermon of Peter: where he exhorteth them to continue in their repentance, and teacheth us that if our sorrow be good, we must go forward therein. Further he showeth them to this end, that they must believe, that believing they may be baptized, that being baptized they might receive the gift of the holy Ghost. Lastly it is manifest, how they hearing that Sermon, first received the doctrine, and after persevered in the practice of the same. Briefly therefore three things are hereto be noted. First, the fruit of the former Sermon of Peter contained in these words: Now when they heard it, &c. Secondly, the sum of a new Sermon of Peter in these words: Then Peter said unto them, Amend your lives, &c. Thirdly is set down the fruit of their obedience. In the former part of this Chapter we may know the wonderful works of God, that the Apostles, who were never brought up in schools, spake with diverse tongues: which when the multitude heard, some are said to marvel and to be astonished: some mocked them and said, They are full of new wine. But when Peter with great boldness of spirit had in this Sermon which he made, set the truth of God against their false accusations, and had preached against their sin, then they left off mocking, and were pricked in their hearts. Where first we may note the power of God's word, which only

is able to touch our consciences for sin. For neither the diversity of tongues, nor other gifts of the holy Ghost could prick their hearts, as being able only to cast them into an admiration. What more forcible thing than that which causeth a godly sorrow, and causeth our consciences to be pricked? What so able to prick our consciences as the word of God? Indeed many feel sorrow, and are inwardly pricked: but because therewith is not joined the power of God's word, they be either senseless as blocks, or in their feeling they be murmurers. This cometh unto us by the dignity of God's word, in that no wonders from heaven, no miracles on earth can touch our hearts, and work in us any good fruit without the same. For though the Lord should show unto us all the wonders from heaven, which he showed on the old world, and on Sodom, although he should lay all the plagues upon us, which he laid on Pharaoh, and on the Egyptians, without the word of God, we should be as unprofitable beholders, as ever were the Sodomites, and should become as hard hearted as ever were Pharaoh, and the Egyptians: so that no judgment from heaven, no trouble from earth can humble us, no blessing from above, no benefit from beneath can profit us, until the word of God cometh, which teacheth the old way to forsake it, the new way to enter into it, and the perfect way, to continue in it. And thus much for the general scope of this doctrine.

Now more particularly we may observe in this first part three things. First, the power of the word to prick our consciences. Secondly, that this prick must not cause in us a more rebelling against the word and Ministers thereof: but rather a greater reverence to them both. Thirdly, such pricks must prepare us to a greater desire to profit. For the first we must know, that this is the beginning of repentance, and this is the entry to godliness, even to conceive a sorrow for our sins, and so be wounded with a feeling of our evils. For as long as men are secure, it is not possible that they should seriously apply their mind

unto doctrine, neither without the knowledge and feeling of our sins can we heartily long for Christ. To this agree the Law, the Prophets, and the Apostles. The law, because in all their sacrifices, wherein Christ was prefigured, was manifested also under dark signs, the contrition of heart, and acknowledging their unworthiness. The Prophet as David and Isaiah. David in the fourth Psalm and fifth verse faith, Tremble and sin not: where the Prophet showeth, that this is an effectual thing to true repentance, to quake and tremble for fear of God's judgments. That we may then truly examine ourselves, we must fear and humble ourselves, because before trouble, terror, and quaking at the judgments of God, we will never be brought to offer ourselves to Christ alone. In Psalm 51:18, 19, the Prophet likewise showeth, that no sacrifice is acceptable to God without a contrite heart, that is, neither prayer, neither alms-giving, neither praise of thanksgiving, unless we bringing an humble and contrite spirit with us, cast ourselves down before his judgment seat, and sue for mercy in Christ. And here mark that he saith, The sacrifices of God are a troubled spirit, &c. where he using the plural number showeth, that the sacrifices of repentance, which must not be one, but many, are humbleness of the spirit, and contrition of heart. For the affliction of the soul and contrition of the mind, do so cast us down, wounded with our sins, and humbled with a feeling of God's wrath, as that it maketh us to acknowledge that we are nothing of ourselves, and to seek for our salvation wholly at the mercy of God. No marvel then (seeing by this means we being confounded and ashamed of ourselves, and staying ourselves on the only promises of God, do come to confess our own nakedness and wretchedness) if the Prophet should say, that the Lord is pleased, with his sacrifice as with the sacrifice of sacrifices. The Prophet Isaiah 40:6, 7, 8, saith, All flesh is grass, and the beauty thereof as a flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower falleth, when the breath of the Lord falleth upon it. Where the Prophet painting out man in his proper

colors, and driving him to seek out salvation not in himself, but in Christ, describeth the outward part of man to be as grass: and by the flower of grass, he showeth his gifts of mind being unregenerate, as wisdom, memory, knowledge, and understanding. So that, when God's spirit doth but breath on us, all our wisdom, all our knowledge, riches, and authority fall before the presence of the Lord of hosts, neither can we remain, but only by the word of God, whereby we are born again. Wherefore the considering and meditating of our transitory estate, driveth us to a contrition and humbleness of spirit. Besides, the Lord God, saith Isaiah, whom the heavens cannot contain, nor the earth hold, will come and dwell with a lowly, poor, and troubled spirit, and which standeth in awe of his word. God doth not accept our sacrifices, which are offered without trembling at his word, no more than if we should kill a man, and choke a dog, or offer swine's flesh, which was counted an abominable thing among the Jews, or praise the thing that is unright. Lastly, to this accordeth the Gospel, and the Apostles. Our Savior Christ, Matth. 9:13, saith, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; not every sinner, but that sinner which condemneth sin in himself, and is weary and laden with his sins. Matth. 11:28, Matth. 21:32, our Savior Christ preferreth the harlots and Publicans before the Pharisees: for they being pricked for their sins and convicted, did sorrow, and heard John preaching unto them. So then Christ giveth relief to those that want, righteousness to them that feel themselves sinners, ease to them which are burdened, light to them which are in darkness, life to them which are dead, and salvation to them which condemn themselves. The Apostle declareth, 1. Corin. 14, how the Corinthians were moved with strange tongues: but yet had not in admiration the word. Besides, he showeth by comparing the gift of tongues and prophesying together, that if an Infidel or unlearned man should come, and hear them speak with strange tongues, he would say, they were out of their wits: but if he should hear them speak the word of

God plainly, he would be rebuked of all men and judged of all men, and so the secrets of his heart should be made manifest, he would fall down on his face and worship God and say plainly, when he feeleth his sins, they rifle mine heart, they show my secret sins, doubtless this is God's doing, God is in them, I will follow this religion. Wherefore in this appeareth the power of the word, in that it citeth and summoneth our consciences before the tribunal of God, and woundeth us with a lively feeling of God's judgment, that he, who before through security did despise sound doctrine, may now be constrained to give the glory unto God. This appeareth more plainly, Hebr. 4:12. where it is said, that the word of God is lively, mighty in operation, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and it pierceth through, and searcheth the most secret chambers of the soul, and divideth thought from thought: and then all our holiness shall seem hypocrisy, all our righteousness shall seem as a defiled cloth: we shall find with Paul, that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no righteousness. For men's consciences are cold, neither are they touched and displeased with their evils, so long as they be in ignorance: but when the word of God pierceth into the uttermost corners of their consciences, and telleth them, that they have to do with the Lord; they are thoroughly touched and begin to fear, and entering into themselves, examining their conscience, they come to the knowledge of that, which before they had forgotten. We can never be offered to God without his spirit, John 16:8. For he reproveth the world of sin, and awaketh our consciences, that those sins, which before were hid, should be made manifest. David did lie a whole year without this prick of conscience, and thought that all was well, until Nathan came, neither did he find comfort of conscience, until he had thus been pricked, Joseph's brethren was thirteen years, and never remembered their sins, until after such time the Lord laid it before them. The Prophet David, Psalm. 32, (which he entitled a Psalm of instruction concerning the free remission of sins) teacheth



how we shall find the same. For many persuaded themselves, that their sins are forgiven, when they be not. He also sheweth, that until trouble of mind did drive him to particularize and confess his special sins to God, he found no comfort. Manasseh did eat the bread of sorrow, and did drink the water of grief, and until he had lamented and sorrowed for his sins he felt no rest, nor peace. The woman of Samaria, John 4. was pleasant, and jested with our Savior Christ, until her sins were opened, and then she began to answer with more reverence. For until she was willed to call her husband, she thought all was safe: but after he had told her, that she had played the adulteress, she acknowledged him that he was a Prophet. Wherefore we may see by this which hath been spoken, that the word of God only pricketh our consciences, as plainly may here appear by the Jews, who cared not for the Apostles, nor made any conscience, until their hearts were pricked. (Psal. 4:5, Isa. 40:6-8, Isa. 66 & 57:14, 15; Matt. 9:13, Heb. 4:12, Joh. 16:8, 2 Sam. 12)

In the second place we must note, that they were rightly pricked. For many oftentimes are pricked, which kick against the prick, and having their consciences galled by the word, they murmur either against the preacher of the word, or against the word itself. Here then is the difference between the godly and the wicked, the one is pricked, and is made more careful in a godly conscience; the other more hardened than before. But this is a godly sorrow, when we love the man that rebuketh us, and reverence the word the more being by it reprov'd in our conscience. Do we love him then that rebuketh us? Then we hear profitably. Let us examine ourselves in this sort: I see God hath wounded me by him, he is the instrument whereby God doth humble me, I will therefore love him. Contrarily, if we be often touched and amend not, we are in danger of God's wrath. Many indeed are pricked with poverty, many with sickness, and some with other like afflictions, but few with their sins, which is the cause of

their poverty, sickness, and other afflictions. Let us then learn a willingness to offer ourselves to be taught and to be pricked for sin, as these men were. The wicked also are pricked sometimes: but it is rather for fear of punishment, than for conscience to displease God, as were Cain and Judas. Some men are pricked, and to put away their sorrow, they will go sleep, they will go play, they will go sport, they will get to merry company, and pass away the time, and so, as they term it, they will purge and drive away the rage of melancholy: they never go to any preacher, to ask of the Lord, or at the mouth of his spirit: they never respect prayer, nor seek any comfort in the word of God. But to put away sorrow on this sort is to call it a again, and to feel it more freshly either in the hour of death, or in hell. Contrariwise, if our sorrow doth drive us to prayer, or to the word of God, it is good. As for the wicked and profane worldlings, though (as the Wiseman saith, Ecclesiast. 11,) he spend all his days without any evil, yet his darkness will be greater than his light, his sorrow greater than his pleasure, his loss greater than his gain, his trouble greater than his vanity in hell. Let us not then so carnally shake off this godly sorrow: for the word will send us often an unquiet spirit, that we may seek to be quiet in Christ. To examine ourselves herein: Have we heard the word of God? Were we pricked by it? Then have we profited: Have we not been pricked thereby? Then as yet are we not a sacrifice for the Lord. For, as was said before, Christ comforteth them that are troubled, he helpeth them that doubt, he easeth them which are in distress, he setteth their feet in the way of peace and gladness, that have long been in darkness and sorrow. Have ye not been sorrowful, and will ye learn a salve for this sore? Be sorrowful, that ye were not sorrowful; be pricked in your hearts, because you were not pricked. Have we heard the word? Let us examine ourselves, if our knowledge be the better, if our affections be the holier. As having heard the exposition of the law of God, do we fear God? Do we know how to love God? Do we pray to God? Do we

worship God in our souls, and in our bodies more carefully, and in greater conscience than we have done heretofore? Are we not now as profane and careless still in giving the right worship to the true God, as before we were too superstitious, in serving Angels, Saints, and other false gods; neither sorrowing for our Idolatry, nor caring for true religion? Have we not blasphemed, and profaned the name of God in irreverent hearing his word, in unprofitable talking of his works, and abusing his own majesty with swearing and cursing as much as ever we did before we heard his word? Have we kept holy the Sabbath? Or have we not profaned it, by open neglect of the word, by playing, sporting, drinking, and other vanities? Do we not still send forth our servants to dispatch our business on that day, as if it were the market day, when they may do such things most lawfully? Are not parents, householders, and governors, as slack in provoking obedience; and children, servants and subjects, as slow in yielding obedience as ever they were) parents in the meantime, not seeing that children therefore rebel against them, because they rebel against God; nor householders perceive that servants do not their duties to them, because they do not their duty to God? Are we less wrathful, and more merciful? Are we less riotous, and filthy defilers of our flesh? And are we more sober, chaste and holy? Are we less given to oppression, to hard dealing one with another, and more just, righteous, and careful to maintain the good estate of our brethren? Are we not backbiters, slanderers, or sowers of discord, causers of contention among our neighbors? Being far off from maintaining love, unity, and the good name of our brethren? The cause why we cannot see further into these things, is, because we flatter ourselves, and because we compare ourselves with ourselves and with others, but not with the rule of God's word. Let us then learn to accuse ourselves, and to judge our own consciences. For if God see us condemn ourselves, he will not condemn us; if we accuse ourselves, God will not suffer Satan to accuse us; if we judge ourselves, God will

acquit us from the fearful judgment to come; if we be displeased for our sins, God will be pleased with us in Christ his righteousness. On the contrary, whilst we lie in our sins, we lie in our own blood; if we judge not ourselves, God will both judge us, and be revenged of our sin; he will set our house on fire, he will send enemies, he will send earthquakes, he will send famines to consume our goods, he will make friends foes, he will send sickness and soreness upon our bodies, and a troubled spirit into our souls, he will send us an ill name: thus will he bring plague upon plague until we repent, and come to a feeling of our sins. And why doth God all this? Because we will not come to judge ourselves. For this cause (saith the Apostle, 1. Cor. 11:30,) that is, because we judge not ourselves, many are weak, and sick among you, and many sleep. 31. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Likewise the Prophet, Psal. 89:30, 31, 32, 33. But if his children for sake my law, and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgression with the sword, and their iniquity with strokes: yet my loving kindness will I not take from him, neither will I falsify my truth. For as a father withdraweth from his child sometimes his love, and whippeth him with the rod of correction: so the Lord dealeth often with his children, and scourgeth their naked conscience. God doth judge his here, but his enemies will he judge in the world to come: if we be not punished here, the punishment will be as thunderbolts in the day of judgment. Hast thou been afflicted, and not profited? Will not a little cross serve thee? A greater shall come to thee. Will not a few troubles turn thee to God? Then many shall come upon thee. If a man be not troubled for sin here, it is the way to hell: if he be troubled here, it is the way to heaven. And as they which have not been troubled having had a little joy, shall have eternal pain: so they which here have had a little pain, shall after

have everlasting joy. They that are corrected and have profited by it, are afflicted of the Lord in mercy: but they that be vexed and amend not, receive a token of God's further wrath. Wherefore we must not look to feel comfort in the remission of sins, unless we also have sorrow for committing our sins. For never any of God's children were comforted thoroughly, but they were first humbled for their sins. To the working of which humiliation, we must remember God's judgments showed on others. Hath God destroyed the whole world for sin, and can he not, or will he not destroy thee for sin? Hath he overthrown whole nations, and will he suffer thee to lie still in thy sins? See how full hell is already, and yet daily we run headlong thither. Consider also how great thy sin was, that could not be cleansed but by the blood of Jesus Christ: Oh how foul was that sin, that nothing else could wash it, but Christ his heart blood? Oh how great was our guiltiness, that was ransomed by such a price? How great was the sore that needeth such a salve? How deep was the wound that needed such a medicine? O loving kindness and unspeakable love towards us! Shall Christ be slain for our sins, and we not labor to slay sin in ourselves? Shall Christ die for our sins, and sin as yet is not dead in us? Shall Christ be crucified for us, and will we not crucify sin in ourselves? Shall Christ have his heart pricked with a spear, and shall not we have our hearts pricked with sorrow? This is the true use and meditation of Christ his passion. We are wont to defy the Jews for accusing Christ, we spit at Judas for betraying Christ, and we condemn Pilate for condemning Christ: but we are much more to be at defiance with our sins, which accused him before the judgment seat of God; we are to accuse ourselves, who have and daily do betray him; we must condemn ourselves, whose sins have condemned him. But if neither the judgments of God, hell, nor the cross of Christ can move us, then let us examine ourselves how we can rejoice in Christ. (Luk. 16, Rom. 6:12, Zach. 12:10-11, Gal. 5:24-25)

It followeth to speak of the counsel of Peter, Repent: as if he should say, I know your hearts are pricked, howbeit I will show you, how it is the policy of the devil, to make these good motions quickly to wax dry in you, he will stay you from persevering, you must therefore endeavor to continue in this godly sorrow. The Apostle saw, that this sorrow, which, as Paul witnesseth, is not to be repented of, as well begun in them: but in continuing his Sermon still to that effect, he showeth that our sorrow must be also continual. Many sorrow, as hath been showed, but in a worldly sorrowing, which bringeth eternal death, not in a godly grief which bringeth repentance never to be repented of. Wherefore we are to note that repentance beginneth in us, continueth and endeth with sorrow. Now, if it might be, it were expedient to show what repentance is. In one word, repentance is not a bare leaving of sin, but an utter condemning and misliking of that sin which we have left. For though we have left it, yet it may make us to sorrow for it many years after, yea even at the point of death. David had left his sin, but it caused him to sorrow many years after. Joseph's brethren had forsaken and almost forgotten their sin, yet it troubled them, and grieved them thirteen years after. Our pricking of heart therefore must be continued and daily renewed. This repentance is figured in Baptism, both in that we must die to sin, and bury it, and also that we must rise again to newness of life: for a man cannot die to sin but by the virtue of Christ his death, neither can he rise to righteousness without power of his resurrection. Now we must know, that as our sins are forgiven, so we must also receive God's spirit. If God promiseth mercy to our children, much more to us, if we believe and receive his promises; if to them which are a far off, much more to them that are near. And yet though we have been baptized a hundred years, and have not received the holy Ghost, we may die in our sins. Some understand by the gift of the holy Ghost, the graces of God bestowed on the Apostles: but in my judgment their opinion is not sound, because that was a particular thing given

only to them of that time, this promise is general and respects all posterities. We are then to note, that repentance is a continual course of sorrow, and if we have this in truth, then may we boldly seek for comfort out of God's word, and from his ministers, and look What comfort they give us on earth, the same shall be sealed also in heaven. Wherefore as it is requisite continually to till the ground, if we will have fruit and daily to eat, if we will live: so in spiritual things, we must be humbled with continual sorrow, that we may be refreshed with daily comfort in Christ, in whose name let us pray. Our Father, &c. (2 Cor. 7:9-10, Rom. 6:3-4, Phil. 3:9-11, Act. 2)

FINIS.

THESE THREE SERMONS FOLLOWING, viz. the 8th, 9th, and 10th; concerning the heavenly purchase, were preached upon the 13th Chapter of the Gospel of Saint Matthew, verse 44.

## **SERMON VIII**

### **CONCERNING THE HEAVENLY PURCHASE PT. I**

Matth. 13:44.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in the field, which when a man hath found, he hideth it, and for joy thereof departeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

The whole scope, and drift of the holy Ghost in this place, is to show that the word of God is to the children of God, more dear than heaven and earth, and that the Word is the only treasure that God hath left unto them, the which indeed is a hidden treasure, unknown unto many, but known unto the children of God, and the only

treasure which they desire: for they which do know it, and perceive the true use of it, do make such a reverent account thereof, as that they are ready to leave all things, and to seek for it; and when they have found it, they are ready likewise to lose all, and to depart from all things (that may hinder it) which they have, and to do all things which serve as good means to keep it, to the end that they may come to the full assurance and possession thereof.

Although I might make a division of this Text into two parts, as first, the inestimable value of the word of God: and secondly, the precious account that is to be made thereof, yet because every word hath his weight, and the text yieldeth a sufficient method as it lieth, I will omit the division, and come to the words as they lie.

Again, the kingdom of heaven, &c. The kingdom of heaven is taken in two diverse senses, first, as all men do know, it is taken for that glorious estate which the Saints and the children of God shall enjoy, when they shall arise with Christ Jesus, and reign after this life with God and his Angels, sin, hell, and death being subdued; which because it is apparent unto all men, we will not stand to approve. The kingdom of heaven is also taken for the entrance which God's children have into God's kingdom, in this world, which is of two sorts, partly of the means whereby God offereth his kingdom unto them, and partly of the graces of his spirit which he offereth by the means: For proof that it consisteth of the graces offered by the means, we read that Jacob in Genesis the 28, when he saw the vision of God and the Angels ascending, and descending, and had the comfortable promise of salvation, and of God's continual presence and assistance made unto him, then he awaking, said, Verily this is none other thing but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And that it is of the means, it appeareth by the 16 chapter of Matthew, where our Savior Christ saith unto Peter, And unto thee



will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven-and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. And this means of entrance into the kingdom of heaven, as it was committed unto Peter, so was it also unto the rest of the Apostles, as it appeareth by John the 21. whose sins (saith Christ) ye remit are remitted, and whose sins yet retain are retained. And as unto them, so unto all the true Ministers of the word of God, succeeding them unto the end of the world, as it appeareth by Matthew the 28, the 19 and 20 verses: Go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you: and loe, I am with you always, until the end of the world. The Apostles are gathered to their fathers, but the ministry shall be forever, it continueth unto the end of the world, and therefore unto the Ministers also are committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and they are the porters of the kingdom of heaven, as the Apostles were. Now, this is evident by Ephes. 4:11. &c. He gave some to be Apostles, some Evangelists, some Pastors, and some Doctors: And unto these he committed the ministry of the word, until the time that all the elect Saints of God were gathered together, and the body of Christ thoroughly built up: which should not be before the end of the world.

By this we see that the Ministers are the porters of heaven, and that they have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, as the Apostles had. Of this kingdom our Savior Christ speaketh, Matth. 23:13. where he reproveth the Scribes and Pharisees, saying: Woe be unto you Interpreters of the Law, for you have shut up the kingdom of heaven before men, for ye yourselves go not in neither suffer ye them that would enter to come in. What these keys be, our Savior Christ showeth, Luke the 11, the 52, saying: Woe be unto you Interpreters of the Law, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge, ye enter not in

yourselves, and them that came in ye forbad. Of this kingdom our Savior also speaketh, Matth. 9, verse 35. And Jesus went about all cities and towns, teaching in the Synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. And in the 10 of Luke, the 10 and 11 verses, our Savior Christ biddeth his Disciples to go and preach: but if they will not receive you, go your ways out of the streets of those cities and towns, and say, Even the dust that cleaveth on us of your city, we wipe off against you: notwithstanding know this that the kingdom of God was come near unto you. And in Luk. 17:21. when the Pharisees asked Christ a question when the kingdom of Christ should come, he answered them and said: The kingdom of God cometh not by observation and glorious signs, neither shall men say, loe here, and loe there, for the kingdom of God behold it is among you. And here we must beware of these translations who have it thus translated, the kingdom of God is within you: for we must not think that the kingdom of God was in every one of the Scribes and Pharisees, but that it was amongst them; so that everyone is not the kingdom of God, as the Family of love teacheth. And in Matthew 21, verse 43. Christ speaking unto the unthankful Jews, saith: The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given unto a nation that shall bring forth fruit. Where we see that the kingdom of God is taken for the ministry of the Word, and the application of the kingdom of God unto us: and here we are to know that by these means of the ministry of the Word, as Fasting, Prayer, &c. the kingdom of God is offered unto us: but these are not the kingdom, but the means to bring us thereunto, as is evident by Isaiah 52, verse 14, the which afterward is repeated and applied unto this end of the Apostle Paul, Rom. the 15, and 21 verse: To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see him, and they that heard not shall understand him: where it is apparent that the ministry of the Word is the means to bring us to the knowledge of Christ, and so to his kingdom. The kingdom of God is wholly spiritual, as Romans the 14, and 17 verse.

The kingdom of God (saith the Apostle) is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost. And that the kingdom of God consisteth partly of all the graces of the spirit proceeding from this means, it is evident by the 2 of Peter, the 1 and 4 verse, &c. Therefore give all diligence thereunto, join virtue with faith, and with virtue knowledge, and with knowledge temperance, and with temperance patience, and with patience godliness, and with godliness brotherly kindness, and with brotherly kindness love: for if these things be among you, and abound, they will make you that you neither shall be idle, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things, you shall never fall: for by these means an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord, and Savior Jesus Christ. Thus then we see that the kingdom of God consisteth in these things, as in respect of the outward means which is the Word, and in respect of the fruit of these means it consisteth in these graces, which fruit God bestoweth on them which use the means.

Here then we learn that none shall make appearance in the kingdom of God hereafter, which maketh not an entrance into it here. He which taketh not possession of it in this life, shall never possess it in the life to come, none shall rise and reign with Christ, which doth not with him here crucify himself and rise from sin on earth: for who so will be made partaker of the kingdom of heaven, must here wholly addict himself to seek the kingdom of heaven. Therefore it behooveth every man to make an especial account of these means, seeing that by them we have already passed the second death, and entered into the kingdom of God, which whosoever doth not enjoy here, can never enjoy it in the life to come: wherefore the kingdom of God is, and may well be called a treasure. The righteousness of Christ Jesus, with the peace of conscience, joy in the holy Ghost, virtue, faith,

knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, love, &c. these be sure gages, seals, and pledges unto us, of our entrance into the kingdom of God, and therefore most excellent treasures. For if that be a treasure, which if a man have, he needeth nothing else, and without which, if he have all things he hath nothing, then may this rightly be called a treasure; for all things without them are nothing, and these without all other things are sufficient for our salvation. Therefore this being so great and inestimable a treasure, is highly to be esteemed of us. Have we this treasure? Then we need not to esteem of all other things. In judgment men do see that the only treasure of man is the salvation of the soul: this is a granted rule, neither doth this need so much to be proved unto us, as that it is not only to be confessed of us in words, but also in understanding to be conceived, in affection to be well liked of, and agreed unto, and in life to be expressed. For blessed are they that can so think of, and make use of this treasure. Now where a man's treasure is, there is his heart, and where his heart is, thither are all the powers both of soul and body carried headlong. For so soon as men give themselves to like of and to love pleasures, riches, credit, honor, or learning, wisdom, or glory, so soon they make these as it were, their God's: when men begin to be persuaded these things are a treasure, when their hearts are once set on these things, then we see presently that all parts both of soul and body bend that way, then goeth mind, heart, and hand and affection, and the whole delight to the attaining thereof. Therefore if this Word be a treasure, then all the powers and faculties of body and mind, must be given only unto it.

Wherefore everyone must know this, that they only have this treasure, whose hearts are set on the kingdom of God, they are the nearest unto salvation, whose hearts are set on the Word and doctrine of salvation, who can say from the bottom of their hearts

with the man of God David, This one thing (O Lord) have I desired, and that I will require, even that I may dwell in the house of my God all the days of my life: But what to do? To behold the beauty of the Lord, and to see the light of his favorable countenance in Christ Jesus, and to receive the gifts and graces of the spirit of God, which may be sure seals and pledges of his salvation, yea (saith he) I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of ungodly men. Neither must we desire so much to be present in the house of the Lord in body only, but also in spirit, that we may even behold his favorable countenance shining upon us in Christ Jesus.

Wherefore we ought to make most precious account of the means, because they bring much excellent graces: By them we are brought into God's house to behold his face, and to enjoy his mercies? Why then (will some say) is the preaching of the Word the gates of Heaven? Are the preachers of the Word the porters of these gates? If this be such a treasure, why is not the Word more preached? Why is it not more esteemed? Are the graces of the spirit of heaven in earth? Are they our entrance into heaven? How then is it that they are not longed after? Why do not men make more account of them? Surely our Savior Christ teacheth his children to meet with this objection, when he saith it is hidden. This treasure is not apparent, but secret, not of this world, nor known to them of this world, but hidden and unknown of them, and therefore not so much regarded and esteemed of.

And this treasure is hidden, whether we consider the means, as things of no glorious show, or the graces of the means, which are not of this world, but rather contrary to this world. That the graces of the spirit are hidden from them of this world, our Savior Christ showeth us in Matthew 11, and 25 verse, saying: I give thee thanks O Father

Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and men of understanding, and hast opened them unto babes. That the means are hidden, Saint Paul witnesseth in the 1 to the Corinth. 2, and 7 verse: But we (saith he) speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hid wisdom which God hath determined before the world, unto our glory, which none of the Princes of this world hath known, &c. And in the 2 of Corinth. 4, and 3 verse, he saith: If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that be lost, whose minds the god of this world hath blinded. The Word is hidden in the base means of the Ministry, as the Apostle saith, 2. Corinth. 4, and 7 verse: We have the treasures in earthly vessels, &c. And therefore it being in earthly vessels, is the less esteemed of the world. Also this treasure is hidden under the creatures of Water, Bread, and Wine. I do now speak basely of these according unto the manner of men: but I know how I do account of them: for unto God and the godly these means are not base, but indeed in respect of the graces offered by these means, they are very base; and who would think that in a mortal man like myself should be hidden the treasure of heaven and earth? Who would think that by the preaching of a silly poor man, Jesus Christ with all his treasure should be offered unto us? Who would think that in the creatures of Bread and Wine and Water, were hid the seals and pledges of the kingdom of heaven? These be treasures indeed, but they are hidden.

As a treasure in the field. This treasure sure is such a hidden thing, as that the eye of the quickest hath not seen it, neither hath his ear heard of it, neither hath it entered into his heart to conceive of it. Now as in a goodly field adorned with Grass, Flowers, Trees, Herbs, and such like, perhaps there lieth hidden no treasure; whereas contrary in a barren piece of ground, wherein no such things are, there may be and do commonly lie hidden treasures very great: so there is an inequality of means, and the Lord bestoweth his graces

upon them, for the most part, which carry least show in this world, and useth them as instruments, and means to set forth his glory: and so likewise in the Sacraments and in the word of God, though they be less esteemed of in the world, yet in them is the chiefest treasure of all hidden. This must teach us, that it is no marvel though few of the world come to this treasure, because that it is so hidden, and therefore this was prophesied of long before of the Prophet Isaiah, in his 25 chap., 1 verse: Lord (saith he) who will believe our report? And, to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

The which prophecy is also repeated again of Christ, John the 12: and also of S. Paul, Rom 10:16. But answer may be made hereunto, even they, who are transformed into the image of Christ. Seeing then it was the complaint of the Prophets in old time, let not us be offended that so few seek this treasure, and men do so little esteem of it: but let the wicked esteem never so ill of it, and let it never be revealed unto the ungodly, yet the godly shall esteem of it nevertheless, and unto them shall this good treasure be revealed, and made most apparent. Let us therefore pray the Lord that he would raise up, and send forth most plentiful and diligent laborers into his harvest, and that he would send forth many of his porters, to awaken us out of sin, and to stir us up to the receiving of the kingdom of God, that so they seeking may find, and knocking it may be opened unto them.

It followeth: which when a man hath found, &c. To pursue every particular far in a parable is not the safest way, except it agree with the analogy of the things; we must here know that parables do not hold but in some things, and not in all, and therefore in this sense the word doth not agree with a treasure, which when a man hath found, he hideth to this end, that none else should find it, and be partakers of it, but himself, but in the Word it ought not to be so; but in this sense it agreeth with the analogy of our faith: A man which

hath found a great treasure, it is so great joy unto him, as that he suspecteth himself whether it be so or no, he is afeard least he hath not found it and therefore he searcheth more nearly into it again, least that his sudden joy should be soon decayed, or else having found it, he lose it, and therefore he hideth it: and even so it is with the spiritual kingdom of God, for when it pleaseth God to work in the heart of his people, by the ministry of his word, to feel their salvation in Christ Jesus, by and by there ariseth a kind of fear in their hearts, least they be missed by seeking the way to salvation, or having found the way, they are afraid least they should lose it again, they are full of doubts that they continually strive to come to a greater assurance thereof. For in the embracing of this treasure they find it to be so sweet, and the taste thereof to be so precious, as that they labor thoroughly to seek after it, they desire not to have a glimmering fight of our Savior Christ but even a full taste of him, and all his benefits, And therefore there is never through peace in the hearts of the children of God, so long as they reverence the word, till they have hidden the word of God in their hearts, and grow more and more in the assurance of their salvation in Christ Jesus. And therefore David in Psal. 119, the second and third verse saith: I have hid thy commandments in my heart, that I might not sin against thee. And in Proverbs the second and first verse: My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments within thee, and cause thine ear to hearken unto wisdom, and incline thine heart to understanding; when wisdom entereth thy heart, and knowledge delighteth thy soul, then shall counsel preserve thee, and understanding shall keep thee. Where we see that the holy Ghost giveth this precept unto the children of God, that they labor so for the word that it be hidden in their hearts, they must labor to have their hearts wholly to possess the word, for the mind of man it may be deceived, but the heart cannot, if the heart be once thoroughly possessed of the word, it cannot easily be deprived of it.



Now as a treasure is found before it be sought, so is the word of God Isaiah. 65:1, Rom. 10:20. I was found of them that sought me not, and have been made manifest to them that asked not after me. This showeth that all goodness cometh of the free grace and mercy of God, but to this end doth God manifest himself to them that sought him not, that men when God hath once found them, should then seek after him, and when he hath once spoken unto them, then they should hearken unto him. And this no doubt the children of God, who when the Lord hath found them, and they know that the Lord hath spoken, they have heard him. O then so glad would they hear him again, and fearful they are least they should be deprived of hearing him in his word: neither do they desire to have Christ transfigured in the mount, but themselves to be transformed into new men, that they might grow up in righteousness, from strength to strength, and from faith to faith. This I speak unto the sons and daughters of God which languish in their sins, and in the feeling of their infirmities, and hunger and thirst after the graces of God; O how joyful are they in hearing the word, having felt comfort in it? Such fervency of spirit is in them, to hear the preaching of the word, being so precious unto them, they delight in the Sacraments, finding confirmation of faith and strength by them: The company of God's children is most delightful unto them, as David saith: All my delight (O Lord) is upon thy Saints on earth: Their consciences are comforted, and they are full of alacrity and cheerfulness.

These things may serve to stir us up, to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the hearing of God's word. For by experience I have known and tried some, which in the beginning of their profession have been zealous, have taken pleasure in the word of God, have felt some comfort in the word, and for confirmation of their faith, both the word and the Saints of God were dear unto them. They have distributed to the poor, and have had many other graces,

yet when they looked for the virtue and power and effect which the word should have wrought in their hearts, it was not in them, alas these things are now gone: but although the children of God have many several temptations, and that often without any feeling of this, yet let them assure them of this, that be they whosoever they are, at one time or other they shall feel this mighty power of the spirit of God in them to quicken them up.

It is requisite therefore for them to know how this cometh, and what the remedy thereof is, that so they might find out the way to the attaining of it. Truly the Lord was found of us, when we sought him not, he made himself known unto us, when we were ignorant of him, he caused the light to shine on us, when we sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. It pleased him in the first shining of the Gospel to put the teat and the milk into our mouths, even as a good mother dealeth with her young child, and to put the clothes upon our backs, and to provide all things for us without asking: but after that the Lord hath thus nourished us, and regenerated us by his word and spirit, and found us out even then when we thought not of him, and then we like unto little children were ready to come unto him; behold here the great mercy and loving kindness of our God towards us; but when as yet notwithstanding these mercies are increased not in faith, in repentance and godly obedience unto the laws of God, he still useth us as children, even as Christ used his Apostles, giving us to know and to see that surely there is good, and that there is comfort and salvation unto the children of God; thus God by little and little conveyeth his graces into us.

But now whether for remission of our sins, whether for omission of certain duties, whether for our barrenness in spiritual graces, whether for our humbling or trial of our faith, or neglecting of the inward means, or for the setting forth of the glory of God, it hath

pleased him a little to frown upon us, and to withdraw his smiling countenance from us: He which found us when we sought not him, even he doth now leave us to the intent that we might now learn to seek after him: God he gave us those things which were profitable for us, before we knocked, to the intent that receiving them at his hand we might hereafter learn to knock for them: for we must know that our clothes must not always be put upon our backs, the tears must not be always put into our mouths: we must not always be fed with milk, and be young children; wherefore seeing that there is an infancy and a nonage and a time of discretion, as it is in Hebr. 5, and seeing the Lord hath a long time fed us with milk as babes, we must not now murmur if he feed us with stronger meat as men.

Fathers will nurture their children, and give them corrections when they abuse their loving kindness, and will make their children to seek unto them, and crave of them those things which they want: And shall the fathers of our flesh do thus? Shall they nurture their children, and by discipline correct their sins and offenses; and shall not we suffer the father of our spirits to deal thus with us? Seeing that we have offended the Lord, and not glorified him as we should, seeing we have been barren in goodness, and have not brought forth fruits of repentance worthy the Gospel? Is it not now good for us, that the Lord should deal somewhat sharply with us? Is it not meet that now the Lord should take his blessing from us, when we abuse them? Is it not meet that the Lord should withhold his goodness when we are not thankful for it, and when the beholding of it doth do us much harm? If God shall now deal somewhat more strictly with us, it is to the intent that we might the better learn to do our duties: for surely now we are not in our nonage, but even come to years of discretion, we must not therefore look still to be dealt withal as young children: but we must fast, and we must pray, and use those good means which God hath appointed. We must knock and we shall

find, we must be importunate with the widow and we shall obtain; we must seek earnestly, and then I dare be bold to say, that the graces of God which now seem in some sort to be withdrawn from us, shall be restored unto us in as great measure as ever they were before.

Wherefore seeing the Lord heretofore hath bestowed his graces and blessings upon us in more ample sort than ever we could have looked for, and that now he seemeth as it were to be absent from us, let us bewail and mourn for his absence, and then he will return: otherwise let us never look for his presence again: wherefore let every man beware that he make precious account of the word of God, and let everyone consider and examine himself whether he hath in him a readiness to seek this treasure or no; yea let everyone provoke himself to this, for the kingdom of heaven from the time of John the Baptist unto Christ suffered violence, and must suffer violence until the end of the world. And none ever did or shall enter into it, to have fruition thereof, but those who with all fervency, violence, and zeal have sought after it. Wherefore if we have not clearness in knowledge, pureness in affections, if we find not in us joy in the holy Ghost, zeal, and boldness in good things, love, meekness, patience, and such like fruits of the spirit, we are to know that this is for want of fasting, praying, knocking, seeking, and due estimation of the Word and Sacraments. Wherefore if we find in ourselves the want of these things, we must have recourse to the use of the means.

It followeth. And for joy thereof departeth, &c. It is a thing incident to treasures when they are found to work joy, and great is their joy which have found pleasures, but greater is the joy of him that findeth the treasure of salvation, then his joy is that findeth earthly treasures; Show us (saith the Prophet, Psal. the 4.) the light of thy countenance, thy favor and thy grace, and thou shalt make our hearts more cheerful and joyful, than rich men are when their Corn, Oil,

and Wine increaseth. Great is the joy that ariseth of abundance of riches, but greater is the joy which ariseth of the love and favorable countenance of God. The man of God saith in Psalm 119 the ninth part, and the 72 verse of the Psalm, The law of thy mouth, O Lord, is better than thousands of gold or silver. That man which loveth gold, he taketh great pleasure and delight therein: but yet saith the Prophet, Thy word is sweeter and better esteemed and liked of by me, than thousands of gold and silver. And in the sixteenth part of the same Psalm, verse the 9, I love thy commandments (saith he) above gold, yea above most fine gold. And in the 21. part of the same Psalm, and 2. verse of that part, he saith: I rejoyce at thy word as one that findeth a great spoil. Pleasures breed joy, profits breed joy, honor and glory breed joy, by a good harvest, with increase of Wine and Oil cometh pleasure, by riches as gold and silver ariseth profit, by victory conquest and spoil of the enemy, honor and glory is gotten. Now all these things being laid jointly together, must needs bring a great joy to a man; but the man of God preferreth the joy which proceedeth from the Word before all these; and that not without good cause, for greater is the joy of the kingdom of heaven, and of eternal salvation in heaven, than the joy which ariseth of all these things. And what is the joy of Wine and Oil to this, that men's hearts are refreshed with the refreshed Wine and Oil of the countenance of God; is it not more than to possess much gold and silver? What greater joy can be than to be persuaded of the love of God in Christ Jesus? The eye hath not seen, neither hath the ear heard, neither can the heart of man conceive of this unspeakable joy of the kingdom of heaven. To live and remain forever with God the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit in eternal glory, is not this better than thousands of gold and silver? To subdue Satan, sin, the world, the Devil, and the torments of hell, is not this a great victory and a great joy? Yea is it not greater than the triumph over our bodily enemies? To remain eternally in the glory of God, of Christ Jesus, the

Spirit and the holy Angels; is not this an infinite and incomprehensible joy? Wherefore men must leave off the false joys of this world, and the petty joys of sin, and cleave unto this joy, and seek after it.

Now everyone the greater treasure that he findeth the more he doth rejoyce, and so everyone the nearer that he draweth unto salvation, the more joyful and glad he is. For the kingdom of God doth not keep one, and the same tenor in all men. This joy is not in all the children of God alike, God he doth sometime hide his loving countenance from them, sometimes he giveth comfort, and sometimes again more sorrow. And as we see that the Lord sendeth sometimes wet weather, and sometimes again more fair weather, sometimes he sendeth storms, tempests, and boisterous weather, and by and by most calm and still: even so dealeth he with his children, sometime he hideth his graces from them, which other sometimes he maketh apparent unto them. And as after storms and tempests come fair weather; so after sorrows and troubles, joys and pleasures do come unto the children of God: after their anguish and pains are past, great calmness and peace of mind and quietness in conscience ariseth unto them. And as it is said in Psalm 30:5. The anger of the Lord endureth but a while, but in his favor is life: Weeping and sorrow may abide for an evening, but joy cometh in the morning. Wherefore everyone is to examine himself whether he hath this joy or not: for whosoever hath it not, certainly he hath not his salvation. Yet it may be that he may have some sight of it, but it was never hid deeply in his heart. And here we are to know that there are two sorts of joys in receiving the word: There is a joy in the wicked in hearing of God's word, but it having but a small crust of the earth to nourish it, it withereth quickly away and remaineth but for a time, as is showed in this chapter in the parable of the seed, which fell in hard stony ground: There is another joy which endureth and continueth unto the end,

which although it have many intermissions, yet it doth not altogether cease, but will at the length have the victory against all sorrow whatsoever. The one of these is the joy of the mind, the other is the joy of the heart. The first is deceitful, the second is effectual, A man may therefore be deceived in joy, and think that he hath it before he hath found it, and that there is a joy when a man thinketh that he hath found a treasure, when he hath not, and another joy when he knoweth indeed he hath found it: even so is there a double joy in the kingdom of God: For there is a joy in the hearing and knowing of this, that the kingdom and graces of God are offered unto us: It is a joyful thing for a man to know his salvation, and to know that God offereth unto him eternal life and redemption; but if this joy do but abide and swim as it were on the top of their brain, and go no further, then is there but a crust of the earth as it were in these hearers, and their stony and hard hearts are hardened with deceitfulness of sin, and there is also another joy in this, when a man is assured and fully knoweth that he is saved.

There is a joy of the mind, when a man doth see the mystery of his salvation, and there is a joy of the heart, when a man hath the experience thereof: the former of these joys may be deceived, the other cannot. The former remaineth but for a time, if a man do rest only in the knowledge of his salvation, a man can minister no true comfort unto this man: For it is one thing to know there is eternal life, and another thing to know that eternal life is ordained for thee: For it is one thing to know that sins are pardonable, and another thing to know that thy sins are pardoned: neither doth it follow, that because thou seest the way to heaven, that therefore thou art there. Wherefore thou must know that the seat of faith is not in the brain, but in the heart, and that the head is not the place to keep the promises of God, but the heart is the chest to lay them up in. Therefore as the mind must be convinced of sin so the heart must be

continually rebuked, feared, humbled, and terrified from sin, it must be the closet wherein the word of God must be kept; With the heart (saith the Apostle) a man believeth unto righteousness. The mind of man, if it be troubled, it is nothing, but if his heart be troubled, the trouble thereof is great. Therefore as the grief of the mind, is nothing to the grief and sorrow of the heart, so the joy of the mind is nothing comparable to the joy of the heart. And then it is indeed a true joy, when a man hath in his heart an experience of the mercies: If I can say now, not I but Christ Jesus which liveth in me, O this is the joy of the heart, which passeth the reach of all understanding.

Many cannot distinguish between this joy of the mind and the joy of the heart: But let such men know, that a temptation may change the mind, and motion of the brain, but the heart and affection being root in goodness, it can never change it. For although there be sorrow in thy heart in the evening and for a season, yet joy again will come in the morning. The Lord he is faithful who hath called his, and he will always perfect his work in them: first in raising up the body in the last day, and then in joining it together with the soul, and making both partakers of that blessedness and glorious happiness which is prepared for them in the kingdom of heaven.



# SERMON IX

## CONCERNING THE HEAVENLY PURCHASE PT. II

Matth. 13:44.

And for joy thereof departeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

In the former Sermon we showed that the kingdom of God was taken in two diverse senses, as namely: First, for the glorious estate of God's children after this life, when they shall live eternally with God, and enjoy the presence of the holy Angels, triumphing over sin, hell, death, and condemnation: and secondly, for the entrance which God's children have into the kingdom of God in this world. This kingdom is of two parts, one of the means whereby God offereth his kingdom unto them; the other of the graces of the Spirit, which he offereth by the means. Here we are taught that none shall ever have fruition of the joys of heaven, but those which take possession of them in earth: none shall rise again with Christ to glory, which doth not here arise from sin: for who so will be made partaker of the kingdom of heaven, must here wholly addict himself to seek the kingdom of heaven, everyone therefore is to make great account of the word of God, which is the means to lead us to this kingdom, that so he may be assured that he hath already departed from death unto life, and so he may have the assurance of the kingdom of heaven.

The word of God and the graces offered by it, are called a treasure, because that without this all things else are nothing, and this of itself is sufficient to our salvation. Many there are, which will confess that this is the only treasure which a man ought to seek for, but few there

are which do agree thereunto in their lives, and labor to express the same in their conversation. But blessed are they that can so think of it, and labor to have a testimony in their consciences that they do thus seek after it: for where every man's treasure is, there is his heart also. So that if the word of God and the graces of the Spirit and eternal life be our treasure, then our hearts must be set on them, and then must we wholly seek after them; but this treasure is a hidden treasure, and therefore not so esteemed and revered: for whether we do consider the means which have no outward power or show in them, or whether we consider the graces of the Spirit offered by the means, it is a treasure altogether hidden; but yet though it be hidden, yet it is not any whit less esteemed of the godly.

This must teach us not to be offended with any, when we shall see them make no account of receiving the truth: for it is no new thing, but hath been a thing prophesied of old: Lord (saith the Prophet Isaiah) who will believe our report, or to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? We showed that treasures are found before they be sought for, and so God he hath offered unto us the treasure of his word before we sought it, and therefore we must acknowledge that this is only of the free mercy and favor of God, that we do enjoy the treasure of his word.

Now, for as much as God hath once vouchsafed to call us, we must obey, and having once spoken unto us, we must hearken unto him: for it hath pleased the Lord to deal with us as parents deal with their young children, who when their children be tender, they put the teat into their mouths, put on their clothes upon their backs, and feed them with milk: but when they wax elder and grow to some years of discretion, then if they offend they are rebuked and scourged. And even so the Lord at the first beginning of our regeneration, he offered his graces most plentifully unto us, he sent his watchmen to call us

unto him: but now whether for omission of duties, correction of our sins, or trial of our patience, it pleaseth him to withdraw his merciful countenance from us, and as it were to be gone from us, to the intent that now we might seek him, now we must fast and mourn, or he will not return unto us again.

Everyone must therefore examine his own heart, whether that he doth there find such power of the spirit of God working in him, as that he is willing to seek unto the Lord, and a proceeding and holding on in grace, in virtue, and in goodness. And if upon due trial and examination of our hearts, we find them not in us, then we are to know that the reason why we have them not, is this, we would still be babes, and still be fed as children, not seeking, not knocking, nor looking after the Lord.

The man that findeth a treasure, hath a joy suddenly arising in his mind, but by and by he doubteth of himself whether he hath found a treasure indeed or no: and therefore he looketh over it again to the intent he may be the better certified thereof, least otherwise his sudden joy should soon vanish away. And even so the children of God find by the word of God the treasure of their salvation to be in Christ Jesus, and being thoroughly touched in heart to seek after the same, yet oftentimes they do make many doubts, they seek again and again, and are desirous not only to have a smack and a glimmering taste of Christ, but a lively eating and feeding upon the Lord Jesus, and therefore they hide the word with the Prophet David in their hearts.

A man having found a treasure rejoiceth. Joy and sorrow, hope and fear working on men's hearts, do make known unto men how far off, or how near our hearts are unto God: for the nearer a man is unto salvation, the more joyful and gladder he is. Great is the joy of

harvest unto them which have harvest at hand; great is the joy of silver and gold, unto them which have abundance thereof, but greater is the joy of a good conscience: great is the joy of spoils, of victory and glory, gotten by victory and spoils, but greater is the joy of a true Christian in the mercies of the Lord. And therefore David speaking in the person of a regenerate man, saith in Psalm the 119. the last part save one: I rejoyce at thy word, as one that findeth a great spoil. Those then which have no joy in the word, in the spirit of God, and in the graces of God's spirit, they never tasted of the good spirit of God, neither shall they taste of the joys of the world to come. There is a joy of the mind, and a joy of the heart: a joy when a man knoweth that a treasure is to be found, but a greater joy, when in experience the heart is fully settled in the finding of it. The joy of a man which cometh in this, that he knoweth that there is salvation, this joy may vanish away; but that joy which is settled in the heart in the full assurance of salvation, this joy, though it may sometimes be darkened, yet can it never be utterly extinguished, heaviness may abide for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

It followeth: He withdraweth himself, or he departeth. The natural signification of the word, is not only to depart and go away, but to withdraw and separate himself as it were from other business. And this we see aptly and fully to be resembled of us in the finding of a treasure: for when a man hath found a treasure, he goeth about to buy the field: or when one is about to undertake any other thing of great weight or importance, then he giveth himself wholly over unto it, he goeth aside to consider of it, what it is, whether he be not deceived in it, what his own ability is, what good it may do him, what it must cost him, what it may be worth unto him, and whether it will countervail all those things he layeth out for it: and even so in the doctrine of salvation it is requisite that men should consider it, when God offereth such a worthy treasure unto them, then they are to

search into their hearts thoroughly and diligently to cast beforehand, what lets, impediments and hindrances there may be, what that is which they seek for, what cost and labor they are to bestow upon it, and again, what may be the profit, commodity and joy thereof, which may redound unto them thereby, when they have it, and how they may keep themselves in sure possession of it, having once obtained it. This preconsideration our Savior Christ confirmeth unto us in two Parables in Luke the 14 the one is of building, the other of war. For the first, he saith, Which of you minding to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost whether he hath sufficient to perform it, least after that he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to perform it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying: This man began to build, and was not able to make an end. For the second, he saith: What King going to war against another King, sitteth not down first and taketh counsel whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him which cometh against him with twenty thousand, least afterward to his great shame (for so it may be gathered by the circumstances) he may be constrained to send an ambassage unto him and to desire conditions of peace. So ought everyone which cometh to hear the Word, to make this premeditation and preparation with himself, whether he be able and can endure the cost which he must be at in coming unto the Lord, whether he can endure that fight which he is to take in hand before he come unto the Lord; whether he can sustain the loss of his father, mother, wife, and children, brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, and all that he hath; whether he be able to fight against Powers, Principalities, the Devil, the World, and the flesh, his own reason and affections, least that otherwise he break off his course, and show himself not to be the man he seemed first to be. This premeditation and preconsideration must be made, before we can enjoy that treasure and buy the field wherein it lieth.

There is no similitude in the Scriptures used more often than the similitude of building, which often is Englished by this word Edifying. Of this building mention is made 1. Cor. 3. where the people of God are called the Building of God, and the Apostles the Builders: so likewise in Ephes, chap. 2, verse. 20, 21, 22. And are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner stone, in whom all the building coupled together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye are also built together to be the habitation of God by the spirit. And in Ephes. 4, and 12 verse, it is said by the Apostle, That Christ gave some to be Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors, and some Teachers, for the gathering together of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edification of the body of Christ. And in verse the 16. By whom all the body being coupled and knit together, by every joint for the furniture thereof (according to the effectual power which is in the measure of every part) receiveth increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love. And Jude in his Epistle verse the 20, requireth of us that we build ourselves in our most holy faith praying in the holy Ghost. Again, who knoweth not that the similitude of warfare is often repeated also in the Scriptures; as in Job, The life of man is a continual warfare. And in the 1 of Timothy, the 6 chapter, and 12 verse: Fight a good fight, saith the Apostle. And 1. Peter. 2, and 11 verse. Abstain from fleshly lusts, which fight against the soul. And Eph. 6, and 12 verse: We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and against earthly governors, the princes of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness's in heavenly things: So that we see that of necessity every Christian must be a builder and a warrior.

This building and fighting was shadowed out in the rearing up of the material walls of the temple of Jerusalem, which when the Jews did build, they wrought with one hand, and held their weapons in the

other hand to fight against their enemies, as it is in Nehem. 4, and 17 verse. The profit and commodity of building is a deed very great, the glory and honor of victory gotten in war is great, but this we know that nothing is more troublesome and dangerous, than both building and war: yet be thinking of the commodity and glory which do arise of them, do countervail the pains and griefs. But greater is the profit and more excellent is the glory which we shall attain unto in building up of ourselves temples of the holy Ghost. Therefore as none can look to have commodity by his building, nor honor by fighting, without travail and pains: so let no man deceive himself with a vain persuasion, that he shall inherit the kingdom of heaven, when he laboreth not with might and main to come there. For we shall never be victors, except we fight valiantly, we cannot enjoy the building if we spare the cost. And as we see some begin a building, which not being able to finish, do leave off to their discredit: and as many do move and make war, who not being able to finish it, and to go through withal, are fain to their shame to seek truce, so alas many begin to build and make an entrance into Christianity with a great and fair show at the first, but few continue to the end.

And we find it most true in the Gospel, that nine lepers being cleansed, but one of them returned back again to give him thanks for it. Wherefore this forethinking and premeditation is most expedient and necessary: neither must we think that religion is so slight a matter, as many do persuade themselves that it is; which kind of men when death cometh upon them, even then they are deceived of their salvation, because they make no account thereof beforehand, they never thought that the profession of Christianity would be so costly unto them, they never thought it would be so chargeable a matter. Whosoever therefore will avoid a most dangerous and desperate estate at his death, whosoever he or she be which will go on unto this building, must forecast and premeditate beforehand, what it must

cost him, he must deeply consider with himself what his salvation and the kingdom of heaven will cost him; I tell you it is no small thing, it must cost him the loss of all the pleasures and delights of this world, it must cost thee the forgoing of all thy lusts, the loss of riches, of liberty, and of banishment, the loss of thy wife, goods, lands, friends, parents, children, yea and peradventure also it will cost thee the loss of thine own heart blood: It is more chargeable than some think it is, and that it is the cause why they make so little account of it.

Now there are some which care not what it costeth them, so that it may be had with ease; but such must know that it is as laborious, as costly: For before thou canst attain unto it, thou must travail in heart and in soul, with weeping, with sighing, with much fasting, with prayer, with watching, with meditation of the word of God, and in practicing of all the commandments of God. Thou must travail in compassion towards all men, thou must take pains in doing thy duty towards thy superiors, and in relieving the needy, and such as are in distress. Finally, it is a most painful way to pass, and many there be which deceive themselves, entering into it without preconsideration either of cost or pains. I tell you in the hour of death, in the day of judgment, in persecutions, in trials, in banishments, many shall see and know that they have deceived themselves, for that they have not duly thought of these said charges; neither is it only chargeable and troublesome, but also there are in it many and great perils and dangers, many battles must be fought, before thou canst come unto the end thereof.

Now for a man not only to be greatly chargeable, but also to have great troubles, many battles betwixt the flesh and the spirit, this is a sore and a great temptation, thou must fight with all thy affections, with thine own reason, thou must be prepared to fight with fleshly



joy, Love, Fear, sorrow, Anger, Meekness, Softness: neither is this conflict as the passion of anger, which endureth but for a moment, but this combat against affections is to be taken in hand diverse and sundry times, and continueth a long time, even during the whole life. And though we receive many blows, and are sometimes (as it were) drawn back, yet we must to it again. Those (I say) which mean to inherit the kingdom of heaven, must renounce their own reason, and fight against their own judgment. As for example, in anger many will burst out to fighting; and why? Because that their own reason teacheth them that they are abused, contemned, and despised, and this is it which deceiveth many, because they do not strive and contend with their own reason: but rather do thus think with themselves according to the manner of men, what is the reason why we should do this? Or why we should do that? Why we should lose our wives, children, goods, and lands? This reason then of ours must be fought against and overcome.

But when a man hath overcome his reason, and knoweth what things to be angry for, and what things to be patient in, what to love, and what to hate, then shall he the better walk rightly, but for as much as a man must fight both with his reason and his affections, this is a hard battle. For though a man have overcome his reason, yet his affections may still be head strong in him, yea so strong as they shall carry his reason and judgment headlong. Here then ariseth a greater fight than before, before the affections can be overcome: but when reason and affections join together and that a man hath to deal with them both, then ariseth a most deadly fight, insomuch that a man shall very hardly overcome them, and yet we have more enemies to fight withal than these. We must fight on the right hand, and on the left; on the right hand with fame and glory, and on the left hand we are to fight with wealth and riches, and with credit, and all things in the world. If God shall vouchsafe to give thee riches, take heed that

thy heart be not set upon them: wherefor when thou, whosoever thou art, art blessed with a good report or with the riches of this world, take heed and beware of pride, vain glory, and ambition, for if the child, of God do not forecast these things, he may easily be overtaken, and we see many, who when they are in lower estate behave themselves like honest men, and as becometh the children of God, but when they come to any preferment, and promotion, then they are altogether carried away with the vain glory of this world. Thou must not only fight with fair and good reports, but thou must also fight with reproaches, and this is no small combat: for having riches and glory thou mayest escape pride, and ambition, but if indeed thou profess the truth, thou canst not escape reproaches. Wherefore if this be not forethought and looked unto betimes, if a man be not well armed against this, he cannot be able to withstand it, but it will make him go back from the truth which he hath professed: alas (will he say) I labor to do good, I endeavor myself to keep a good conference in all my dealings, yet loe how I am contemned, and how I am accounted a Precisian, and a Hypocrite.

We must also fight with losses and want of living, and in this point we see many to be overcome: when as therefore the Lord hath brought us unto a low ebb, we must take heed that we be no shifters. For when by a simple and godly living many cannot thrive and prosper in this world, then fall they to unlawful means; and nowadays rather than a man will be in want, he will take two or three livings: wherefore this temptation of want is very great, and therefore so much the more to be looked unto. Likewise when a man must fight with banishment, loss of friends, or such like, then the anguish which ariseth thereof, it draweth from him many bitter sighs and deep groans, and through sorrow of heart, he is brought unto strange thoughts: wherefore except a man do acquit himself with these, and the rest, it will go hard but Satan will have the victory, for it is a very

hard matter to endure them. There is another thing to be taken heed of, and that is this, when Satan shall behold the corruption of a man, either which is within him, or which is outward (for whether it be inward or outward it will serve his turn) as it is in Ephes. the 6. He is spiritual wickedness's in heavenly things, he is a spiritual enemy, and in this world he is Principalities and Powers. Therefore (I say) when he beholdeth thy corruptions, he cometh to work upon thee, and stirreth up thine own conscience, and thine own reason to accuse thee, and to condemn thee: then like a spiritual enemy he cometh to intoxicate thine affections, and moveth thee sometimes with losses, sometimes with profit, sometimes with pleasures, sometimes with joy, sometimes with sorrow; when I say he doth thus bewitch thy reason and affections, and doth thus infatuate thy wits, and intoxicate thy brains, here is a very dangerous fight. And herein may a man easily perceive, that Rebecca had not such a conflict, when the two young babes were within her, as thou shalt have when Satan beginneth thus to work. And for this cause was it that the Church in Baptism did appoint that everyone should even then prepare himself to fight with the Devil, with the world, his own affections, and all the lusts of the flesh.

Now when a man hath once entered into this fight, and for want of due considerations is not able to go further, because he looketh not unto the charges thereof, then what will be said of him? Behold the foolish builder, loe the unwise soldier; and is not this a great reproach? Satan shall laugh at us herein. And this defect in forecasting and premeditation is the cause that some men are carried away from the truth, by this means, and by that means, but few continue steadfast in it unto the end. Hence it cometh to pass, that so many being grounded in the pleasure of this life, swell in ambition, and are as it were choked with delights, in poverty some run to unlawful shifts, many by reproaches and taunts fall away, some burst

with anger, and some are either carried away with grievous errors, or else with Idolatry, because they do not consider that Satan is a spiritual wickedness in heavenly things: Some come to drown and to hang themselves, and all for want of consideration. Wherefore it behooveth all men to be most circumspect and wary in this, that they consider what that is which they be to take in hand, before they enter rashly into it. But yet Satan hath another shift, when he cannot cause us to be careless and negligent in premeditation, then he will make us to trust too much to our own strength, as he did move Peter to do, who if Christ had not prayed for him, and if he had not been grounded on the rock before, he had utterly miscarried, otherwise he maketh us to be over circumspect and wary in this behalf, as he did Ananias and Sapphira.

Again, if he see that thou makest a conscience to offend the Lord, then he will set before thee the weight of thy sins and the great dangers that thou art in, that thereby he may move thee to despair: but if he perceive that thou art careless in offending God, then will he set before thee the mercies of God, that thereby thou mayest presume. O most perilous temptation, when on every side Satan shall seek to entrap thee and bring thee unto destruction! Some again he maketh thus to think; Alas, if I shall give myself to this severe and strict examination of myself, then I shall be plunged into extreme sorrow and grief and brought into melancholy, oh I shall never be mine own man, I cannot beg, I cannot abide (for the words sake) to lose my country, my wife, children, and such like, and therefore I can never come to be a Christian. Thus he causeth thee only to see and look into the peril which shall come unto thee in professing the word of God: but the price of thy salvation and me joys of this life to come, he never telleth them to come into thy mind, and this is also a most perilous temptation Thus the devil by one means or other goeth about to deceive us, either he maketh us to think that the way is not

dangerous, or else that it is so dangerous as we shall never be able to get through it: But notwithstanding these great and manifold combats, as the hope of profit doth move the builder to go on forward in his building; so must we in our spiritual building, in hope of some especial commodity not leave off but go on forward. And as in wary the hope of victory doth stir men up to continue to fight; so seeing our victory is already gotten by Christ, let no labor stay us, let no dangers hinder us, but let us go on forwards both in our building and war.

Let us consider that we fight not in our own strength, but under Christ Jesus, who hath gotten the victory for us, and who fighteth for us, he hath overcome Satan in all his temptations, and accusations: so that he shall never be able to overcome us, either in the sin of presumption or desperation.

We may not therefore be now driven back, the cost of our warfare must not fray us, Christ Jesus will minister harness, strength, and weapons unto us and he will get the victory for us. The great and heavy judgments of God against sinners, let us set before our eyes, the comfortable sayings of the holy Scriptures, as this: Isaiah 11. The wolf shall lie with the lamb, the Leopard shall lie with the kid and the calf, and the Lion and the fat beast together, and a little child shall lead them. Whereby is meant the mighty power of Christ in regenerating our corrupt nature, which is as fierce as a Lion, and as savage as a wolf, or also if we rely upon Christ Jesus, he is able to turn the hearts of the cruelest to pity us. Thou must believe that Christ by his mighty power hath begotten thee anew, and hath delivered thee as it were out of the mouth of the Lion, and therefore in no wise be dismayed, but comfort thyself, and beware of fearful desperation.

When our Savior Christ saith, that it is as possible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, as it is for a Camel to go thorough the eye of a needle: O this is a fearful saying: but again it is a great comfort, when he saith, that with man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. It seemeth to a covetous man to be a very hard thing to depart from anything, but when Christ Jesus shall be the mighty work of his spirit truly touch the heart of Zacchaeus, he can make him willingly to give half of his goods unto the poor, and if that he hath injured any man, to restore the same four fold.

That was a hard and fearful saying of Saint Paul 1. Corinth. 6, and 9 verse: Neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor Idolaters, nor Wantons, nor Buggerers, nor Thieves, nor Covetous men, nor Drunkards, nor Railers, nor Extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God. But that which followeth was most comfortable unto the Corinthians, and so it is most comfortable unto us: And such (saith he) were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God. Loe here how Corinth was once a wild and brutish people, but after their calling they became sound in faith, and were made the Church of God. And in Titus 1, verse 12, Paul saith, That the Cretans were always liars, evil beasts, and slow bellies, and (saith he) this witness is true, wherefore rebuke them sharply: that they might become sound in the faith. Whereby we see how these wicked people were by Faith purged and made the children of God: Why therefore shouldest thou lay before thee the difficulties of overcoming Satan, that thou shouldest therefore despair in the mercies of God? Why should any of us think that we are not able to overcome our own lusts when Christ Jesus standeth for us, and fighteth with us, when his Angels pitch their tents round about us, and the spirit of God is powerful in us, and the word of God maketh for us.

Now seeing thou hast the Word which is of power to save thy life, and seeing thou hast the seals of God's mercies, Water, Bread, and Wine, which are more sure seals of God's favor, than the obligations and bonds of any Princes; seeing thou art so fenced in on every side, be not discouraged by the mighty power of thine enemies, but abide the brunt a little, and desire the Lord to increase thy faith, and no doubt thou shalt be a conqueror, and triumph over all thine enemies: Let us bethink us of our charges and costs, being certainly persuaded by whom, in whom, and through whom, we shall be more than conquerors, that so we run not away at the first: Let us believe, and it shall be unto us according to our faith; and if we cannot believe, let us pray with the man in the Gospel, Lord help our unbelief.

FINIS.

## **SERMON X**

### **CONCERNING THE HEAVENLY PURCHASE PT. III**

Matth. 13:44.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in the field, which when a man hath found, he hideth it, and for joy thereof departeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

Having spoken of this verse before, my purpose is not to use any long repetition of that which was delivered. In effect this hath been before showed, namely, that the price of our salvation here called the kingdom of God, is so excellent, that it is resembled unto a treasure, which howsoever it is hid from the reprobate, and those that be of this world, yet it is manifest and revealed unto the children of God, who find it, and when they have found it, hide it fearing least they

should lose it again; the finding whereof breedeth such joy in their hearts, that they will willingly part from all things that they have, so that they may enjoy this treasure: and therefore it is said, that the man having found this treasure, departeth and withdraweth himself. Where we have showed that many for want of this withdrawing themselves, or premeditation, not considering what the price of this treasure is, nor what pains and labor he is to take which enjoyeth it, after they have once begun and entered into this course which leadeth unto eternal life, not being able to continue therein, do with the unskillful builder, not forecasting what the building will cost, and with the unwise King, having begun war, and not able to go through there with, leave off unto their great shame and reproach.

And here we have showed that no man can sell all that he hath to buy this treasure, before he have thoroughly considered and deeply wayed what the thing itself is, and what loss and peril he is to sustain before he can attain thereunto. And here least that any should be discouraged from selling that which he hath to buy this treasure, I showed the remedies and helps which further us therein. For howsoever this treasure is chargeable, yet the cost is Christ's: and how laborious soever it is, yet Christ hath taken sufficient pains in obtaining it, for all those that put their trust in him. And although the perils and dangers be great, yet in our Lord Jesus they are all overcome. After that a man hath premeditated the charges, pains, and perils, which he is to sustain in buying this treasure, then he cometh to a full resolution, and he selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. In this word selleth, there is much matter contained, where we ought to give more diligent attention thereunto. The things in general which are to be sold before this field be bought, are either of their own nature evil, and in themselves simply sinful, or else such as are sinful in respect of circumstances: those which of themselves are simply sinful, are of two sorts, either gross outward



sins, or else the inward corruption of our corrupt nature. Concerning the former, to wit, gross outward, they must be parted withal and sold, for this saying is true both in religion and in manners, No man can serve two masters, &c. If Baal be God then we must follow him, we must not be luke-warm, hot and cold, for such the Lord speweth out of his mouth. Wherefore we cannot serve God and the world, for there is such a contrariety and a fight between them, that until we reject and forsake the world, we can neither serve God aright, nor yet attain to the fruition of this treasure.

In these words, He selleth all that he hath, there are three things to be considered. First, that sins must be sold and not changed. Secondly, sins must be sold all and not some. Thirdly, they must be sold forever, and not for a season. As touching the first, we see many that do not so much sell their sins as make an exchange of them: for many in the time of Popery had in estimation the Pope and that religion of Antichrist, which now professing the Gospel do neglect and condemn it: heretofore the pains of that feigned Purgatory were feared of many, but now men are not afraid of the torments of hell which are most sure: heretofore men prayed in an unknown tongue, not understanding what they said, but now they will not pray in a known tongue knowing what they say: before men prayed for the dead, now they will not pray for them which are alive: before men used long and continual prayer, now either they pray not at all, or they are so short, and soon weary, as it seemeth they receive no grace thereby: before many Sacraments which were no Sacraments, were much accounted of, now there are but two, and those are true Sacraments, and yet they are neglected: heretofore men fasted very often, and that very scrupulously, insomuch that they did rather offend in fasting too much than too little, but now a Christian fast publicly appointed is rather oppugned than received, and a private fast is not known amongst Christians. Before there were many and

superstitious holy days received, now the only Sabbath of the Lord is profaned, and the devil or at the least not God that day is served: Before men confessed their sins unto every hedge priest, now men have left confession of their sins unto their brethren, choosing rather to murder themselves, than to acknowledge their faults one to another, as the Apostle James willeth they should. Yea men are so far from this, that they will rather by perjury and bribery clear and purge themselves, than make their sins known, and so satisfy the congregation, and Church of God. And thus we might go through all points of religion; for men before were altogether superstitious, and now they are become wholly profane. Wherefore miserable was their estate before, but now most miserable, dangerous and damnable (I say) is the estate of our age, wherein those that serve God best, and walk most carefully in their callings, are accounted mad and frantic, precise fools: on the other side, they which are altogether dissolute, and secure in discharging their duties, are taken for the wisest men, and this cometh to pass because men do not consider that saying of the Apostle, 1. Thess, 5 verse. Brethren, we beseech you that you know them which labor amongst you, and are over you in the Lord, that you have them in singular love for their works sake.

This changing of sin may also be seen in young men of the University, who in their youth did live altogether dissolute in their behavior, but being stricken in years they account gain to be godliness, and so far forth as religion may serve to enrich them, so far are they professors thereof. These and such like have not as yet made a sale of sin, but a change. Satan as yet goeth further, and moves some men to make a more dangerous exchange than this, and bringeth them from one extremity unto another. For many being before given to work wickedness, and that with greediness, and to commit most gross sins, now forsaking that outward wicked course are so puffed up in the pride of their spirit, that they are become such

new men, as it were thinking too well of themselves, they run on into the other extremity in seeking after those things which are above their reach; by whose wickedness it cometh to pass that the good graces of God oftentimes fall to the ground, and the children of God fare the worse for them: and thus we see that many do not so much fell as change their sins.

But it must be otherwise with us, if we mean to obtain this treasure, we must so part with corrupt religion, that we admit no false sects and heresies: we must so give over wickedness and corrupt manners, that from hence forwards we return not unto them, and we must, as the Scripture requireth, forsake a show of profession of religion, and come unto a strict practice thereof. Secondly, all sin and not some must be forsaken, and sold of him, who will enjoy this treasure, many can be content to relinquish some sins, but not all. Herod heard John the Baptist willingly, and was content to give ear unto him preaching repentance: for when John told him, that it was not lawful for him to have his brothers wife, then he would not hear him any longer, but cast him into prison, and caused him to be beheaded. The young man in the Gospel had sold many sins, and had many good thoughts in him, insomuch as it is said, Mark. 10, and 24 verse, that Jesus loved him: but when Christ told him, that if he would follow him he must leave his riches, then he chose rather to depart from Christ than from his riches. Ananias and Sapphira, Acts. 5. had many good things in them, so that they sold their possessions and laid part of the price thereof at the Apostles feet: but dissembling with the Apostles, and distrusting the providence of God, they kept back some part of the price of their possessions, wherefor through the ministry of Peter they both were presently deprived of their lives. Judas also (no doubt) had many good things in him, otherwise Christ would not have made him an Apostle, neither could it be but that hearing Christ so long he should reap some commodity thereby, but

yet he did secretly inveigle the goods of the Church, and did purchase unto himself not this field wherein the treasure was, but (as it is said of him) a field of blood. And thus we see that there is a partial and not a total forsaking of sins in men. But such men must know, that they have not done enough to obtain this treasure, in leaving some faults and holding some. For it is true which the Apostle James saith, 2, and 10 verse, Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet faileth in one point, he is guilty of all. This the Apostle proveth by an example, as if a man have respect of persons, then he is unmerciful towards him whom he regardeth not. Now unmercifulness is referred unto murder, and he that said, Thou shalt not commit adultery, said also, Thou shalt not kill; now though thou doest not commit adultery, yet if thou killest thou art a transgressor of the law. They therefore which make an outward show of Religion, but still keep sin in their hearts, such must know that if they keep sin in part, they shall lose grace in whole: wherefore our sins must be left, not some but all, not partially, but totally. Thirdly, men must sell sin at once, and forever, and not for a moment, or a short time. And herein we may easily see that many men have rather left sin for a season, than thoroughly repented them thereof; and therefore it cometh to pass with them that they do return with the dog unto the vomit, and with the sow which was washed unto the wallowing in the mire. Now if any man ask what the reason is, that some men after that they have escaped the filthiness of the world, are yet again entangled therein: I answer, because such men never came unto a sound grief for their sins. And hence it is, that many being renewed and endued with some gifts of grace, yet being defiled with inward pride and lust of the heart, and not laboring with might and main to be delivered thereof, become much worse than they were before.

The repentance of many who have been Papists, Atheists, and whose lives have been stained with fornication, hurts of their brethren, or

some other gross faults, is only that they have left those sins, but such men never attaining unto true remorse for their sins, fall therefore into them again, or into worse if it be possible: to whom the Apostle James, chapt. 4, saith, Cleanse your hands you sinners, and purge your hearts, you wavering minded, suffer afflictions, and sorrow and weep, let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness. Where the Apostle showeth, that it is not enough for man having offended (with the harlots having done amiss) to wipe their mouths, and to come unto the Church, but they having displeased the Lord must weep, and mourn, until they come to sound grief, and such as is answerable to the measure of their sins. For grievous sins must be repented of with great grief, even as sore diseases must be cured with sharp medicines. And as it is in Zechariah the twelfth, Men must mourn for their sins as one mourneth for his only son, and be sorry for them as one is sorry for the death of his first borne. There must be in them a great mourning, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon for the death of the good King Josiah: Even so must men mourn because they have pierced Christ through with their sins, and wounded him with their abominations. And men must know that a few dry tears, when they have offended, are not sufficient repentance, or sacrifice to God, but they must rent their hearts and be heartily sorry and turn unto the Lord: Now many are so stricken with the sense and feeling of their sins, that thereby they are moved to confess and lay open their wickedness in such sort, as a man would think them to be such as forever afterwards would stand in fear to offend the Lord anymore: but these after that they have received some comfort by the word, of their sins, and have seen that their sins are pardonable, not distinguishing between these two, that it is one thing to have their sins remissible, and another thing to assure themselves that they are remitted: After (I say) this comfort received by the preaching of the word, they laboring no further to be renewed and thoroughly

reformed, although they had some sorrow for a season, yet because they did not search themselves more narrowly, and endeavor to purge themselves as well from inward sin, as from outward, and to be wholly transfigured and transformed into a new holy, and righteous life; therefore it cometh to pass, that the love of righteousness departeth from them, and they return again to their old by as, and are become prays for Jesuits, and massing Priests, such is their profaneness. And this is because they rested only in the universal promises of God, which although they be all most true and comfortable, yet they can minister no true comfort and consolation unto man's soul, except he make a particular application thereof unto himself.

Lastly, some there be who would fain seem to the appearance of the Church to have forsaken and sold their sins, and to have made a full and perfect reformation of their former lives evilly spent, which notwithstanding harbor and nourish sins in their hearts, which afterward will break forth, and discover their hypocrisy: and this they do because they were but a little enlightened with the flash of the holy Ghost, and were not thoroughly reformed inwardly, which is evident in this, that they covet to approve themselves more before men than before God, nourishing in their hearts secret self-love, as in showing themselves zealous until they come to preferment, or to this end that many perceiving their zeal may flock after them, to hear them, and so they may procure themselves fame: whom so soon as Satan beginneth a little to buffet them, they fall away and show that they had sold sin but for a season. This is contrary unto that course which the true ministers of God, and those which fear him aright ought to take, for it is their duty to seek the praise of God and not of themselves, to covet the profit of the people of God, and not their own private lucre, knowing this that they serve not men, but God, and that they must profess religion religiously, setting before their

eyes the praise of God, the crown of immortal glory, the salvation of souls, and the acceptation of their labor before God. And all men must desire rather to be religious than to seem so, giving themselves to the exercises of private prayer, reading, fasting, to private admonition, conference, and other private duties, at such time, and in such place, when and where they need not to boast of anything done, seeing it is done in secret, which who so doth, let him assure himself that there is nothing so secret, but it shall be revealed, whether it be good or evil.

If we do this, then shall we not be in the number of those which beginning in the spirit, end in the flesh; or of those which serve God for a season, and in the end fall away from him, and his service. Doubtless it is a strange thing to see some who have been themselves a light unto others, so now to shrink from God's truth, as that they should become Papists, or of the Family of love, or of some other heresy. The cause of this is, because their inward stuff was corrupt, and not fully cured by effectual repentance. And thus much of gross sins. Now of the infirmities of nature which remain ever in the best, this inward corruption must be sold also: for it is not enough to leave outward and gross sins, except also we beat down the inward corruption of our own nature: and although we cannot altogether blot out this our natural corruption, yet the righteousness of Christ may be so resident and dwell in us, that it shall not only keep us from gross outward outrages and offenses, but also will hold down and keep short our natural corruptions, neither must we think it enough to sell the fruits of our corrupt nature, but we must also sell the corruption itself: for as we see, so long as the tree remaineth, there will always spring forth some buds; even so of the children of God, so long as the corruption of the nature reigneth in them, so long do they burst out into some offenses or other: but most men make either little or no conscience at all of these little faults; but it must be

otherwise with us, or else we cannot but displease God greatly. For as a river drieth up unto the fountain, yet if we do rest from all emptying of it, it will increase again: So except the children of God do keep down their natural corruption, although they offend not as the reprobate and wicked, in monstrous sins against God, yet they cannot but have great downfalls. Wherefore we must not with the woman, whereof the Poet speaketh, see, and behold good and lawful things, and follow that which is evil; neither must we be as the Philosophers, whose reason fighteth with their appetite, but we must fight both with reason and appetite, we must be as new creatures born again, and we must be more willing to endure all shame and reproaches, than to fall and offend to the dishonor of God. Being grieved that we see ourselves ready to displease the Lord. The Apostle Paul, Rom. 7, saith of himself. I see another Law in my members rebelling against the Law of my mind, and leading me captive unto the Law of sin which is in my members. Here the Apostle sheweth his captivity unto sin, by reason of his inward corruption, now when men are in imprisonment or captivity, then they are fed with the bread of adversity and affliction, and therefore the Apostle viewing the misery wherein he was by nature, in the type of a true regenerate man saith, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Here he crieth out against himself from the truth of his heart, as he findeth himself corrupt within, even so must the children of God do, and they must make a conscience to keep down their corruption, or else that filthy fountain will grow up still, and they shall see that it will so work with them, that even (if Satan were away and should do nothing) it would pull and draw them from God, except they do suppress it, and continually meditate upon it.

This is painful unto the wicked, but very joyful and pleasant unto the children of God, when they shall sell all their sins forever, for the



more of them they sell, the more sweet and comfortable it will be unto them. Besides this, we have an adversary within us, even the prick of the flesh, the messenger of Satan, for so the Apostle witnesseth of himself. 2. Cor. 12:7. Least I should be exalted out of measure through the abundance of our revelations, there was given unto me a prick in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, because I should not be exalted out of measure. Who or what man was more in taking pains than the Apostle Paul? Who went through more perils for the testimony of Christ's truth? Who was more zealous in advancing the Gospel of Christ Jesus? Could not all the Apostles watching's, all his fasting's, his dangers, his continual prayers: finally could not all his gifts and graces which were in him abundantly beat down and cure this pride and arrogancy of the spirit in him? Who therefore, or what are we that think we can get so easily a victory of sin, seeing the Apostle, who was carried up to the third heaven cannot do it. When all other sins are ended in a man, and when he thinketh himself safe from sin, then cometh pride, for it ariseth of well doing, and therefore the Apostle said that the prick of the flesh did buffet and box him. Where he showeth that this sin was so grievous unto his soul, that he fought against sin and Satan, even as Christ did fight against him, when after he was baptized he was tempted of him: Even so it cometh to pass with the children of God, when they are delivered as it were wholly from sin, and think themselves most far off from offending God, then Satan cometh like an Angel of light, seeking by this means to deceive them, that in well doing they should please themselves overmuch, and so displease God; wherefore the virtue of God must appear in our infirmities. For as the Apostle saith, God's power is made perfect through weakness: and therefore when any temptation shall happen unto us, we are to beware that we neither make a light account of them, neither be too much afraid of them, for as it is with the bodily enemy, so is it likewise with the spiritual: if thou be careless, then thine adversary

setteth upon thee at unawares; if too fearful, then he over cometh thee at the first assault: even so is it with Satan, if thou be secure and pass not for him, then he suddenly taketh thee napping, if thou be over fearful; then likewise he seeketh thy destruction. Wherefore take good heed unto Satan, and see that thou make not too light account of his temptations, but still consider with thyself, that the devil is ever knocking at the door, ready if thou have but one evil thought to enter into thee. Wherefore beware least by reason of thy security the devil do enter into thee, be humble in thy soul, as it becometh the child of God; on the other side fear him not too much, but know that God, Christ Jesus, the holy Ghost, and the Angels in heaven, and all the Saints of God in earth will take thy part against him.

## **SERMON XI**

### **OF CHRISTIAN WARFARE**

Ephes. 6:10, 11, 12.

10.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11.

Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the assaults of the devil.

22.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, and against the worldly governors, the princes of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness's, which are in the hie places.

After the Apostle had used general doctrine, and in forced thereupon particular exhortations, he returneth from his specials to general exhortation again, as we may see in these verses, wherein he exhorteth them to stand strongly, and therefore putteth them in mind of armor, without the which they must needs lie open to their adversaries. The peril whereof is so much the greater, by how much their adversaries were the sorer, and for that cause the Apostle falls into the description of them, with whom they must encounter. Afterward the several pieces and parts of our defense are set down, &c. More plainly these things are worthy to be noted. The exhortation itself in these words, Be strong in the Lord. Secondly, the way how to stand, by putting on the armor of God. Thirdly, the reason, which is, For we wrestle not with flesh and blood alone, &c. Lastly, a description of the weapons and armor itself. Finally, that is to conclude, or what remaineth, or, take this the conclusion and corollary of all, that you must not think it a small thing to profess Christ his Gospel, as some do; neither yet on the other side must ye be discouraged at the difficulties of the profession, but as on the one side you must still think of a battle, and not dream of peace; so you must know, that the Lord will harness you even with his own coat armor thereunto. Thus he noteth with two extremities incident to Christians, that is, that either they forget that they are in a warfare by security and presumption, and think it to be less than it is, or else they are too much dismayed at the first view of it, and so desperately yield ere they fight. But do any here marvel, that Paul should speak thus to God's children and well approved Christians? To them I answer, that besides other miserable experience of latter times and

present time which doth declare it too openly, David a dear child of God, and Peter a professed and an approved Christian, will sufficiently teach them in this point. One would little think David had had an adulterous heart or bloody hand: if one should have told Peter, that he would have forsworn his sovereign Savior, it had been a matter of quarrel. But seeing David in the conflict shrunk, and Peter in the trial failed, let us beware we be not daring David's, nor proud Peters, speaking further then we try our hearts. No doubt of it Peter spake simply and as he thought, yet he saw not what he thought, he knew not his own heart. It is another thing, as God's children can well tell us, to have a general knowledge of our strength, and another thing to have a particular feeling of it: let us thereupon still remember that heavenly apophthegme, Who so will follow Christ, must for sake himself. Now if Satan find us wisely and warily catechized in this point, then he turns another leaf, and works our desperation. Then he shows the difficulties of godliness, our weakness, and the number of our hindrances, to bring us to be discouraged; but this is the more rare evil. Thus Satan finding another corruption, useth another course with us, if he cannot make us easy Christians, he will make us heavy Christians. To raise up such faint hearts the Apostle cries, Be strong; and least any man should reply of his own want of strength, Paul shows what and whose strength he means, namely God's strength, and in the power of his strength this strength is required, when we see it is not good fighting with Satan in his own armor, he is a sophister, dispute not with him in his own logic; he is an orator, beware of his eloquence; he is a Prince, take heed of his power. As Satan in his own cause must use his own strength, so we in the Lord's cause are to trust to the Lord's strength. This doctrine requires rather meditation than declaration, conscience than knowledge to be made of it.

Now to show how we must be strong, it is added, Put on the whole armor of God, &c. It is a pleasant and profitable comparison here used, to show the estate of Christians. As silly soldiers going into the camp cannot hope for any good issue if they be naked and unarmed; so we, if in our daily conflicts we remain unfenced, cannot think of any better end than to be overcome. But three things here offer themselves First, it must be God his armor. Secondly, it must be a whole armor. Thirdly it must be put on. There are some in the pride of their wit, and opinion of their learning and policy, that marvel that silly souls lie so weakly under Satan's hand. But alas if one temptation shake them, if one wound of conscience bruise them, they see no learning but learning from heaven, no wisdom, but the wisdom of the spirit can help them; Satan will overcome them in his own armor, and God's cause is defended with his own strength. Now that we must put on all it is plain; for as he were worthy to be counted a fool, that with one piece, or with a few would venture into the battle, seeing the enemy strikes rather at one part not fenced than at all the other covered; so what were it to have one grace of God, what to leave one sin, what to see one want, what to hate one corruption, and yet to lie open in a great many? Lastly, we must put on our harness. Admit a man had his armory never so well stored, and his weapons never so tried, if either he cannot put on his armor, or being armed, wants skill to use it, what doth it profit when the enemy knocks at his gate? So if I have never so good things, if either in temptation I know not how to use them, or to deal in them, how shall I stand at Satan's assaults? This courage must be neither mean nor in ourselves, but in God, and in the power of God, and in the might of his power. And to add to the former examples more, consider how Noah presuming proved weak; how Hezekiah after many distresses not suspecting himself did fall, for the Lord leaving him he was vainglorious even before God's enemies. So far have even God's servants been deceived in an opinion of their strength, not that

they were gross hypocrites, but that they saw not the corruption of their own hearts, and therefore when they came to handy strokes, they were foiled. No doubt Peter, as we said, and the other Apostles were not purposed to deceive men's eyes, yet they fell. Who then are we having no such strength, if the Lord let us see our weakness by withdrawing his spirit from us? Why should we think well of ourselves? Late and lamentable memory shows, that many old Gospellers are now cold professors, some being heretics, some Epicures, some worldlings. No little charge, nor slender burden is Christianity then, for many seek the straight way, and cannot get in, many either in practice or otherwise being plainly Atheists. And surely hereof it must teach us, that God's Saints in temptation and accusation are so fair to seek for wisdom and strength, as we are to learn wisdom by other mens harms, least in trouble we be such as falter in affliction. Here our Savior Christ his admonition cometh in speed, that if we will come to him, we must go out of ourselves, and think no wit, wisdom, reason, or strength to stand on temptation if the Lord keep us not. We are as in building, so in battle. for the building we must provide stuff enough; for the battle we must provide sufficient furniture, we are to cast our costs before, we must reckon our revenues, and take accompt of our armory, and consult of our ability, because of Christianity be building and warring together, we must provide both trowel and sword together, least finding hard tempests we retire and recoil with shame. And what makes us so secure, but that we think that Christian profession is but a slight? And to go further, why comes it to pass, that oft disputing Preachers in conflicts are confounded, and most courageous champions prove the vilest dastards, but from hence, that they trust in themselves? But O malice of the Satan, O corruption of nature! If thou, Satan, canst not make us to presume, thou wilt make us to despair; O vile nature, thy presuming is the way to despairing. And to speak of this latter extremity, which is the less curable evil, if Satan meet with us

as having a sight of our weakness, sure he will bring us to despair. It is a sure temptation to hinder belief (which belief in perfection is as hard as to fulfill the law) and it is Satan's practice, if he once see us down, he will keep us down, and answer all our wants. If we say we have no wisdom, he will confirm it, nay he will make us to despair not only of our wisdom, but of God's wisdom in us. But remember that that which is not in us, is in Christ. Remember God's strength must be seen in our weakness. Necessary then was this reduplication of Paul concerning the strength and might of God. In temptation we say, we are strongly tempted; Paul saith, the Lord will strongly help us. But here note a difference between the exhortations legal and evangelical. The exhortations of the law kill, the exhortations of the Gospel quicken. For he that thinks he should do good as he should do it, and leave sin as he ought to do, shall find corruption in everything. Hereof it comes to pass, that many say, I see nothing in prayer and in all good things but hypocrisy. It is well, thou thoughtest thyself living, but thou art dead. But to come to the difference spoken of, the exhortations of the law do bind us on pain of death, the exhortations of the Gospel commands that which Christ is ready to give us, and it chargeth us not so much to do it, but to believe that Christ by his blessed spirit will work every good thing in us. For the Gospel being the Ministry of life giveth life, and strength from above, when we are dead and weak. The not discerning of this difference makes many good precepts fall to the ground. The law indeed reveals sin, but the Gospel cures sin, the law woundeth, and so must it do; but the Gospel healeth us, which the law can never do.

Hitherto we have heard thus much, first we must provide that we fight in God's harness, not with Satan's weapons, whether they be wit, reason, policy, education or such like. We fight against a Prince and principality, who wants not wit, knowledge, civil gifts, or any such things, which things have been given even unto the heathen, for

they were wise and learned men, yet many of them lay in great sins, in idolatry, some fearfully ended their lives. Let not Christians then say, have I not wit, reason, and education beseeeming a man? Well, so did the Philosophers and Poets, and yet behold their fruits, behold their ends: but let us deny reason, and withstand wit, for it will surely fail in the hour of death, and in the hour of temptation. No gift of nature, no gift of bringing up can withstand Satan or sin, unless from heaven God change us Neither is this the sin only of the unregenerate, but in the regenerate, who still sliding to reason or overweighing of God his power are foiled; and therefore we see many overcome, who purpose to withstand, yet striving in their own wisdom they are spoiled, be their purpose never so great. Many will say, why this is a monstrous temptation, I will never yield to this, yet they fall. This we shall see both in temptations and accusations, when men strive and dispute with reason with so subtle a sophister: so the more they strive, the more they are entangled, for they want strength to fight with the strong man, who will not be subdued unless we put on the armor of the stronger man, which is Christ Jesus; which armor is afterward set down. Neither is it enough to have a piece of harness, but we must have all the whole armor, for what is it to cover the head if the breast be bare? What if the arms be armed when the back is unharnessed? We cannot avoid the darts which come against every place. So we must not have one grace and want another; for then Satan comes in the open place, who observes whether we want a head-piece, a gauntlet, a breast plate, or whatsoever: wherefore we must think that Satan as a politic soldier looks not so much to the armed part, as to the naked part. If he seeth us afraid of him, then will he tempt us to despair; if we will not be pierced with uncleanness, then he will shake at us with covetousness. If he sees us pettish and unarmed with love, then Satan will tempt us to anger. Alas it is our weak nature to reserve one sin or other, and it gives Satan advantage; we be Herodian courtiers and Christians, we



are half persuaded with Agrippa to be Christians, but we must thoroughly be harnessed, least as a dead fly corrupteth much good ointment, so with one sin we defile many graces. Everyone hath his familiar sin, which we must labor to espy as an adversary, and to fight against as an enemy, whether it be pleasure, covetousness, or such like. Whereas then thou seest some graces, yet be humbled for those, which especially are wanting to thee; and wherein thou art most unarmed, then pray, and labor for more help by grace in Christ Jesus. But what if we have good armor and all armor? Yet without use of it we may be strangled in our armor. What if we have good graces, and all graces? Yet without experience and use of them our souls may be murdered in the midst of them. Many may come to the assemblies and hear, yet they either fail in knowledge, or in practice of it. And sure such is a man as he is in temptation. What is it to have many precepts against anger, and yet be overcome of anger? What is it to have rules against covetousness, and to see the issue of it, and yet to be a covetous man? Let us know, that it is one thing to learn to fight against Satan, and another to fight against men. In material conflicts there is some time of truce, but with Satan there is no truce with us but for his advantage; for him we must be armed as well in the night as in the day: in outward battles winters make war to cease, we have no quietness neither in summer nor in winter.

That ye may be able to withstand. The Apostle describes our enemies. If we had to deal but with ourselves, or with men like to ourselves, or with the world, we had need of God his power; but seeing beside all these we are to deal with all the hellish army, much more we need this: we are not only to fight against the flesh and the world, but against the devils: neither must we think that Paul denieth in this place that we should fight with our own corruption, but he sheweth we fight not only with ourselves and with the world, but with Satan too, and so that we need more armor. By two things he

describes our enemies, by their might, and subtlety. For their might he calls them principalities and powers. This title is given to the devils, Rom. 8, Coloss. 1. Indeed these names are given to the good Angels, as Ephes. 1, Hebr. 1, so that look what titles are given to the good Angels, are given to the wicked spirits, which, except sanctification, are equal in gifts to the good Angels; for though these spirits have lost their goodness, yet have they not lost their strength and wisdom. They be worldly governors. God be blessed their government reacheth not to heaven, but to the world, yea of the darkness of the world. Thus he distinguisheth of the world as it is by creation, and so God is the prince of it, and as it is now by corruption, and so the Devil is the god of the world. This teacheth us, when Satan shall prevail, even over men living in ignorance and ungodliness. The world was made good by creation, but degenerated to evil by corruption. Well we see the devil is called the prince of the world, and he saith of himself that all is his. It is not so by creation, but be the righteous judgment of God all is in his hands to punish our sins, or try our faith.

It follows to speak of his subtlety in these words, Against ambushments, &c. Even as ambushments are used privily to undermine the enemy, so by wiles Satan goeth about to trap us. But this is larger said, against spiritual wickedness's. If one could see the enemy, he might be prevented, but we cannot see the operations of the devil, because he is spiritual, and therefore we neither can by sense nor by reason discern him; so that he is not only a layer of ambushments, but of spiritual ambushment. Yet note, though they be spiritual, yet not in goodness but in wickedness. In heavenly things. Though Satan be the prince of the air, yet here it is meant that he fighteth against men in heavenly knowledge. By creation they had much good knowledge, their goodness they have lost, their knowledge is retained. Again Paul saith, there is a mystery of

iniquity, showing, that as there is a mystery of godliness, so there is a mystery of wickedness; and therefore Satan is said to change himself into an Angel of light; which is, because he will come in good things, in knowledge, in spiritual exercises, and falsely and wickedly gloss on them by that great practice and experience, which from their first fall they have learned. Thus Satan comes even in good things. Worldly wise men distinguishing, whether the enemy by strength or by subtlety doth most hurt, conclude, that the subtle enemy is most dangerous. Alas, we are in evil case then, having to do with enemies not only strong, but subtle: it were enough to deal with an enemy having but one of these qualities, but we fight with them that have both, that is, both strength and subtlety; so that we know not whether they are more strong, or more subtle. Two uses there are of this doctrine. One is, we must not make it a slight matter of the enemy. The other is, that we be not too much afraid. Both these are dangerous extremities. Some vile heretics deny there is a God, or a devil, or that the devil is so strong and subtle as he is. Indeed men will not speak thus, but they show it by their peace in themselves in their lives, which sheweth, that men do not believe there is a battle. For we see we are now at peace, and why? Because there are no enemies. But were it so that the enemies were in the field, would we not fear? Did we believe that Satan could sit in our consciences, deluding judgment and understanding, and casting a mist on reason, would we not be more jealous of reason? Would we not be more fearful of ourselves? Yes surely. Let us then consider, that besides ourselves which were enough, Satan adds both corruption to judgment and affection. And herein specially Satan shows himself a subtle Apostate, in that he cares not whether we be sound in judgment and corrupt in life, or careful in life, and corrupted in Religion, so we may be one. Hereof it comes, that heretics are precise in life, and good Christians are so careless in conversation: so either he gathers false conclusions on good principles, or else glorious

sequels of rotten premises. To go back to the plain sense of these men, the meaning is not, that we fight not with flesh and blood at all, but we chiefly or only fight not with flesh and blood. The like speech is in the word, as, Thy name shall not be Jacob, but Israel, that is, Jacob only. Again, in the Epistle it is said, The word is not in word, but in power, that is, the Gospel is not chiefly in word, or only in the word. Again, Rom. 7, and Galat. 5, it is plain, we fight with flesh and blood. And John 15, we fight against the world. Wherefore seeing we fight not against ourselves only, but against such adversaries as whet up ourselves against ourselves; and therefore we stand in need of all the armor that may be, which we shall see to be more requisite, if we consider that it were enough to fight with an adversary either strong or wise; but seeing we conflict with them, who for strength and subtlety too are equal with the good Angels. For their power these adversaries are called Powers, as Coloss. 2, Rom 8. So are the good Angels Powers, as Ephes. 2, Heb. 1. Herein the evil spirits differ from the heavenly spirits, in that these are from heaven, and for the good of the Church: those are governors of the world, that is, of the corrupt estate of the world; so that their whole power is against the children of the world. Satan may strike the children of the best, but slay them he cannot. Christ calleth Satan the Prince of the world, and Paul calleth him the god of the world; Christ calleth him a strong-armed soldier or giant: yet God be blessed all his strength is in the world. Well then, be he more fearful to us then Goliath to the army of Israel; be it that he be as a roaring Lyon, at whose voice all the silly beasts stand trembling; be it that he so astonish and terrify our conscience, that we know not what to think or to speak: yet all is to the terror of the wicked. But behold, besides his strength, Satan is spiritual, invisible, not to be discerned, and therefore more dangerous, in that we cannot prevent him nor his temptations, being above nature and above reason, cannot be descried, unless above nature and reason we be either very well taught of the Devil, or of

God. To this unsearchable nature he is occupied in heavenly things, but as a spiritual wickedness, not goodness. To show how he is spiritual, we see in this, in that he is an Angel of light, he tempted Christ with scripture, he set the Pharisees in devilish wisdom against Christ, he suborns false heretics; yea, his subtleties shall be such, by Christ his own testimony, that even the elect, if it were possible, should be deceived. And Paul speaking but of the child of Satan the Antichrist, reports, that he shall be mighty in power, in miracles, &c. Only this is our comfort, that this wisdom is but wickedness, which is the only thing wherein they be distinguished from the good Angels, with whom in wisdom and strength Satan is equal. Here ought we to blush, in that we desire rather learning, wisdom, and power, wherein Satan and wicked men have not only been equal to us, but above us, and we less desire goodness, wherein we are like to God, to good Angels, and the children of God. For this may be a special mark that we belong to God, when we rather desire goodness than those other qualities wherein we are equal but to the Devil. Be we never so learned, he is more learned, be we never so strong, he is stronger. For is not he mighty in power that can so trouble the air, as he did to Job, and as oft as he doth in that boisterous manner, that no natural Philosopher can give a reason of it? In Exodus we know that the Lord used evil Angels to trouble the Seas. Psal. 78, the Lord is said to send evil Angels to trouble them. And as godliness is a mystery, so there is a mystery of iniquity, and the Lord sending an effectual illusion, (2. Thess. 1.) on them that received not the word in love, is said to do it by the operation of Satan; so that though the Lord be the supreme worker, yet Satan is the instrument. What shall we say of the rage of sin in these days? What shall we say how Satan daily bewitcheth us in Paganism, Atheism, Machevillism, Anabaptism, &c? Is not all this sufficient to prove, that Satan taking up the wisest men of the world to his service is a spiritual wickedness? Whereof comes it that suddenly a poor man becomes a cunning Artist? or that an ignorant

man presently should speak with diverse tongues? Or that silly souls should be subtle disputers? What is it that sin is nowadays so subtly, so closely, so wittily dispatched? Why do men to maintain Papism forgo all their goods, suffer their bodies to be whipped? Do not all these prove, that Satan is a spiritual wickedness? Again, if we look to the height and shamelessness of sin, to see how men prostitute themselves to sin, we must say Satan hath been mighty, powerful in deluding men's minds, in hardening men's hearts, so that no word can pierce them: therefore it is, that Paul saith men are blinded in their minds; therefore Paul would have us to tolerate and suffer such as Satan doth hold in chains, 2. Tim. 2. Here let us see a difference of the sins of the godly and ungodly. The wicked rage and devise platforms; the godly for a time may be under Satan. 2. Tim. 2, but they sin of infirmity, not of willful selling themselves to sin. So great a cause of thankfulness we have, that we are not raging in hellish sins, in that we are simple, and bungler like sinners. Besides, the godly are silly, the wicked subtle in sin. So great a cause of thankfulness we have, that Christ the stronger man hath overcome. The Devil hath power, but by derivation, he hath a strength, but by limitation, he hath force, but in darkness. So great a cause of thankfulness we have, seeing Christ hath wisdom enough in God to overcome the wisdom of Satan in evil. Though then Satan be strong, yet none is greater than the Father, none mightier than Christ, who hath captivated Satan under his feet. So great a cause have we to be thankful, that Christ will not only in his presence himself, but in us by his power also he overcometh. A further use of this is to try when our temptations come of the natural corruption, or of Satan's malice. To this we answer, that as our enemies are described by power and policy; so when temptations come so strongly and slyly, that it is above reason, then the adversary abuseth our weakness, our own temptations come more remissly and easily: but when these temptations hale us more violently, then we fight not with flesh

alone, but with spiritual adversaries. In the book of Exod. mention is made of a spirit of jealousy, which is more than natural jealousy. In the book of Judges, an evil spirit was between Abimelech, and the Shechemites, which was more than frailty of the flesh. In the Gospel mention is made of an unclean spirit returning with 7 spirits more; so that the pulling of our affection is of Satan, as Christ said of Satan's operation to Peter, that Satan sought to sift him and to deal with him: and indeed Satan did so daunt and circumvent him, that he spake he knew not what; so that this fell not only on the wicked, but on the godly: as Satan so bewitched David in understanding, that he made him to number his people. Hereof it is that we pray not to be led into temptation, because though I am well purposed, yet so many vain reasons rage in us, and forcibly draw us another way, that we may see somewhat more than nature. Likewise when we shall without any object be carried away with some affection so strongly, that though our life lay on it, we cannot contain ourselves. When Paul, Ephes 5, biddeth us be angry without sin, he showeth, that there is a natural affection without sin: but because our affections are without rule and mixed with sin, he saith, in so doing we give place to the devil. So that there is a great difference between a natural anger, and a carnal sinful anger, which besides the instinct of nature is wrought by Satan. And therefore as it is good to stop the first breaches in banks for fear of further danger; so it is good to murder the first motions of sin by the word, prayer, fasting, and admonition, least giving the sway to our affections they overrun and overflow us thoroughly, and so we are carried to strange and furious sins. Wherefore first we are to be thankful, that we may know how to prevent sin (for we may soon let in a guest which we cannot well let out again) and we must labor to repress such raging evils.

Yet another use of this doctrine is, that we must think, how oft we deal with more than with men, when we deal with heretics, or with

angry bloody men, who often are stirred up by Satan, so that they spoil themselves and others. The ignorance of this doctrine breeds jealousies, repining's, and malice, that when we think to revenge others we revenge ourselves. This is now without cause: now if we have a just cause, yet for want of love, wisdom and humility, we spoil our good cause, harden our adversaries, and hurt ourselves. We must not resist policy with policy, nor requite evil with evil, but in wisdom be long suffering, pardoning man, as we would be pardoned of God. For this cause fight. He bids us not to make truce with our enemy, though our enemy be strong and subtle, yet fighting under Christ we are to stand fast; Christ hath subdued for us, and he will subdue for us. Still we must remember to resist with God's harness, which as surely exceed Satan's harness, as heaven excels earth or hell. For want of this armor we see wise and civil honest men fall into horrible sins. For want of this armor come such disputes with Satan, which simple souls use, not being able to discern which is the true armor. For want of this armor green Christians, and troubled consciences looking for their own armor rather than the armor of God, enwrap themselves in most dangerous labyrinths. Now our armor must be complete: some have a good heart but not a good life; some have a good life but not faith; some faith in part: this comes of want of knowledge, if they know the word, they pray not; some pray, but not with continuance.

To come to the armor, mark, it was said, Put on; now it is said, Take the armor. We see that here is no truce with us and Satan, as in civil wars, but we must continually say as Jehu to Jesabel, What peace my soul with Satan? We must not be secure Laish, or careless Babylonians, least that we be prevented of the enemy. It is good to see sin rather by experience particular in ourselves, than for general knowledge in others. Ask our judgment for a sin in another man, and we can point out every part of it; lay this sin to ourselves, and we can



say nothing. So that we see it is easy to know sin, but it is hard to feel the practice against it. Let us not then let the harness hang on the wall, but let us put it on. Here mark one thing, that it is a policy of the devil to persuade us there is no devil, as it is the policy of wizards to persuade us that there are no witches. And so as he comes at the first as a silly Serpent, whilst he would creep in, but after he proves a roaring Lion, when he is once entered: yet let us beware we fear not too much, for that emboldeneth the enemy. For as man feareth man keeping courage, and is pursued without courage, nay as brute beasts are bolder by seeing one which feareth them; so the devil is the bolder, if he seeth us afraid of them. And besides that fear drieth up the blood and weakeneth nature, it doth also deprive us of faith in God his providence, which doth assure us that Satan's power is all by derivation and limitation; it cannot touch the body without permission, much less the soul: which is manifest, for that witches though they prevail in petty and little things, yet when they come to great points, they can do nothing. So singular a preservative to the godly is the providence of God, as the Unicorns horn to the inferior beasts. But we will herein strengthen our faith, that the cross of Christ hath triumphed against Satan for the godly, Coloss. 2, and therefore if he now assault us, he doth cure rather than slay us. For as an enemy oft by God's goodness thrusts his sword into an ulcer, rather to purge that which would have bred death, than to kill: so oft God purposeth to cure us of the impostumation of pride even by the malice of Satan, so wonderfully can he draw good out of evil. The devil brings unrighteousness, we allege righteousness; he brings terror of conscience, we meet him with peace; he offers vanity, we refuse it with truth; he comes roaring, we avoid it by praying. Wherefore that proclamation must be made here, that was in the Israelites army, that is, that those that are fearful, return home, and beware how they come into this conflict. And let us oppose to the strength of Satan the strength of Christ, who being our head

shepherd will not suffer us to miscarry, though we seem to be in the wolves mouth, and that in the deep valley of death. But what of all this harness? It must be put on We shall see oft none so weak in affection, as they that have much knowledge. Who will better declaim against anger generally than the angry man? Who is more severe against wantonness in education than a most shameless harlot? Why do men think others blessed being troubled in mind, and count themselves cursed being in it? All this is because we have harness, but use it not.

In the evil day. The day of temptation is called an evil day, because the temptation is evil. James calleth it a good day, and that we must rejoyce in it; and it is so in respect of God his wisdom turning it to good. So that this may be a good day and evil day in diverse respects.

Having finished all. Luk. 4. After Christ was tempted, the devil went away for a season, though that temptation ceased, yet he pursued him with afflictions. And though as children of the marriage the dint and edge of temptation be blunted to us, yet the enemy still envieth us. And therefore we had above all need of perseverance, no danger like to that which is in the end. When thou hast overcome the popish devil, the worldly devil comes. Hast thou overcome the swearing devil, then the lying devil comes? Hast thou overcome the filthy devil, the worldly devil comes? Hast thou overcome all these devils, the proud devils come?

That thou mayest stand. This is a promise, and we shall not fail of this armor of proof, nor of the profit of it. And so as we are exhorted to put on the armor, so we shall have the fruit of it by standing, so we still pray, Da Domine, quod jubes, and jube, quod vis. Thus Christians by faith and standing fast in the evil day, must change the other evil nature of affliction into a good quality, still being mindful

to comfort themselves in this, that the Evangelical exhortations give by promise through the holy Spirit a certain strength to do the thing commanded, the Law leaving us in our weakness. Again to the armor.

Stand. We must always be in a readiness, and at the first call, what time of year, month, day, or night soever the adversary provokes us. He begins with the girdle, because in former ages as there were diverse manners of eating, sitting, or warring, so Paul here speaks of such things as were used then. The girdle is not now, which was then used, as we have some armor familiar to us, unknown to them, as guns, &c. The use of the girdle was to gird fast the nether parts, this is Truth, which is not taken for the whole word, as John. 17, but for a sincere and upright heart, or for faithfulness. And as we take faith either for our faithfulness to God, or God's faithfulness to us; so truth meaneth sometime upright dealing either from God to us, or from us to God. Truth is counted then for a true performance, as Roman. 2. The judgments of God are with truth, that is faithfulness. All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth, that is, a performance of his mercy. Well, here it is not spoken of that truth, which is the word, but of uprightness of heart and sincerity. Again, the truth of the word is after spoken of, and here can be no vain repetition. Well, as the girdle knits all together on the body; so the uprightness of heart is the band of all virtues, and hypocrisy is as a wide or loose sack, wherein nothing can tarry. This uprightness of mind is in diverse places, as Psalm. 32. Blessed is the man, who with comfort in his remission of sins without guile laboreth for a godly life. The same commendation is Psal. 15, and 24, and 119. This is a thing accompanied with blessedness by Christ his own words, Matth. 5. The Author of the Hebrews willeth him that comes to God, to come with a pure heart, the want of which integrity is reprehended in the Jews, Jam. 4. But what of all these porches to such a house? Surely

because a true heart nurseth all graces to the end, and the false heart dissipateth all gifts, and disgraceth such hypocrites. Psal. 125. uprightness of heart is such a thing, that the Prophet specially prays for such as have it, and leaves them in God his judgment that want it. Psal. 119. Then shall I not be confounded, when my heart is upright, Portion 10, verse. 80. We see true hearts shall be justified in the end, and hypocrisy shall blush in the issue. Thus we see the reward of a good heart, the revenge of an evil heart, when we know not how to do our duties simply. The honest heart still is struggling out of sin, and cometh; the hollow heart makes a show of mortification, &c. but God takes away his vizard in time. For some men's sins go before to judgment, and some follow after: some men's good deeds are cleared in this life, to show, that all well-doing shall be glorified. Iniquity may be colored, but not ever covered; truth may be blamed, but not shamed. For exemplifying the Lord himself gives testimony to his uprightness. David was an upright hearted man, Saul a hypocrite; Nathaniel had a good heart, Judas was a hypocrite; Josiah, Hezekiah prepared their hearts to the worship of God, 2. Chron. 25. Amaziah did good, but not with a right heart. The people (2. Chron. 20.) are said not to prepare their hearts to seek the Lord their God: 2. Chron. 30. Hezekiah craveth mercy for them that came with an upright heart, and God heard him: so acceptable is an upright heart. But how shall we discern our hearts to be upright? It is not by nature, Gen. 6. Job saith, a clean thing cannot proceed from an unclean sin. David confesseth original hypocrisy, which is showed Proverb. 12, and 20. We then (Act. 13.) must see that our hearts are made clean by faith. Of itself, above all, the heart of man is unsearchable, Jerem. 17. But how comes this? Because there is a labyrinth of hypocrisy in it, there is a gulf, and depth, and privy discourse in it, that no man can gage but the Lord, who is said, Proverb. 16, to be the searcher of the reins, howsoever our heart is hollow. This secret searching is by the Spirit of God, 2. Cor. 2, and by the word wrought upon by the Spirit, 1. Cor.

14, Heb. 4:12. The Spirit rebukes us of sin, John 13. but by the word searching the very hidden intents of the heart. Therefore as it is to no end to hide anything from the Lord, so it boots us not to look for an hiding of thoughts. For be they in love of good, good; or for hate of sin, or sinful things, then God is pleased for it. If we do good for reward, or avoid evil for shame, &c., all is woeful in the fight of the Lord, seem men's goodness never to be so good in a man's eye.

FINIS.

## SERMON XII

### OF DIVERSE CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTIONS

Psal. 16:1.

Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I trust.

This Psalm containeth the acknowledging of the Prophet his unworthiness, and sheweth how all things are of God: it witnesseth the man of God his love to the Saints, his hatred of false religion, the assurance of God his providence, and his undoubted hope of life everlasting. All which things containing so many points of heavenly doctrine, ought much to provoke in us the love of the Psalm, and loving it to frequent the use of it. The Psalm seemeth to be general, and may be used at all seasons, and of all estates, as not being bound to any peculiar condition of men, or tied to any several circumstance, as are many other Psalms, containing particular matter: and therefore is it to be used as a notable meditation, which may be showed by this word Michtam. The first verse is the proposition of the whole, and the residue of the Psalm prosecuteth the same matter. Now to the words of the text.

Preserve me, O God. Here David desireth not deliverance from any special trouble, but generally prayeth to be fenced and defended continually by the providence of God: wishing that the Lord would continue his mercy towards him unto the end, and in the end: whereby he foresaw that it was as needful for him to be safeguarded by God his protection in the end, as at the time present; as also how he made no less account of it in his prosperity, than in adversity. So that the man of God still feared his infirmity, and therefore acknowledgeth himself ever to stand in need of God his help. And here is a sure and undoubted mark of the child of God, when a man shall have as great a care to continue and grow in well doing, as to begin: and this praying for the gift of final perseverance, is a special note of the child of God. This holy jealousy of the man of God made him so to desire to be preserved at all times, in all estates, both in soul and body. Every man will say, true it is, if God should not preserve us, how could we continue? But few there be who rightly and carefully use the means, as this man of God did, whereby they may attain this grace. And therefore howsoever they pretend a good affection, and well liking generally of the thing, yet they have no true faith, as the Prophet had: for faith would drive them carefully to use the means: howbeit this general knowledge is left in many to take from them all excuse: but in the faithful it worketh an holy fear, and fear engendereth a conscience to use the means. I appeal to the conscience of a natural man: If a man being sick would cry, Lord help me, Lord restore me to my health, and yet in the meantime willfully refuseth the prescribed means for his recovery, tempted he not God? Which if it be so, how much more dangerous is this in things concerning the soul, when a man either for want of hearing and reading the word feeleth not the diseases of the mind; or feeling them effectually, pineth and languisheth away under the burden of them, neglecting prayer, confessing of his sins, repentance, and such like means of his salvation? True it is that, man liveth not by bread

only: and therefore the wicked are but stalled up and made fat against the day of slaughter. And the children of God know and acknowledge, that without the blessing and favor of God their meat may bring their bane: and therefore they crave that by the word and prayer the means may be sanctified unto them; much more in things concerning our salvation we must both carefully use the means, and in the using of them not to trust in the outward work wrought, but to crave the inward ministry of God his holy spirit, which worketh by them, not being ordained for God but for us.

For in thee do I trust. Here the Prophet setteth down the cause why he prayeth to God: whereby he declareth, that none can truly call upon God unless they believe: Rom. 10:14. How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? In regard whereof as he prayeth to God to be his Savior, so he is fully assured that God will be his Savior. If then without faith we cannot truly call upon God, the men of this world rather prate like Parrots, than pray like Christians, at what time they utter these words. For that they trust not in God, they declare both by neglecting the lawful means, and also in using unlawful means. Some we see trust in friends: some shoulder out (as they think) the cross with their goods: some fence themselves with authority: others bathe and baste themselves in pleasures to put the evil day far from them: others make flesh their arm: and others make the wedge of gold their confidence: and these men when they seek for help at the Lord, mean in their hearts to find it in their friends, good authority and pleasure, howsoever for fear they dare not say this outwardly. Again, here we are to observe under what shelter we may harbor ourselves in the showers of adversity, even under the protection of the Almighty. And why? Who so dwelleth in the secret of the most high, shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty. And here in effect is showed, that whosoever putteth his trust in God shall be preserved: otherwise the Prophet his reason here had not been good.

Besides, we see he pleadeth not by merit, but sueth by faith, teaching us, that if we come with like faith, we may obtain the like deliverance.

It followeth in the Psalm, verse. 2. O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my well-doing extendeth not to thee. In this conference with his soul, David setteth down the reason more at large, why he trusteth in God, that he will preserve him: first, he acknowledgeth his own unworthiness: secondly, he giveth himself to the Saints, Thou hast said unto the Lord. Here he confesseth that whatsoever good thing he had, he received it of the Lord. And this he doth not barely or barrenly with his lips from the teeth outward, but unfeignedly in his soul, also from the heart inward: and in that he passeth from the conference with his soul to speak unto the Lord, he showeth that God knoweth how his soul lieth not: and that he did behold the sincerity and simplicity of his heart herein. So that he dealeth not before men alone, or with his lips, but with God also, and travaileth with his own soul: wherein he cleereth himself of hypocrisy, and by his own practice convinceth and condemneth those kind of men, who say one thing with their lips, and mean another thing in their hearts. Wherefore we are to learn, that in our prayers we deal not with men, but with God. We must not so much labor for a set order of words as for a well ordered heart; and we must not use these words as before men alone with our lips, but in our souls and in the presence of God; to wit, Lord thou hast redeemed me, Lord thou hast saved me: and I say to my soul, that it should acknowledge thee to be my Lord, my Redeemer, and my Savior, and therefore should use all things to thy glory. Thou art my Lord, my soul, O Lord, hath tasted of thy goodness, and by good proof I find that thou doest govern me. My well-doing extendeth not to thee: oh what shall I render unto thee, my God, for all thy benefits towards me? What shall I repay? Alas I can do thee no good, for mine imperfect goodness cannot pleasure thee, who art most perfect and goodness



itself: my well-doing can do thee no good, my wickedness can do thee no harm: I receive all good from thee, but no good can I return to thee: wherefor I acknowledge thee to be most rich, and myself to be most beggarly in well-doing: so far off is it that thou standest in any need of me. Wherefore I will join myself to thy people, that whatsoever I have, they may profit by it, and whatsoever they have I may profit by it, seeing the things that I have received must be put out to loan, to gain some comfort to others: whatsoever others have, they have not for their private use, but that by them as by pipes and conduits they liberally should be conveyed unto me also. Wherefore in this strain we are taught, that if we be the children of God, we must join ourselves in a holy league to his people, and by mutual participation of the gifts of God we must testify each to other, that we be of the number and communion of Saints: and this is an undoubted badge and cognizance of him that loveth God, if he also loveth them that are begotten of God. Wherefore if we do profess ourselves to be of God, and to worship him, then must we join ourselves to the Church of God, which with us doth worship God. And this must we do of necessity, for it is a branch of our belief, that there is a communion of Saints in the Church: and if we believe that there is a God, we must also believe that there is a remnant of people, unto whom God revealeth himself, and communicateth his mercies, in whom we must have all our delight, with whom we must communicate, according to the measure of grace given unto every one of us.

But to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent: all my delight is in them. The Papists could abide no Saints, but them which are in heaven; which argueth that they live in a kingdom of darkness, and err not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God: for if they were but meanly conversant in the Scriptures, in the holy Epistles, they should find almost in every Epistle mention made of the Saints,

who are thereunto called in Jesus Christ, through whom they are sanctified by the holy Ghost. And mark, he calleth them excellent. Some think rich men to be excellent, some think learned men to be excellent, some count men in authority so to be: but here we are taught that those men are excellent, which are sanctified with God his graces. True it is, that learning, wisdom, authority, honor, gold and credit, are the excellent gifts of God in their kind, and yet have they not true excellency in themselves: for they make not the possessors of themselves excellent, because the wicked may have them as well as the good: and these things we see for the most part are as they are that have them. For if the good man have them, he useth them reverently, moderately and thankfully, he applieth them to good uses, and so maketh them serve to the furtherance of good purposes. Again, if an evil man have them, he unreverently usurpeth them, immoderately useth them, and unthankfully is puffed up with them, he turneth them to evil uses, and by them promoteth ill causes. Wherefore this excellency, which is the fruit of God his spirit, is in itself only good: and this indeed maketh men truly excellent. Some say the Prophet meaneth, that seeing he cannot do good to God, he will deserve well of his Saints: but this is but one part of his meaning: so that he meaneth this and somewhat more, that is, that he will delight in them and that not only to do them good, but also to receive good from them, as may appear by his terming of them excellent ones, such as are fit as well to do good, as to receive good from others. Wherefore the Apostle saith, Rom. 1:12, that he desired to receive mutual comfort by them. Secondly, this appeareth by the opposition of the verse following, which is of the worship of God: and therefore it cannot be restrained to outward things. Again, in that verse he maketh mention of false worshippers, as here he nameth excellent ones: meaning that he would use the benefit of them, to wane himself from false worshippers; as men will frequent the company of the learned that desire learning; and they that will have

their lips schooled by the law of grace, will oft resort to the grave speeches of the wise. And surely it is a special help to further ourselves in the pure worship of God, if we divorce ourselves from the crew of false worshippers, and wholly espouse ourselves to the fellowship of them that worship in spirit and in truth. This reason also may appear to be general, because it followeth in the order of our confession of our faith, that we believe the holy and universal congregation, the communion of Saints: and this communion is in receiving as well as in giving: and therefore being understood of such a mutual participation of gifts from one to another, it must follow as a particular part thereof, that we be ready to do good. And where he saith, All my delight is in them, that is in the Saints: we must not think that he meant to take away civil duty from them that were in authority, for that must be given to them in outward things, yet in our hearts and in our affections the graces of God his children must be most esteemed. In respect whereof when James saith, Jam. 1:2. that the Jews had their faith in respect of persons, when they were wont to say to the rich, Sit thou here in a good place; and to the poor, Stand there, his meaning was to rebuke them, for that they so highly despised the one and so vilely esteemed the other. Wherefore we must learn always to give unto Caesar that which belongeth to Caesar, but God his children must always be nearest our heart. And this was it that our Savior Christ saith, that they which heard the word and did the same, were his mother, his brother, and his sister: not that he lightly regarded his mother, for he was a pattern of obedience to all children, yet he loved her more as she was the daughter of God, than as she was his mother. Likewise we read, that he answered the woman that cried unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck. His mother no doubt had as singular blessings, as ever were given to woman, in outward things, in that she brought forth the Savior of all mankind:

howbeit herein she was chiefly blessed, in that she believed in him to be her Redeemer.

That are in the earth. See he maketh mention of the Saints here on earth, and speaketh no of the Saints which are in heaven, from whom as we are severed in body, so are we also in the soul, and we have no dealing with them, either in soul or body. Wherefore it is said of the Prophet, Abraham knoweth not us. True it is, that the Lord maketh his Angels ministers unto us, and therefore sending them to do anything, he maketh it known unto them. Howbeit we read no such thing of the Saints that are dead, who as they know nothing of us or our estate, which only is known to the Lord, and are not used as ministers of the Lord; so they cannot hear or help us, as some foolishly have imagined. The Saints which are dead may be in some respect remembered, but in no case worshipped: remembered, I say, not for their power to be prayed unto, but for their virtues to be imitated. Wherefore in Heb. 11 the holy Ghost setteth down a register and catalogue of the Saints, that seeing we are compassed with so great a cloud of witnesses, we must cast away everything that presseth down, and sin that hangeth so fast on, that we may run with patience the race that is set before us. Here we see these are set before, that we might so far follow them, as they follow Christ, and in this respect they are called witnesses: but to honor them as God, or to appoint holy days unto them, or for them, it is not lawful. But behold when it was painful to the belly gods of Rome to remember the good life of the Saints to follow them, than which nothing is more grievous to them, the devil to draw them from this, invented a more easy way for flesh and blood, and taught them an easier lesson, by appointing in the stead of this holy and painful imitation, a carnal and voluptuous rabble of holidays unto the Saints, and that (as they said) for the better remembrance of them: and thus that transformed Angel of light knoweth how to transform pure religion. In like

manner, when it was an hard thing to preach Christ crucified, because it would call them to a sight, feeling and forsaking of their sins, and so they were made more unquiet; the devil found out an easier way, and for sooth would have Christ painted upon the cross in their Church windows: which was a thing more easy to behold, being pleasant to the eye, than it was to hear that sin should be crucified in them, if ever they would hope for the fruit of Christ his death. Again, when they could not away with bearing the cross, of loss of name, of friends, goods and life, for Christ's sake, they thought it was good to profess it by wearing some cross about them, or by erecting in every place a cross of wood, stone, or such like thing. But let us learn to be provoked by the graces of God in his Saints to follow them in goodness, and labor to have Christ crucified in our hearts, by the ministry of the word, ever preparing ourselves in truth to bear the cross of Christ, by preferring the pure profession of his Gospel, before anything in the whole world dear unto us. Besides we are here to learn, that if our delight be in God his Saints on the earth, we must be far from using them maliciously, or speaking of them cruelly. This delight then must be to receive some profit and benefit by these graces which they have, also to use to the comfort of the children of God whatsoever good we have received. For as well the servant which puts not out his talent with gain was punished, as those that contemned the talent. Neither in truth have we any right use of the gifts which we have received of God, unless we put them out by imparting them to our brethren in love, and so the gain may return by holy revenues to the Lord himself; neither have we truly learned anything, unless we have in some measure communicated it with others; for whatsoever is ours by gift, it is the interest of others by necessity: whatsoever is proper to us by possession, is common to the Church by use and participation; and whatsoever we have, we have it for dispensation, as the stewards of God his gifts, and disposers of his graces. And therefore as at the

audits and days of accounts such stewards are culpable and unworthy of their places, who having large sums of money for the liberal maintenance of the family, have appropriated all to themselves; so likewise in that great day of reckoning and audit of Angels, those stewards will be found damnable, and judged unworthy to have had access to the Lord his treasury, who having received of God singular graces, and plentiful gifts for the building up of his Church, and distributing things necessary to the Saints in due season, have notwithstanding enriched themselves alone, and impoverished their fellow servants, unto whose use, and for whose good such rich revenues of God his graces and gifts were committed to their fidelity.

It followeth in the Psalm, The sorrows of them that offer to another God shall be multiplied: their offering of blood I will not offer, neither make mention of their names with my lips. Here the man of God declareth himself to be no lukewarm professor, and therefore as in the third verse he sheweth the profession of his faith concerning the communion of Saints, so in the fourth verse he protesteth his hatred to the false worshippers, and he teacheth that none can truly love the Saints, but he must also hate the wicked. God cannot abide to be worshipped in part, or by mixture of religion, as though the Ark and Dagon, God and Mammon, Christ and Belial should be joined in worship together. Many are not so fully contented with the Saints, as that they are thoroughly discontented with the wicked, who so long as they see matters of civil authority and good order have success, can love the word to serve time and season, whose liking of it is so small, that when other religion cometh, they find not themselves much discontented. But we must learn so to believe in the true religion, as our faith may draw out of us an unchangeable love, and this true love must be free from all appearance of idolatry, and contrary religion whatsoever. If ever this doctrine was necessary, it is

now most needful, since true religion so decayeth, false religion so aboundeth, heathenish profaneness so groweth; all which no doubt arise of so little esteeming, and small liking of the truth. For whereof first did spring heathenishness? Even from hence, men were contented that every nation should worship as they listed and liked whereupon they did grow to have both their country gods, and household gods; for we read that the Senate of the Romans would receive Christ as their God, yet so, as they would also maintain their own gods. Not much unlike is our family of love, and common sort of Protestants, both which can easily tolerate any kind of religion, come what profession come will. Wherefore we may see how this Psalm fitly may be used, when we will accuse ourselves of want of love to the Saints, or when we will accuse ourselves of want of hatred to idolaters, seeing the spirit of the man of God so earnest, and ourselves so cold herein.

In that he saith, he will not make mention of their names with his lips, he declareth his through hatred unto them, which the more evidently appeareth, in that he would not only not communicate with them in his goods, but also that he would not meddle with their ceremonies. Neither must we think that this was any peculiar thing unto David, but that it was common also to all the Israelites, as we may see Exod. 23:13, ye shall make no mention of the name of other gods, neither shall it be heard out of thy mouth, and not to them alone, but to all Christians in like manner, as appeareth Zechar. 13:2. And in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, yea and they shall be no more remembered. Besides, the law commandeth all avoiding of occasions of idolatry, Deut. 7:25. where are set down two reasons; the one, that we should not be snared with such occasions; the other, because it is an abomination to the Lord, wherein although somewhat be political, yet because whatsoever is impure is abominable to the Lord, and our

nature is prone unto, and hardly kept from corrupt religion, we hating the impurity of the doctrine, must also hate the impurity of the ceremonies. To the Law agreeth also the Prophet, as Isaiah 30:22. where the Lord not only commandeth them to avoid all idolatry, but even the appurtenances thereof, Ye shall pollute the covering of the Images of silver, and the rich ornaments of the Images of gold, and cast them away as a menstruous cloth, and thou shalt say unto it get thee hence. This seemeth preciseness and puritanism to the world, which can be content to use things for form and fashion; but if we urge upon purity, we are counted precisians. Well if it be so, then David was a precisian. The holy ghost also exhorteth us also to abstain from all apparance of evil, 1. Thess. 5:22, 1. John 5:21. Babes keep yourselves from idols. And the Apostle Jude, verse 23, willeth us even to hate the garment spotted by the flesh. True it is, that one may have a private use of the meat prepared for Images; but as it is an appurtenance of idolatry, it is to be avoided. Wherefore we are to pray that we may so have our hearts rectified by the spirit of God, as not only the substance of false religion may be avoided, but also the appurtenances thereof, whereby we may the better provide both for God his glory, and our own peace. Whereas he saith, the sorrows of them that offer to another God shall be multiplied, he showeth, how besides the comforts which he had in the Saints, he so much the more hated the idolaters, because he saw the more they enwrapped themselves, the more their spirits were troubled in them, and then they could find least rest when they had most trouble. So that as the man of God commendeth true religion by this effect, that it yieldeth peace of mind, and comfort of conscience in trouble; so he discommendeth false religion by the contrary: because howsoever in prosperity it bringeth a swelling joy, yet in adversity it maketh men cry to the rocks to cover them, and to the mountains to fall upon them. This must cause us more narrowly to search our hearts whether we have



this love of true religion or no, against the which neither the gates of hell, nor terrors of Satan, nor troubles of conscience can prevail; for this religion is no less comfortable than true, when we feel ourselves assured thereby of our justification by Christ, of the ministry of God his Angels watching over us, and that we offering ourselves to be governed by him, he will work in us heavenly things: and howsoever we are evil by nature or custom, yet by grace we are kept safe in him. This is that which helpeth in trouble of conscience, this comforteth in banishment, this relieveth us in poverty, this is the fruit of true religion. In false religion there appeareth not like effects, not being able to deliver us, much less to comfort us in time of trial, but it leaveth us in a mazed spirit, and troubled mind. Wherefore in respect of the issues of both these compared together, we see how dear true religion ought to be to us, and how we must abhor the contrary. The very heathen men by the instinct of nature did most labor for those things which would in death bring peace of mind, and assuage their inward troubles, who never had this remedy: how much more then ought we to embrace this pure religion, having such effects; and hate the contrary, which then yieldeth a swelling and plausible joy, when no heaviness is at hand, but is void of all substance of perfect consolation to ease a perplexed mind? Wherein it may well be compared to those water brooks, which in time of winter, when water in every place aboundeth, flow over; but in summer, when droughts bring the necessary use of water, are for the most part dried up.

It followeth now in the fifth verse, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou shalt maintain my lot. He prosecuteth the same matter which he handled before, showing a reason why he linked himself so to the Saints, and abhorred the wicked, to wit, because as the Lord defended his holy ones, so he defended him; as he was their inheritance, so he was his; as he was a portion unto them, so also he was a sufficient portion unto him: for

so was he tied to the Lord, and to the love of his truth, that no corrupt religion could move him from it. And why? He saw in the word, that God provided on every side for him, both spiritually for his soul, and corporally for his body. Wherefore his meaning may thus briefly be gathered. I need not to seek for help in any false religion, although mine enemies would constrain me, because I am persuaded sufficiently that God is my portion, he is mine inheritance, God filleth full my cup; and as his mercy hath chosen me, so his power maintaineth me, the sure persuasion whereof maketh me grow in the love of true religion, and in the hatred of false. Out of the scope then of the Prophet, we may draw thus much, that whosoever is grounded on pure knowledge, and a sure faith, shall never wander after idolatry, because the word of God will show them now all sufficiency both for their souls and bodies is in the Lord, who freely hath taken the whole charge thereof into his own hands. On the contrary it is apparent, how that from hence cometh such slipping into idolatry, because we want true faith in the true religion, and true love of those things which we believe. This place then commendeth unto us a continual care, which we must labor for, whereby such assurance of God his favor and providence watching over us may be in us, as we contenting ourselves with him, our portion and inheritance should covet nothing else. Some refer this saying of the Prophet, thou art the portion of mine inheritance to the soul, but it is to be thought that he rather meaneth how he only resteth and stayeth himself concerning his whole felicity of body and soul on the Lord alone, and in that the Lord did not only begin, but did continue in him his grace he assureth himself as well of final perseverance, as of his gracious entrance, which undoubtedly is no small comfort. For many have inheritances, who hardly keep the assurance of them from all assaults of crafty men, who craftily undermine the estate and hold off their possessions, by falsifying their evidences. Wherefore he addeth in the latter end of the verse, thou shalt

maintain my lot. For although nothing be more casual than the life both of body and soul, and in manner of a lot is most uncertain, yet the issue of them both being in the hands of the Lord, he dare safely commend himself unto him. Thus then must we be persuaded of our inheritance, as for love of it, we had rather with Naboth have our blood spilled, then suffer ourselves to be deprived of it; which we see already to be performed of the Martyrs. But here we are to note how all our assurance hereof is in the word, and not elsewhere to be found, as the man of God himself sheweth, Psal. 119:57. O Lord thou art my portion, I have determined to keep thy words: and 111. Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage forever, for they are the joy of mine heart. it is both easy and usual for all to say, God is my portion, God is mine inheritance, God is he that prepareth a table before me, God filleth my cup: The gayest hypocrites will brag of this, and the most wretched worldlings will avouch as much; but here in they bewray themselves in reverencing so smally the means hereof, and accounting so little of the word, which is the only assurance whereby they hold their inheritance. Doth he seek by his portion or inheritance bequeathed unto him by testament or otherwise, who maketh none account of his evidence and ancient copies, whereby he holdeth his assurance? Can men then think that God is their inheritance, when they esteem so smally of his promises which ratifieth their hold, and keepeth in record their assurance? Can a man assure himself, that God is his portion when he hath no delight in his sacraments, wherein it is sealed and surrendered into his hands? This then is a true trial, whether we may in truth subscribe to the Prophet his protestation, when we delight in the means, that is, in the word, in prayer, in the sacraments, and in discipline: which thing if we have not, pretend we what we will, all is but hypocrisy. If God be our portion, we must be as chary and wary of the word, as of some Will, wherein some great thing is given unto us; we must be as much afraid and grieved to lose our faith in God his promises, as we

are to lose the evidence of our lands; we must be as careful to use the sacraments, as to keep whole and unviolated the seals of our evidences; we must be as careful to perform to God that which his will requireth of us, as to receive of him that which in his testament is bequeathed us, otherwise we have nothing to do with God, and God hath nothing to do with us in mercy, God is none of our inheritance, neither are we his inheritance. Such then as will come at their leisure, and when they list, or when the world will afford no further profit, nor the flesh further delight, as they did most unthankfully in the Gospel, who preferred their marriage, bargaining, and toiling in the earth to the heavenly banquet, are not in any assurance, that God is their portion; for where our portion is, there is our delight; and where we look for inheritance, there we provide for assurance; and where we look for treasure, thither we go with joy: wherefore until we set the word aloft in our consciences, we can find no assurance that God is our portion, or that we are his. The equity hereof appeareth, Deut. 9:29, where the people are called the inheritance of the Lord: and Deut. 32:9. The Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. For as possessions in times past were chosen out by lines, so the Lord is said to divide to the Nations their inheritance, and to separate Jacob as a part for himself. Neither must we shuffle off this from ourselves, seeing the Apostle (1. Pet. 2:6) calleth us a spiritual house, and a holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices: and the holy Ghost (Revel. 1:6.) saith, We are made Kings and Priests unto God through Christ. Wherefore seeing the Lord dealeth so favorably with us, that when hell was our portion by our birthright, he hath measured out heaven for us by the promulgation of his Gospel; when we were guilty of damnation, hath made us inheritors of salvation; and when Satan made claim to us, he hath rescued the title of us to himself: what an hellish pride were it, not to set God aloft? What presumption were it, not to make him our chief delight, seeing he before freely hath made us his chief

delight? If then we desire that God should be our inheritance, we must be his; if we be his, he must take up wholly our souls and bodies in his word; which if we despise, undoubtedly we shall be despised of God. Mark then in the latter end of this verse, he saith, Thou shalt maintain my lot. As if the man of God should say: Howsoever the world judgeth, that my estate cometh of other men, I know it cometh of thee: and, Prov. 16:4. Thou Lord hast made all things for thy own sake, although other think things to be fortunate, and subject to luck; and when as others think it strange, that the son of Jesse should come to the government of the Common-wealth, yet thou alone hast done it. Neither are we thus alone maintained of God in our outward estate, but also in spiritual things, we are kept by his power, as 1. Pet. 1:5. We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. And howsoever the world marveleth that we live, yet we (saith the Apostle) are kept by the secret finger of God, and that unto salvation. This happy assurance caused Paul to say, 2 Tim. 1:12. I know in whom I have believed, and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which is committed to him against that day. In which doctrine is no small comfort, in that we have not our salvation in our own custody, neither hath the Lord left us to ourselves in the conducting of our bodies and souls, but hath given the whole and happy government to his Son Jesus Christ: in which dignity we far excel Adam in the estate of innocence. For albeit we are by him and in him fallen from it (so weak was our estate, and so brittle was our hold whilst man possessed it) yet having it restored, the credit and custody of it resteth not on our weakness, but on the mighty power of Christ, from whom it cannot be taken. Such is the merciful wisdom of our good God. Wherefore our Savior Christ, John. 6 saith, that he is the shepherd, and that we are in his custody. For whereas like sheep of ourselves we are ready to go astray and wander, the Lord with his shepherds crook will fetch us again to the fold; and when we are lost in the wilderness and dark places, he will find us out; when we see no

issues of our matter, he will be faithful unto us, if we commit ourselves unto him. We see now the blessed security of God his children is herein, that their lot is not in their own hands. This doctrine also is full of comfort to us in these times: For in such a multitude of heresies, where with profaneness of life hath joined itself, if it were possible, the very elect should be deceived, were it not that they were governed by the Lord himself.

It is added in the next verse, The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places: yea I have a fair heritage. The former matter is amplified, wherein he showeth, that he so liked his choice of the word: that in hope to change he chose it not. So his meaning is in effect all one with the verse going before, and may thus shortly be couched together O Lord thou hast dealt with me favorably, which pleaseth me so fully, that I require no other happiness. For notwithstanding my crosses and temptations be many, yet because in all I feel thy gracious help, I desire not to change for any other felicity. In which stream we must learn this one point, that we never feel effectually the fruit of our salvation, until we can triumph over the world, the flesh, and the devil: and when our heritage so pleaseth us, that we repent not: beware of repenting, beware of repenting when ye have once given your names unto Christ: for ye are become backsliders, and are fallen partly to heresy, partly to atheism, partly to profaneness, because they made not a sure and unchangeable choice of their profession at the first. This verse is especially to be understood of the favor of God, which he felt; and therefore being assured that the kingdom of God was his, that the providence of God watcheth over him, and his Angels ministered unto him, he was so stayed, that if other outward things did come, he counted them cast upon him, as the overplus of God his mercy; if no other things came, he was satisfied If we think our lines to be fallen pleasantly, we must by proportion by so much the more seek spiritual than carnal things,

by how much the soul is better than the body. How then is God their portion, their lot and inheritance? How doth their heritage assigned of God please them, who are so careful in earthly things to provide for back and belly, and so careless in heavenly things to provide for their souls and consciences? For if we were persuaded, whatsoever we have, we have it of God, we would use it with prayer, receive it with thanksgiving, we should not rest in outward things, as in lands, possessions or preferments, as in our portion, but in the Lord who giveth these things. Thus when we are delighted with our heritage, we endeavor not to get things by ill means; having gotten them, we set not our hearts on them, we pray for the holy use of them, we return them to God his glory, and the comfort of his Saints; when we cannot keep them with a good conscience, we will willingly leave them, always making the Lord our chief inheritance, as we are his; and on this manner being weaned from earthly things, we must look for our outward estate to be ordered in full measure and scarcity by God, that we may say with Paul, Philip 4:11. I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. 12. And I can be abased, and I can abound: everywhere in all things I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry, and to abound, and to have want. If we have much, it is well, and wisdom is a goodly thing with inheritance: if we have not outward things, the word is able to save our souls: and blessed are they that in time of trial can say, my lines are fallen unto me in fair places. Every man is to try himself, how in his particular calling he can stay himself on the word of God. Jacob desired nothing but cloth and meat for food and raiment; and Paul 1. Tim. 6:8 saith, When we have food and raiment, let us therewith be content. And surely great rest should we find in our consciences, if we could command our souls not to look for greater things than the Lord hath placed us in: for nothing doth more bewray our want of faith than our wrestles minds which are not contented with those places allotted to us of God. But who in the time of the gospel cannot

say, that his lines are fallen to him in fair places? Wherefore we must be so quiet in our proper stations, as if we were Kings or Emperors, knowing that when our places are not fit for God his glory, and his church, the Lord will fleet us. In the mean season let our consciences rest on the Lord his will, how base and inferior so ever our calling is, and he assured, that by so much the more our walking therein is an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord, by how much our gifts being the greater they do submit and humble themselves under the ordinance and appointed calling of the Lord the more. And let us stay at the Lord his commandment and pleasure to be put in his time to some other use; neither let us put the fault of our trouble in our places, as commonly we do, but in our restless mind, which as a rolling stone is carried from one place to another.

It followeth in the next verse. I will praise the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins also teach me in the nights. That is, I acknowledge that it is thy free benefit, that I have discerned to make this choice. For how should I think thee to be my portion of mine in heritage, and to maintain my lot, but because thou hast renewed me by thy spirit, and advised me in that, wherein flesh and blood could not counsel me? The due consideration hereof made our Savior Christ say on this manner: I thank thee, O father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones: for so it is thy good will and pleasure. As if he should say, I would marvel these silly souls should so profit more in heavenly wisdom, than the wise of the world: but, Lord, I see it is thy will, and the wisdom of the wise can nothing further thee, nor the simplicity of the other can anything hinder them for thy kingdom: but thou workest all in all according to thy pleasure. Again, among so many opinions of the Jews, of the Scribes, Pharisees, of Sadducees, Herodians, and Essens, it was the only power of God whereby Peter was taught among the rest of the



Disciples, and in the name of all rightly to confess Christ to be the true Messias, and to be both true God and true man. Wherefore our Savior Christ hearing this his confession, saith, Peter, flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but my Father which is in heaven: that is, thou never attainedst to this by thy mother wit, or by the light of nature; thou hast not been fenced by thine own reason from hunting after me, and opposing thyself against me, with the Scribes and Pharisees, but my Father hath both guided and guarded thee. And what shall we think of ourselves? Is it not the Lord his mighty and secret working in us, that among such swarms of heresies, such boldness of Papists, such a multitude of Anabaptists, Arians and Family of love, we are preserved, to discern the right, and to cleave to the truth? If we look to our wits, others which are fallen away are as wise as we: If we look to our natural dispositions, we are as full of natural corruption as they: if we look to our education and helps in learning, have not others been as much thereby furthered as we? We are made all of one mold, we were all born under one climate, we are not sanctified by nature more than others; are not we then highly to praise God, in that we maintain not our own lot; but whilst round about us some are become Papists, some Atheists, some Arians, some Familists, we are both guided of God to make our choice of the truth, and are continued in the well liking of our choice being made? What a benefit is it that in such store of politiques, we should not only understand the letter, but also conceive the mystery of the truth? What a grace is it, that we should be so taught of God, that if we abound we can be thankful, if we be in trouble we can be patient, if we suffer the cross we are content? But do not the Papists and Familists commend the Saints? Doth not every man say, God is his portion? How is this then any particular thing in the godly? True it is they do so: but we stay on God his will revealed in the word, which we account our portion. Talke with a blasphemer, talk with a drunkard, an whoremaster or a worldling; talk with a skillful man of

law, or an expert Physician, and everyone will as proudly and as boldly profess God to be his portion as another: but come to them in a matter of salvation, or in a case of faith, and they can say nothing: how much now are we to be persuaded of, and being so persuaded, to be thankful for the free mercy, and undeserved good will of God in directing us, in choosing, and nourishing our choice?

My reins teach me in the night. This place hath in it some difficulty, and diverse interpreters write diversely of it. But it is certain, that often in the Scriptures the heart and the reins are mentioned together: as Psal. 26. Prove me, O Lord, and try me: examine my reins and my heart. By the heart (I think) is meant the more inward and secret thoughts: by the reins are understood the more outward and sensual affections, as Psal. 51:6. Behold thou lovest truth in the inward affections: therefore hast thou taught me wisdom in the secret of mine heart. And Psal. 139:23. Try me, O Lord, and know mine heart, prove me and know my thoughts.

In the night. Of his holy exercises in the night the man of God speaketh, Psal. 119:55. I have remembered thy name in the night, O Lord, and have kept thy law. And Psal. 62. At midnight will I rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgments. And verse. 148. Mine eyes prevent the night watches to meditate in thy law. The Physicians affirm, that our dreams in the night season are agreeable to our musings in the day time: and that our affections in our sleep do much follow the complexions, the repletion or evacuation of the body: according to these they say also are the dispositions of the mind naturally, without some violent alteration or extraordinary operation. And surely a man by diligent observation may espy his inclination of mind as well by his dreams sleeping, as by his cogitations waking: or rather the better by how much the night is more free from those troubles which work great perturbations and

violent distractions of the mind in the day: So that the agitations of the mind are by so much the more strong and effectual, by how much it is more free and natural; which experience may teach both in them that are renewed, and such as are unregenerate. The Philosophers not much disagreeing, say, that the civil virtuous man is much affected in the night, according to his actions in the day, and that the virtuous and the vicious man concerning half their lives, that is, the night season or sleeping times, do nothing differ, save that the dreams of the virtuous are good, the dreams of the vicious are evil; which if it be so, then much more shall they, whose hearts are thoroughly sanctified with the spirit of God, either find comfort in good things, or sorrow for their sins even in the night season. Such is the mercy of our God, that he ceaseth not to continue our knowledge, and to teach us by his spirit and meditation, even in the night season; and if at any time they break forth into more sensual liberty proceeding from their natural appetite, they make this profit of it by judging that the Lord correcteth these wandering thoughts in the day, by confused dreams in the night, and their impure cogitations waking, by unchaste imaginations in sleeping. By the reins I gather, is signified not the spiritual parts of the mind, but the more gross and sensible parts of the body separated far from the heart, and that part which conceiveth and seemeth to be the Prophet his sense, Psal. 51:6: which before we alleged; that the Lord will not to that part which is most sensual, have liberty given, and that he hath charged the reformation of the soul to stretch itself to the most natural parts, and which are common with us to brute beasts, that even in them also we should be sanctified. Thus we see there is no part of us whereof the Lord in mercy hath not care, even in the night, in which one blessing the Lord will discern and distinguish us from brute beasts, and more confirm us in godliness. For it is no small benefit if we rightly consider it, that the spirit of God should so moderate with a continual regiment our affections, that if our imaginations burst

forth, we should receive the check, and be controlled in the night, and by comparing one thing with another, long ago forgotten, that the Lord should bring things again to our remembrance. Thus when we know we lie on the Lord his bed, and that in dark we must behold him present, and feel our affections rectified, our reins sanctified, and our bed undefiled, we may be assured of some further sincerity of our hearts, wrought by his holy spirit: and doubtless as we said before, there is no small trial of our hearts, even in our dreams; when all things being more quiet then in the day, greater opportunity is offered of entering into ourselves, and furnishing ourselves with serious devises, whether it be in good or evil. Wherefore God his children are not so lightly to pass over their night-thoughts, but that they observe in them either the merciful corrections of God of some sins past, or his gracious admonition of some sins to come, or else his favorable instructions concerning some sin present, which not being repented of, will as well break forth openly in the day, as secretly in the night. Nights. To conclude, we see in David a mind thoroughly sanctified, where the spirit of God keeping a continual residence, wrought a continual progress and growing in spiritual knowledge, as well by nights as by days.

It followeth in the next verse, I have set the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand, therefore I shall not slide. Having showed before his delight in the Saints, his hatred of Idolaters, his stayed and full contented mind in God as his portion and inheritance, who as well continued in him as he did begin his grace, and that not only more openly in the day, but also more secretly in the nights; the Prophet now declareth how by all this he was moved to think that God was at all times, in all places present with him, both as a Lord to survey his ways, least he should slip grossly, and as a father to comfort him when he slipped of infirmity. His meaning and intent then is thus much, that having severed himself from Idolaters, and

joined in league with the Saints, wholly resting himself on the Lord and his word, he desired nothing more, then as the Lord had set a continual watch over him both by day and by night; so he might have his heart in continual awe to be prepared for the Lord his presence. The self same obedience the Lord requireth of Abraham, Genes. 17:1. saying, I am God all sufficient, walk before me, and be upright, that is, seeing I am able by mine Almighty power to bring to pass whatsoever by covenant in mercy I have promised to thee, make me the arbiter of thy thoughts, the surveyor of thy words, and the viewer of thy works, commit thy ways unto me in all things. Neither must we think this to be enjoined to Abraham alone, and that others be exempted from this obedience, but that every true Israelite, every good Christian, and true believer, who looketh with Abraham for God his power in accomplishing his promises, must be assured hereof like as he was. For where we look for like mercy, we must perform like duty; and where we hope for the like grace; we must have the like faith, albeit not in so great proportion, yet in some acceptable measure following him, whose example, Rom. 4. we must not think so much to be person all, as real, and for imitation.

How we should thus walk before the Lord we are taught of the holy Ghost, Micah. 6:6. Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings? He hath showed thee O man what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee; surely to do justly, and to love mercy, and to humble thyself, to walk with thy God, that is, that thou shouldest set him in thy sight, believing that he doth guide and govern thee. Besides the Apostle teacheth us, 2. Cor. 3:18, that we all behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord with open face, and are changed into the same image. For when we behold the Lord in his promises of reconciliation, that he is at peace with us; of sanctification, that he will renew us; of safeguard and providence, that for our good he will

watch over us, and that he is at our right hand with his Angels, and on the other hand with his creatures; then we behold him as our redeemer, as our teacher, as our provident father, and as judge of heaven and earth, so we shall with Stephen see Christ: and thus beholding God in his word and works, we may be said to walk before the Lord. Whereupon we may easily conjecture, how requisite a thing it is often to hear, read, and meditate of the word of God, to be frequent in prayer, whereby we may attain to a clearer sight of God his promises, which are all yea and Amen in Jesus Christ. Whosoever then setteth God before him, first as a God of glorious majesty, who will not justify the obstinate sinner; then as a father of gracious mercy, who comforteth the repenting sinner, and in every particular thing is persuaded that God seeth him as a judge and a Lord of the spirits, and God of glory and power; it cannot be but this will shake from him all drowsy security, and chase away all vain imaginations, as the bright Sun beams break the dark and misty clouds. And because there is no dealing betwixt God and man, but by a Mediator, we must set God before us in Christ, and Christ in God, that we may behold his justice under his mercy, and his mercy under his justice. And being thus persuaded, that we are beloved of God in his beloved, we shall do all in his name, which is the end of all happiness. This one lesson of Divinity will teach us the use of many, and will stand in stead of a thousand, both to comfort and instruct us: to comfort us with pacifying our consciences with a godly security in things most open and apparent; to instruct us by charging our consciences to avoid carnal security in things most inward and secret. Until we are brought to walk before the Lord in this obedience, all the wisdom of the learned is vanity. Having learned this one rule, and made in truth this pedagogy of our actions, the simplest soul shall come forth himself in the conscience of unfeigned holiness.

For he is at my right hand. This phrase of speech is borrowed from them, who when they take upon them the patronage, defense or tuition of any, will set them on their right hand, as in place of most safeguard. Experience confirmeth this in children, who in any imminent danger shroud and shelter themselves under their fathers arms or hands, as under a sufficient buckler. Such was the estate of the man of God, as here appeareth, who was hemmed and hedged in with the power of God, both against present evils and dangers to come. Neither doth the Lord hatch David alone under the hand, but all other that put their trust in him: as Psal. 91:1. Who so dwelleth in the secret of the most high, shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty, &c. Wherein we see this assurance of God his protection to be common generally to all, which fly for succor wholly to him in time of temptation. Again, Psalm 121:4, it is said, Behold he that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. Vers. 5. The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shadow at thy right hand, &c. Where we see he speaketh of the whole body, and not of any particular member of the Church. We are then to learn thus much out of this strain, that when we have a care to set the Lord continually in our sight, he hath a care continually to watch over our estate. This glorious rejoicing of faith is also in other places of the book of God. Psal. 23, throughout the whole Psalm, the man of God sheweth that he had so richly and so sweetly tasted of the promises of God, that in trouble he never wanted help. The Apostle likewise to the Rom. 8, sheweth the happy estate of all the regenerate, although in a more excellent pattern of his own faith, saying, verse. 31. If God be on our side, who can be against us? 33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God his chosen? It is God that justifieth. 34. who shall condemn? &c. And afterward verse. 38, I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come. 35, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our

Lord. Howbeit, we must not think that the man of God was not removed at all. For he counteth himself a stranger upon earth, and he had many pushes and diverse assaults: yet so as he was not finally moved, and utterly overthrown. He had many battles, but got the victory; many men rose against him, but the Lord was on his side, and still he was unremovable as Mount Zion; and though he was shaken for a time, yet in the end he was safe. Now to the verse following.

Wherefore mine heart is glad, and my tongue rejoiceth; my flesh also doth rest in hope. Here are two pestilent opinions of the Papists overthrown. The one, that we should not boldly rejoice in the undoubted assurance of our salvation. The other, that we should doubt and be in a mammering of our final perseverance. In our confession of the faith immediately after the article of the remission of our sins, followeth the acknowledging of a happy resurrection, and glorious immortality: wherein we are assured, that even as in this life our sins are pardoned, so we shall not miscarry to the very resurrection, and our very flesh shall rise again to most blessed immortality. Shall I doubt, that God watcheth over me as a father in love, as almighty in power, as a provident preserver in governing heaven and earth? Shall I doubt that Christ, true God and true Man died for my sins, rose for my justification, ascended to take possession of that glory, which he will give unto me at his coming? Shall I doubt that the spirit of God hath sealed me and sanctified me, preserving me unblameable in Christ until the day of redemption? Shall I doubt, that I am of the number of the Saints, which are ordained to that glory, which is freely given of God the Father, dearly purchased of God the Son, and assuredly warranted by the ministry of the word, and working of God the holy Ghost? No. Why then should I doubt that my sins are freely pardoned? Can a man by reason conceive the mystery of the Trinity in unity; the distinction of



natures in one person Christ Jesus, the secret working of the holy Ghost in them that are called, the rising again to life, the dead body consumed to earth? No, we walk not by reason, we live by faith, and we believe against reason, even because the spirit of God by the preaching of the word, hath sealed and beareth record of these things to our spirits. Wherefore seeing we have no warrant of anything concerning faith, but by the word and by the spirit, and the same word and spirit assure us as well of one parcel of faith as of another; what blockishness is it to believe all other points that doctrine, and to doubt and call in question one concerning the forgiveness of sins? And seeing we believe as great things, what peevishness is it to doubt either of the comfortable assurance of our salvation present, or to despair of final perseverance in time to come? Against these we see the man of God opposeth his glorious rejoicing: wherefore the holy Ghost speaketh, Rom. 5:1. Being justified by faith, we have peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ. And 1. Pet. 1:8. You believe in Christ, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorious. In which point we are taught, that this rejoicing of the heart, praising of God with our tongue, and holy security of the whole man is the spirit of faith; and this is our true joy, even our assurance, that we are righteous in Christ, that God is our portion, our inheritance, our guider, governor, and preserver of us to life everlasting, yea and this fruit of faith is a sure token of faith, though it be not always and in all men in like measure. Howbeit, where the want thereof is felt, we must remember both to mourn and groan in our spirits for the want of it, and also wait on God in the meantime, and use all means possible to recover the same. This certainty of our salvation spoken of by Paul, rehearsed of Peter, and mentioned of David, Psal. 4:7, is that special fruit then of faith, which breedeth that spiritual joy, and inward peace, which passeth all understanding. True it is all God his children have it not. One thing is the tree, and another thing is the fruit of the tree: one thing is faith, and another thing is the fruit of

faith. And that remnant of God his elect which feel the want of this fruit, have notwithstanding faith, which manifesteth itself in them by groaning and sighing for it, and by the complaining of the absence of it. For albeit indeed there is no greater argument, that a man is alive, than his lively, quick and cheerful spirits, his fresh memory, nimbleness and agility of body: yet it is some token also of life, when a man not having in himself this alacrity of mind and acrimony of well-doing, can complain of his lumpish, earthly and dead spirits, dull memory, and heaviness of body, as one that feareth and suspecteth these things to be forerunners of some fainting, languishing, or dangerous sickness, which is towards him. And surely God his children, who hath been made drunken as it were with this spiritual gladness, are often waned from it, either for their trial, how highly they esteem it, or to punish them for some sin past, or else to forewarn them of some sin to come. Wherefore when any such morse of our spirits and extraordinary deadness doth come upon us, let us thus commune with our own hearts; Surely all is not well, I must look out, I have not heard the word cheerfully, I cannot rejoice with his Saints, I am subject to some trouble, and must prepare my heart for some cross, I must rouse up myself and raise up God his spirit in me, that I may recover that life which is in Christ, without the which I am thus dull, or rather dead. The Prophet David (as we know, Psalm. 119.) finding in himself this untowardness to good exercises, the want of this delight, the loss of God his countenance, counteth himself as dead; and having these things he thought himself alive. It is a wonderful thing to see, it is a wonderful thing, I say, to see how natural a thing it is to all men to seek a quiet mind, and glad heart; how unnatural it is to wish for sorrow of mind, and grief of heart; and on the other side, to behold the security of men in neglecting the means of true joy, and their indiscreet plunging of themselves in endless and easeless sorrows, in pulling upon themselves sorrow after sorrow, and that with fantastical delights; all

which kind of pleasures have either their present pain, or pain to come accompanying them; and therefore worthily are they compared to the cracking thorns under the pot, which make a sudden blaze, and are quickly out. So the pleasures of fools vanish away without any issue, yea they are so far from bringing any joy in the hour of death, that even then most will they sting and accuse us for dishonoring of God. On the contrary when we feel the glory of God to be our chiefest joy, and the peace of the Church with the feeling of our salvation to be the peace of our minds, we have that gladness and calmness of a good conscience, which God reserveth in store as a treasure and precious jewel, whose virtue is to comfort us in time of greatest trouble, whose operation is to draw joy out of the bottomless pit of sorrow, when the world doth hate us, to show how God doth love us, and when our minds are deject, to bring a pawn from God his spirit to our spirit to assure us that our troubles shall have an issue to God his glory, and our salvation. This solace only cleaveth unto us in death, and in sickness, and in time of trouble; and therefore the more carefully must we use the means whereby we may buy and purchase the same: when we want it let us complain and mislike ourselves, accusing ourselves of some sin past, or enarming ourselves for some evils to come. Undoubtedly the jealousy of God his children over the security of these times maketh them to suspect that men may bear out themselves in good things for a time to serve persons, time and place; and that for lack of this true joy and delight in them they will fall away and deceive, especially when men come to their liberty, and are without controlment of person, awe of any place, or regard of any time. Men for a time be hearers of the Gospel, men may for orders sake pray, sing, receive the sacraments; but if it be without joy will not that hypocrisy in time break out? Will they not begin to be weary? Nay will they not be as ready to hear any other doctrine? Good things cannot long find entertainment in our corruptions, unless the holy ghost hath changed us from our old

delights to conceive pleasure in these things. Where love is, there is no lack, in pleasure there is no pain, and when we find the pearl of price which passeth all understanding, we will sell all our former delights, and depart from our vain pleasures to purchase this. It is a continual joy that worketh a conscience to use the means of anything: it is an abounding delight, that avoideth and fenceth off all wearisomeness in good things: wherefore the holy Ghost saith, Be ye filled with the Spirit: and in another place, Let the word of God dwell in you plenteously. In which place we are to gather that there is in us sometime an emptiness of the Spirit, and a scantness of the power of the holy ghost; the spirit of God is not so mighty in operation, grace is not so plentiful, the word is not so powerful in us; and from hence cometh our momentary joy, and transitory gladness.

And my tongue rejoiceth. That which in truth is inward, will in time show itself outward, as we may see in these holy affections of the man of God. The Prophet himself confirmeth this in another place, Psalm. 116:10. I believed therefore did I speak: which the Apostle repeateth in the person of the whole Church, 2. Cor. 4:13, because we have the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; We also believe, and therefore we speak. And Rom. 10:10, it is said, With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the tongue man confesseth to salvation: and sure it is, that of the abundance of the joy of the heart the mouth rejoiceth: as contrariwise of the abundance of the grief of the heart, although there may be for a while an inward devouring, binding and suppressing of sorrow, yet it will in time break forth, and we shall even roar for disquietness of mind, and cannot hold long, until we have eased our hearts with some outward complaint. For we see if a man have a through grief how it consumeth him, unless he utter it. Again, if a man hath conceived a true joy, how he longeth, how he is ravished, how he travaileth, until he hath brought it forth. If then in

any good measure we feel the joy of the spirit, the tongue will be at commandment to utter it. Wherefore we are to try ourselves and examine our hearts, whether we hear, read, pray, or sing with this grace in our hearts, with this joy in our spirits, with this comfort of conscience: let us lament, considering how singing and spiritual rejoicing is decayed, how great a stranger the word is with us, what little delight and alacrity we have in holy and religious exercises; and let us accuse ourselves, that therefore our tongues cleave to the rough roof of our mouth, because our hearts are locked up in security; which undoubtedly is so open to all men, that there is no man but bewaileth his want of inward joy. Many indeed, as hypocrites, can blow and bellow outwardly, who make no melody in their hearts, who sing not in grace, who have not the sweet and natural voice, which cometh from a well affected and right ordered mind, either joyfully showing a godly digested mirth, or dolefully breathing out into the passions of an exercised mind.

My flesh also doth rest in hope. See, his godly joy made him have a security in his flesh. It is our naturally infirmity that we have a trembling of the flesh which hindereth in us many good actions, as may be seen in our thoughts, suspecting of dangers, fearful imaginations, and wandering conceits, forecasting this evil and that evil to the great disturbing and disordering of the peace of our minds, all the which excessive fears were in this man of God wisely corrected, though not utterly removed, but suppressed in him by faith. Whereof cometh then our carnal and immoderate fears in dangers but of want of faith? This our Savior Christ teacheth his disciples, at what time they were with him being asleep in a tempest on the seas, when they through unbelief feared his divinity to have slept with his humanity, where he saith unto them, O ye little faith, why do you not believe? Here we see he rebuketh their excessive fear, which thing he also doth almost in the same manner. When they

carnally feared him to have been a spirit as he walked on the seas, they were not thoroughly persuaded that God was their portion, their inheritance, and watched over them; for if they had, they would have corrected these fleshly and immoderate fears, that they should not have hindered their holy meditations of God his powerful providence, nor their prayers for his gracious assistance, nor any other good exercises of their minds. Thus we see how the sure persuasion of God to be his inheritance, his maintainer both in soul and body, his teacher both by day and by night, both by his word and his spirit made the man of God secure both in soul and body. And what caused this? Partly that which we spake of before, partly that which followeth, for thou wilt not leave my soul in the grave, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption: so that the promises already tasted of, and the sure expectation to have the good work begun to be finished in him, made him rest in hope, and having God his cause in hand, he saw how the Lord would not only watch over him for his present estate, but also would guide him to immortality. Behold how his inward assurance wrought an outward safety, whereby we plainly see, that where there is a want of this comfort and faith in the soul, there is a want of peace and security in the body. It is our unbelief then that hatcheth and nourisheth wandering thoughts, and filleth our brain with suspicious phantasies, and fruitless illusions, dreaming of dangers where there are none, and imagining mountains where scarcely are molehills. Let us then strengthen our faith, and certify our souls, that our flesh shall stand before God, which will so work in us, that neither flesh and blood shall weigh us down with security in time of prosperity, nor overload us with desperate terrors in time of adversity. Neither as we said, must we think David to be a senseless Stoic, as feeling no troubles, but that by the power of God he was in trouble a triumphant conqueror, and in all these dangers through faith more than a victor. For as God reserveth his unspeakable joys for his children in

intolerable agonies; so he never armeth them strongly, but he prepareth them a field where they must fight stoutly. Oh that this heavenly joy were in us more abundantly, and of more men more frequented, then should not the small remnant that now always use it, be counted and called precisians, then should we give more lively testimonies of our effectual faith to our own consciences, then should we offer to others a larger cause of magnifying the name of God, who hearing us use such spiritual gladness, might be provoked to an holy emulation and say: surely this is the power of the holy Ghost, this is undeceivable joy, happy are they that can thus rejoice in the Lord. Oh that the Lord would give us of the spirit, and fill our hearts with such gladness: thus others undoubtedly would plentifully be ravished by our godly examples. Though some would laugh at us, as they did at the Apostles when they had received the holy Ghost, yet others would reverently marvel at it, and willingly follow it. Wherefore when with the man of God we shall be persuaded of our immortality both of body and soul, when we having God his cause in hand shall use it in a good conscience as he did, we shall surely and sincerely with him rejoice. And what I pray you in the night season, in thundering and lightning, in earthquakes, blazing stars, and fiery stars, in extraordinary working of the heavens maketh us so dismayed and at our wits end? Want of faith. What maketh us at the death of our friends to mourn, and that we will not be comforted? Paul, 1. Thess. 4:13, telleth us want of hope.

FINIS.

## **SERMON XIII**

OF FLEEING ILL COMPANY, IDOLTARY, AND SWEARING

Gen. 42:9, 12, 14, 15, 21

9.

Ye are spies, and are come to see the weakness of the land.

12.

Nay but ye are come to see the weakness of the land.

14.

This is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies.

15.

Hereby shall ye be proved: by the life of Pharaoh, ye shall not go hence, &c.

21.

We have verily sinned against our brother, &c.

Joseph a good man, and yet lieth: so was Lot a good man, and yet loath to part from Sodom. These were great offenses. Whence come they? From custom no doubt. Joseph being amongst profane men had some smell of their words. And Lot, though their wickedness and Sodomitry vexed his righteous soul, yet through custom, he could have found in his heart to have lived still amongst them. So first we must here be taught to eschew ill custom and company. The second note hence to be observed, may answer a piece of a doubt in the former two examples of Joseph and Lot. For some man may say, Joseph and Lot both good men dwelt and kept company with the wicked, therefore we may do so. But it may be answered, that examples prove nothing without the warrant of the word. And as for Joseph, God had sent him extraordinarily to provide for his fathers



family: but Lot chose to dwell in Sodom for his lucre (as ye may read in the thirteenth chapter of this book, the tenth verse) and therefore this greedy desire was altogether unlawful: and though the Lord in mercy deferred the punishment thereof, he punished that yet at length in his wife, who was turned into a pillar of salt; in himself and his own daughters, with whom he committed abominable incest. Therefore we see, that it followeth not, because they dwelt among the wicked, therefore we may.

It was not sufficient for Joseph to have had a misliking of lying, but he should have abstained from it, and detested it in heart. No doubt he being a godly man, otherwise had a misliking of it: but because he did not even abhor it, we see how in time he was brought unto it, and as it were, to make no conscience of it. So it is not sufficient for us to have a misliking of unlawful apparel, plays, sport, naughty and ungodly talk, but we must in heart detest it, much more in practice: otherwise by evil company we may easily be drawn to follow them. The Physicians means is to be used in time of sickness, and the plague to be avoided in flying from it: so we must use means to avoid sin by the word and prayer, and as much as we may, the place where it aboundeth, least we be infected. And if it so be, that we cannot avoid (for it may be the Lord will sometimes try us with the company of foolish, vain, and profane worldlings, to see how we will cleave to him) if then we cannot avoid but our eyes shall behold vanity, our ears shall be filled with ungracious and graceless graces in lying, swearing, and blaspheming the name of our God, then show yourselves to the world, that you are not of the world, assure your own souls that you are called and chosen of the Lord, not only by a cold kind of misliking of these things, but by an utter abhorring and detesting them from the heart: otherwise we may be by Joseph's example, drawn not only to approve them, but also to commit the like, and to forget ourselves, and to heap up the wrath of God against

us: so that when their destruction cometh, except the Lord show mercy (but if we tempt him, he will show no mercy) we shall be partakers of all their plagues, and the vengeance which the just and most righteous God hath threatened to throw down upon them.

Vers. 14. Again Joseph said unto them, This is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies. Joseph maketh another lie. So we see that use is a sore matter, which had brought him to this, that he stuck not at a lie: and yet, we know that the liar even killeth his own soul. Nay but see, he left not here, he went further yet. In the fifteenth verse: Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go hence. Joseph smelleth by this use of Idolatry: he forsaketh the Lord, and sweareth by him which is no God. Besides, another fault, he cometh near for swearing and perjury, because his oath cometh very near a lie, and we know that untruth and an oath jumping together maketh perjury: and it cannot be, but those that swear readily, must sometimes be forsworn.

Joseph was a Magistrate, Magistrates may go far in examining and searching and sifting suspected persons when they appear before them, that they might come to the truth of the matter: but to affirm flatly and falsely, is against God's commandment, and therefore a grievous offense.

Vers. 17. So he put them inward three days. Now he did not imprison them of any corrupt affection or desire of revenge, but there may be great reasons to show, that he used great wisdom in his doing First, if Joseph should not have done thus, but should at the first have made himself known unto them, they for shame would never have gone back again to their father. Secondly, this dealing thus with them was a means to humble them. Thirdly, he might do thus, that he might be

more fully certified of the state of his father. And lastly, the short time of his imprisoning them was a token of his love towards them.

Vers 18. Then Joseph said, This do and live: for I fear God. As though he should say: Do not you fear: for I fear God, I am true and just Therefore you shall have no harm, unless you be wicked and ungodly men.

[I am a man that fear God] Here is a rule of Christian life, especially for Magistrates. We must all fear God. All that are in place and authority must know that they are under God. Joseph considered hereof not now only, but also in the last chapter of Genesis, when his brethren were afraid of him. Read from the 14. verse of that chapter, to the 19. where Joseph saith, Fear not: for I am not under God? And I pray you mark what this consideration wrought in him in the 20. and 21. verses: When ye thought evil against me, God disposed it to good, &c.

Now if we fear God, we must pray unto him for our Magistrates, that he will maintain his fear among them. For it falleth out that we are often times punished by them, even especially because we never pray for them.

Here be rules in this fear of God for religion, for praying unto God, and praising God: for true keeping of the Sabbath, and for conversation of life. First, when as to the hindrance of the fear of God any laws shall come forth contrary to God's word, we must remember that we forget not to fear God, and to stand in awe of his rods, if we swerve from his word. Secondly, if we do not on the Sabbath day more than man commandeth, we show that we fear man more than God. And lastly, in all our doings and dealings, either with the Lord, or with men, let us remember to fear God: for if we fear not God, what wickedness is there which we fear to commit? Abraham

when he came to Abimelech's Court, he feared adultery; he had no other reason but this, Because the fear of God was not in that place. Hence even from the want of the fear of God cometh drunkenness, and selling of wares without conscience, and oppressing of the poor, and heaping up riches to another end, then he that gave them, or rather lent them, hath appointed: against all which, since man cannot make sufficient laws, it were to be wished that every man could say truly, and from his heart, I am a man that feareth God.

Vers. 21. And they said one to another, We have verily sinned against our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear him, therefore is this trouble come upon us. Every word containeth doctrine upon doctrine. First we see how necessary afflictions are to make us call upon God. By this reason, by afflictions we feel our sin: now without we feel our sins we call not upon God. For till we feel the burden of our sins lying upon our conscience, as it were a weight to press us down into hell, we forget God: we foolishly persuade ourselves we have no need, for we can see none. Therefore afflictions are very necessary for us, to remember God, to call upon him, and to bring us to some assurance also thereby, that we are the children of God. That affliction is so necessary to feel our sins, both daily experience doth teach us, and examples and testimonies of the children of God do confirm the same unto us. Joseph's brethren all the time of their prosperity, forget what they had done to Joseph; but now when they were in some distress, they came to themselves, and began to call to account, and to lay before them their hard dealing with their brother. And David saith in the 119 Psalm, Before I was afflicted, I went astray, the ninth part of that Psalm: but (saith he) now I keep thy word. So then we may boldly conclude, that affliction is a necessary thing to bring us to God. And here we may note the great love and care that the Lord God hath over us, and his infinite goodness towards us in using

all means for our salvation. First the Lord setteth down his law unto us. and he hath added also threatening and curses to as many as shall neglect or disobey it. But now if neither the law preached, nor yet those threatening's are able to strike a terror into our hearts, then he useth yet another means, he taketh his rods and fatherly correcteth us, by that means to move us to cry to him, and himself by our cry to pity us, and have mercy upon us. The preaching of the law is necessary, and the threatening's for transgression of the law must often times be used. Joseph's brethren after they were sore threatened, they then began to be humbled, and to acknowledge their fault. The Lord said unto Abimelech: Thou art but a dead man, if thou restore not to Abraham his wife again. So that we may here see the end of threatening's, either they bring a man to know his sin, and so to prevent the punishment due for sin; or else they hasten and heap greater punishment unto us, if otherwise we do not repent. After Joseph's brethren were threatened they were humbled, and so God repented him of the plague he was minded to bring upon them. Abimelech after he was threatened he restored Abraham his wife again, and so the Lord stayed from destroying him.

Now there are two sorts of people which would have God's promises preached unto them, and not the law of God. The first are they which would continue in sin. As for these they are like to the Horse and to the Mule, whose mouths must be holden with bit and bridle. Another sort there is which would not have the law, nor the threatening's thereof preached unto them; and these are they which feel themselves moved with the promises of God. But we cannot be moved lively with the promises of Christ, except we first by the law, and the threatening's of John, see the full measure of punishment, that our sins have deserved. Therefore it is very requisite we first have the law preached unto us, that we may have a lively feeling of our sins.

As those which would not have the law preached, were said to be of two sorts; so those that feel their sins are also of two sorts: for either they see sin in general, or else they are humbled more specially. Those which feel their sins, and have a taste thereof, and see them in general, and not specially; these must be cut on both sides, they must see sin on both sides, they must enter into the secrets of the heart, for they have not yet learned to discern of thoughts, they must even have their very hearts and thoughts laid open unto them. In the third to the Hebr., we are bidden not to harden our hearts at the word of God. Not to harden our hearts, that is, not only to hear the law preached unto our ears, and to go no further (for so it never profiteth us, nay it is the power of death unto death unto us) but we must suffer it to soke into us, to have his proper working, to pierce and to enter even to the very secret cogitations of our hearts, that not only our wicked deeds, our unsavory words, but also the fountain of all these, even our corrupt nature, our unbridled and untamed affections, our heart, which is wonderful faulty, may be made known unto us, that we may come to make conscience of our very thoughts, because the thoughts are grievous breaches of the law of God, who being a Spirit, hath made a law for our heart, for our thoughts, for our soul and conscience: and thus being very loath in the sight of God to offend by thoughts vain and ungodly, to strive with our flesh, and to have our affections subdued to the spirit, that so our heart being reformed, all our members may be conformable in every respect to the will and commandment of Almighty God. And thus far must we be humbled, if we will be truly humbled before the Lord. And truly if we be not rightly humbled before the Lord, we can hardly have any assurance, that we are the children of God. For without this humbling of us, having had some taste of the promises of God, we for the most part resemble the corn that our Savior speaketh of sown in the stony ground, which for a time flourished, that is, made a fair face, as many hypocrites can do now; But having no root, nor

nothing at all in truth, they show themselves how unable they are to stand, because they have no deepness of ground, the seed of the word never begun nor rooted in their hearts. So that we must be truly humbled before the Lord, and the word must be permitted to rip and lay open unto us the very secrets and thoughts of the heart.

Now those which see and feel their sins, and are already humbled more especially, are humbled either by preaching of the law unto them, or else by affliction.

Affliction is either of the body or of the mind; of these the Lord sometime to humble us doth send the one, sometime the other, sometime both, and all to humble us before his Majesty: when as he seeth by reason of the corruption of our nature, that the preaching of the law is not sufficient to humble us, and to strike that terror into our hearts which might make us duly prepared to receive into our hearts the sweet and comfortable promises made to us in Christ, that it might be so rooted, that it might still grow up even to the full ripe and perfect age of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; because I say our loving father seeth that the law will not suffice us, therefore it pleaseth him in mercy, who will leave no way unassayed for the salvation of his children, to prepare us by afflicting us, which cannot by the hearing of his law be truly prepared.

Now if affliction be such a notable thing, and the Lord worketh even eternal life thereby oftentimes to those whom he hath elected and called to be his, how lovingly ought they to embrace it to whom the Lord so fatherly doth offer it? And how patiently and cheerfully ought they to bear it, in as much as they thereby may assure themselves that God hath severed them from the world, and from those on whom he meaneth to show no mercy in the day of his wrath?

And as for those whom the Lord as yet hath laid no scourge upon them, let them not long for it, but let them lay the law of God and the threatening's thereof unto their hearts to humble them thereby. It is better to be humbled thereby than by affliction, and yet better by affliction than not at all. To commend affliction and to mislike of preaching of the law, is as though one should commend a sore and dangerous purgation, and mislike a good diet. A good diet is able, and it is the ordinary means appointed of God to procure and conserve health, which as many of us as are not unwise, will observe. Now if for want of discretion, or for greedy desire we neglect this, and so by gathering together of ill and noisome humors within us we endanger our life, yet to save our life we will suffer the working of the most strong purgation, that the Physician shall prescribe us: so the law that is, the ordinary means to make us apt to hear the word of peace and salvation, and ought of us to be observed and applied unto us, that we may thereby be preserved rather than by affliction; yet if our merciful Lord and only Physician of our soul shall with tender compassion look upon our sores, and shall see the malady of our soul to be incurable without the strong purgation of affliction, then ought we even with good courage to take it, except we will suffer and see our endless vexation. So purgation is good, but it is more wisdom to observe diet: and affliction is profitable; but if the law might take place effectually that were needless. Let us take heed therefore we deceive not ourselves in thinking that affliction is the only means to bring us to God, and so neglect the due preparing by the law till time of affliction. We see that is the means rather than this: and affliction indeed is the curse of God. Now the curse of God is the verifying of his law: and though it please God to bless it; as he doth always to his children, for all things turn to the best to them that love him, yet ought it not to be the means to humble us rather than the other. The end of affliction and of threatening both is to humble us; and therefore it were better to be humbled by threatening than by



experience of punishment; for the threats of the law may do this as well as affliction, if we be not unwise.

In ourselves we may have some testimony of our true humbling in time of affliction, yet is it hard to say for others whether one which now feeleth the hand of God upon him, and never felt any token of God's displeasure before, be either truly humbled for his sins, for which he is afflicted; or seemeth to be humbled because of the pain that he abideth. Therefore even he that is afflicted ought to examine his own soul whether he be truly humbled, and feel within himself even a grief that he hath so diversely provoked God to plague him, acknowledging God's unspeakable mercy and long suffering, that he long ere this did not clean consume him: least otherwise the devil deceive him, as he hath done diverse, who for a time seemed to be humbled, because of the heat of their grief: but afterwards when the Lord hath stayed his hand, they show what their humbling was, they turn again to sin as a dog to his vomit, and as a sow that is washing to her wallowing in the mire. But as for him that feeleth the weight and burden of his sins, and God's displeasure for sin, and even groaneth as it were under the burden of sin, he may find a heavenly comfort, and assurance of the favor of God: for if thou seest a man truly humbled, him will I consider saith the Lord. To him will I look that is of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my words.

Those that are afflicted, are either such as are instructed before, both whence their affliction cometh, and to what end they are sent, or else they are such as are ignorant, and know nothing hereof. They that are ignorant when they see themselves so punished, they are driven into great straits, they look only upon the curse of God, they never consider the appurtenances thereof, and that the cause thereof is the transgression of God's law, and that it is sin for which God is angry, and that which he punisheth in them: upon which their blindness

they attribute the cause of their pain either to Witches, or to natural causes, or fortune, or some such thing; and hereupon to be released of their grief they go and run and ride to wise men as they call them, to Witches, yea oftentimes to the Devil himself, and use all unlawful means that they can devise. But for these what remedy is there? Surely even first to consider that their afflictions are sent from God. Secondly, to inquire at his word the cause that moved the Lord to lay them upon them. The Lord no doubt will answer them out of his word, that it was sin. Thirdly the end which the Lord hath set down, which is to humble us. Now if we consider that the Lord hath sent it, that sin was the cause thereof, and we be truly humbled because of our sins, then may we be bold to seek to the waters of comfort, and drink freely of the water of life, which our Savior hath promised to all that come unto him to be refreshed. They which are instructed both whence affliction cometh, and wherefore, and to what end, they commonly are very sorry, and do earnestly repent them; and although they are something troubled, because before they were never sufficiently humbled, yet are they not dismayed, they have the stay in themselves: they hold it as most certain, that their God as he is all wisdom, and therefore knoweth all things that are best, so he is infinite in mercy, and putteth upon him the affection of a father to those that fear him, and giveth nothing to his children but those things which may be best for them; and therefore they know he scourgeth as a father, or beateth as a schoolmaster; and no tender father or wise schoolmaster will correct the child with beating when words may serve: so that they know the Lord was even to take his rod in hand before he could renew them, and hereby he meaneth to fine them, that they may come out of afflictions as fined gold, whom the Lord will make vessels to eternal glory.

That which is set down here of the afflictions of Joseph's brethren, we may term more rightly by the name of scaring, than of

punishment and affliction; for they were but put in fear only, and though they were put in ward; it was but for a very small time: and we read of no correction that was laid upon them; no, it appeareth by Joseph's affection to them, who could not abstain, but was fain often to burst forth into tears when he had gone from them, that he so tendered them as his brethren; when by the wisdom of the spirit of God he made a show as though he would deal very hardly with them, yet this fearing and searing of them it humbled them, and drove them to confess, and to say one to another, we have utterly sinned against our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear him: therefore is this trouble come upon us. And here we see how they confessed their fault when they were scared, before they felt any punishment upon them; which may be an argument, that it was a true humbling from the heart, with a grief not of the punishment, for there was yet none laid upon them, but of their sins, which then they brought into their remembrance, and it lay as a burden upon their conscience, that they even saw God's judgments ready to give sentence of condemnation against them, except they prevented him by speedy repentance. Whereas if it had been done, and had been in time of affliction that they had been so humbled, it had been hard to say, whether it had been done truly or dissemblingly, with a feeling of their sins, or the greatness of their grief which they sustained, as is said before.

Thus we may learn, that the Lord God doth not only, to humble us before his Majesty, set forth the law unto us, and preach unto us the threatening's thereof, and then if they take no place amongst us, he layeth his rods and scourges upon our backs; but commonly of his infinite wisdom and mercy, before he afflicteth, between the preaching of the law and affliction, he scareth us, he shaketh the rod of correction over us; and before he punisheth, he showeth tokens of displeasure, and that we have provoked him to anger: wherefore we

have experience of his great mercy in this land amongst us at this day. We have had the law preached unto us, loe these twenty years; but where is any humbling, any confessing of sins before the Lord? Nay, we neglect the word, and have it in contempt amongst us, we even loath the bread of the Lord, which is of power to work salvation to all that by faith shall feed thereon; we prefer our pleasures before the keeping of the Lord's Sabbaths; we esteem of the Lord himself (who hath made us of nothing, bought us with a price, even his own blood, and who one day will call all before him to judgment) as nothing: we come to pray to him with less reverence than to miserable men; our lips say some prayers unto God, but our hearts have some other God's, namely, our belly or our goods, wherein we wholly delight, and in whom we only trust. And indeed it is lamentable, that prayers are said of a number to keep a custom, and a fashion, even mocking of God and deceiving our own souls. Will the Lord suffer this? Is the sacrifice acceptable that cometh not from a humbled and prepared heart? No, he will not accept it. All these abominations are in the land, and may not the Lord have good cause to visit amongst us? Nay, to come even in judgment against us? And yet see the unspeakable mercy, and the long suffering, and the exceeding love of God towards us, who hath for born his rods thus long, and yet destroyeth us not, but before his besom of destruction shall come to sweep us away, he sheweth us foretokens of his displeasure; he now beginneth to scare us, to see if yet by this means he may humble us, and so preserve us from those plagues and judgments which he is presently purposed to bring upon all the ungodly of the earth. But how doth the Lord scare us, and what whips be they wherewith he meaneth to scourge? They are many, and we cannot see them all, but there are three especial plagues which the Lord is ready to pour upon us, and three manner of ways there be, whereby the Lord scareth us, which are very plain and manifest, and almost every child may perceive. He scareth us by fear

of dearth and famine, whereof this unseasonable weather, these immoderate waters which we have had, cannot but be fearful tokens. He scareth us by tokens of a pestilence to come amongst us, which is already laid upon the necks of many of our brethren in this land, not only far off, as at Yarmouth, at Norwich, and diverse other places which we know not, but also in this shire at Eli, we know not how night it is our own doors. A third way there is, whereby he scareth us, and that is more fearful than all these, and that is by the secret devices of our enemies, whom the Lord hath stirred up even to threaten a separating of us from his Majesty, and from his word, and the continuance of his government by his word amongst us, and a captivity, a subduing of us to false gods, and an ignorance of all the laws and commandments of our good God, whom only to serve is perfect felicity. And this is a sore scaring: the other are sore for the time; but this punishment, if it cometh, it shall end at no time. We may partly see it, I would to God we could as well consider of it, and even yet at the length before we feel the rod, as did the brethren of Joseph, acknowledge our sins before the Lord, whom we have provoked to wrath, humble ourselves before him, and call for mercy, and even by prayer stand in the gap, and prevent the punishment prepared for us.

Now let us herein learn one point of wisdom more, which is, if God sometime shall threaten us by scaring, and shall sit him down again a little, and it falleth not out presently that we be punished, let us not thereby get occasion to flatter and deceive ourselves, as though God's rods were then clean overpast, as a storm carried away with a cloud; but let us carefully consider what were the causes that moved him to threaten us, and no doubt we shall find that even they were causes sufficient to provoke him to plague us: and if we will not call them to mind, and confess them while we have respite given us, they will

never [yield] yelling and crying in the cares of the just and righteous judge for whole vessels full of vengeance to consume us utterly.

Now as for the godly, and those that fear the Lord, and have their hearts upright before him, they are as it were forewarned and fully prepared whatsoever plagues come, they know that nothing shall come nigh them to hurt them, and they can see a glimmering of the thing a great way off, and the Lord telleth them beforehand what he is minded to do: he told Noah beforehand of the great judgment of waters when the whole world was drowned for sin: he told Lot how he was minded to burn and boil up the filth of Sodom: he told Moses before how he would destroy the Egyptians: yea and the Prophet David speaketh truly, The Lord revealeth his secrets to them that fear him; and yet notwithstanding the dear children of God, when as nothing will serve, they must then needs look for affliction. And if it be so that affliction must needs come, let us yet pray to God rather to lay any plague upon us than the famine of his word, and the subjection to the enemies of his grace; yea let us heartily confess our sins before God as David did at the threatening of the Lord by his Prophet: and if the Lord might put us in choice (if it seemed good unto his Majesty) whether we would fly before our enemies, or whether we would wish, or chose rather a dearth in the land, or a pestilence; let us from our hearts beseech the Lord God that we may rather fall into the hands of the Lord, than into the hands of cruel and persecuting men.

The sum of all is.

1. Precepts to fly ill company, which is the plague of our soul. Not only to mislike, but also to detest from the heart a wicked custom, least we give consent and reach our hands unto sin, as Joseph and Lot did.

2. To beware of swearing by false gods, which is idolatry.
  3. To beware of often swearing, for fear of perjury.
  4. How the Lord hath two means of humbling us, the law, and affliction.
- FINIS.

## **SERMON XIV**

### **OF THE MUTUAL DUTIES BETWEEN THE MINSTERS AND THE PEOPLE**

Heb. 13:17

Obey them that have the oversight of you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give accounts, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

Whensoever it pleaseth the Lord God by his providence to call me to preach his word unto his people (as he hath at this present called me unto you (reverend Fathers and brethren beloved in our Lord Jesus) my desire is to entreat of such a parcel of his most holy word, as may minister matter both to stir up and rouse them out of the den of ignorance which have not known Jesus Christ, nor the sweetness of his grace, and also to prick forward them which have received some measure of the Spirit of God, assuring them of salvation purchased by Jesus Christ, to a greater study and care for to increase this inestimable treasure. The Lord of his great mercy therefore hath presented unto me, such a place for my desired purpose, as I hope by the assistance of his holy Spirit shall be profitable both to you and to myself. The words are written in the thirteenth chapter of the Epistle

to the Hebrews, and in the seventeenth verse: Obey them that have the oversight of you, &c. The spirit of God doth most plainly set forth unto us in this place:

1. First, what duties the Ministers of God do owe unto his people, declared in these words, They watch for your souls.
2. Secondly, what duty the people owe unto them again, expressed herein: Obey them that have the oversight of you, and submit yourselves.
3. Thirdly, the fruits that come of well-doing of these duties to both parts, that is, both to the Minister and to the people.
4. Fourthly, what danger it is not to do them well.

We must first speak of the duties of Ministers. But before we enter into it, it is very necessary, that we consider whether it be requisite to have a Minister or no, and also to what use and end we should have him. For if it were not needful to have a Pastor, it were in vain to speak of the duty of a Minister. Whereas the holy Ghost saith. Obey them that have the oversight over you &c. It is meant of the Pastors of the Church, of the dispensers of the holy word of God. For there were placed over the Church of God, both Pastors, Doctors and Elders, which were certain grave wise men appointed to look to the manners of the children of God, and not to be alders and helpers of the Ministers of God in the furtherance of his office: and whereas they saw any disorder among the children of God, they were to admonish them of it; which if it would not serve, together with the whole congregation would use admonitions: but if they would not be obedient thereunto, such was the authority of the Church, that they might excommunicate them, and so rend them off from the Saints fellowship, and deliver them to the devil, that thereby they might be



driven to true repentance for their sins, and have their souls saved. To these overseers doth the Apostle will them to be obedient, and doth not mean generally all kind of superiors and civil Magistrates, as in diverse other places of the Scripture. In Rom. 13:1, 2, 3, and Titus 3:1, also 1. Pet. 2:13. we must take it in this place according to the Scriptures: in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, and fifth chapter, S. Paul writeth in this sort: Now we beseech you, brethren, that ye acknowledge them, which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, that ye have them in singular love for their works sake. Be at peace among yourselves. Here the Apostle also speaketh of them that rule over men's consciences by the ministry of God's word, and not of civil Magistrates. We see therefore that it is meant that there should be a governor over every congregation, which we call in our English tongue a Pastor. Only this remaineth among us, that we have Pastors, Doctors, or Teachers and Ministers. How necessary they are, our Savior Christ testifieth in the ninth chapter of his Gospel after S. Matthew: But when he saw the multitude, he had compassion upon them, because they were dispersed, and scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. This people by whom our Savior Christ spake, had the Scribes and Pharisees, great learned Clerks, Doctors of the Law, and yet he saith, that they wanted shepherds: and therefore he willed his Disciples to pray to the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest. Whereby he noteth, that those only be true Pastors which be laborers. He likeneth true Ministers to faithful shepherds, and the people of God to a flock of sheep, taking the occasion of this simile, according to that country where were many mountains, deserts and wildernesses, so that their sheep without a shepherd were scattered abroad very dangerously, in that so many wolves and savage beasts laid wait in every corner to devour the silly sheep. In like case are they that have not a Pastor, that laboreth faithfully in preaching the word of God, which is the instrument which God hath

appointed to pull his people into the sheepfold of Jesus Christ, where they are without danger of destruction: when as all they that are without a Pastor, are wandering abroad to their own destruction: such horrible disorder is there, where God's word is not truly preached. In another place he saith: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. This people dwelt all together, they were not scattered here one and there another, but abode whole in that goodly city of Jerusalem: yet because they were not in the unity of the spirit of the household of God, they were scattered abroad in most miserable disorder. For the Church of Jesus Christ is not in one place only, but dispersed and scattered in diverse places throughout the whole world, and yet are they all of one household, all of one sheepfold, and are united together in one spirit: and though we be here, yet are we of the same number and flock with them in Germany, so long as we are of the true faith of Jesus Christ, for their faith and ours is all one, their spirit and our spirit all one, according to the words of the Apostle: There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your vocation. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of all, which is above all, and through all, and in you all. We must therefore take this as the Scripture teacheth, that the ministry of his word is the necessariest thing in the world, which cannot be done without faithful Pastors and distributors of the same. For when the Lord will beget your souls, which he doth not by mortal seed, but by the immortal seed of his word, he will appoint you a spiritual father also. He never establisheth any kingdom, but he appointeth a King, and when he hath any scholar, he provideth him a schoolmaster to instruct and teach him his most holy will. For this is most certain, where a Common-weal is without government, the case is very miserable, one man shall not live by another. Again, if there be such governors, as use tyranny, oppression, and seek to enrich

themselves, gathering and scraping all into their hands; what miserable slavery shall the poor people be brought into? So it is in the church of God, if such be placed over it, as be blind, unable to feed the flock, such as seek their own pleasure, to fill their bellies, to clothe their backs, to enrich their coffers, and to live as they list, the people of God shall be in miserable case, as blind men groping out of the way, and be devoured of their adversary the devil (who as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour) because they know not how to resist him by a steadfast faith, and so be led away captive unto hell. This cometh of not having a Pastor, or having such a one as regardeth not the souls of his people. (1 Thess. 5:12-13, Matt. 9:36, Mark 6:34, Matt. 9:38, Matt. 23:37, Luk. 13:34, Eph. 4:4-6, 1 Pet. 1:23, 1 Pet. 5:8)

For the end why the Lord placeth faithful and laboring pastors of his Church, is, that they may teach his children out of his word the way to heaven sincerely and purely: and such governors must we obey and be ruled by them according to the word of God. Neither must we say in heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (That is to bring Christ from above) or who shall descend into the deep? (That is to bring Christ again from the dead,) but the word of God is near thee, even in thy mouth, and in thine heart. We must therefore obey the true Ministers and faithful laborers in the Lord's Vineyard, and learn by that wholesome doctrine which they bring unto us, how to attain unto salvation: for there is no other means in the world to come unto Christ than by the preaching of the word, according to that saying of S. Paul, faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God: and as he speaketh a little before, how shall they hear without a Preacher? We may therefore draw a very strong argument to prove that faithful Ministers are appointed of God to this end, only to bring home his children into the sheepfold of Jesus Christ. True faith maketh us only heirs of the kingdom of heaven; faith cannot be attained without

hearing of God's word preached; the word of itself cannot be preached without a Preacher: therefore Preachers are the only means appointed of God to work faith in his children by the preaching of God's word, and the secret working of the holy Ghost, whereby they are made partakers of the promises. Whosoever therefore is not content with this ordinance of God, but would have some further revelation from heaven, shall never be partakers of the benefits of Jesus Christ. He himself declareth in the parable of the rich glutton, that whosoever would not believe the messengers of God which are the Preachers of the word, they would not believe though one should rise from the dead to instruct them. For in the word of God is set forth most clearly and manifestly the true and certain rule to live by, and the means whereby to attain unto salvation. Therefore it is too too much ungodliness to desire any other means to be instructed by, than by the word of God, which is the very gate of heaven, and the keys thereof are given to the true Ministers of God's word, with such power, that whatsoever they bind on the earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they loose upon earth, shall be loosed in heaven. So wonderful is the mercy of God toward his children herein, that they may have assurance of salvation in this life; yea so certain may they be of it, as if they had it already in possession, and that not by preaching of Angels, but even by our own brethren, mortal men as we are, subject to sin and all infirmities, at whose hands we may daily be taught, and with whom we may talk familiarly, and at their hands through the word of God we may have as good assurance hereof, as if the Lord should speak himself from heaven. If God should speak, we were not able to abide the hearing of his voice, but be even swallowed up of fear. How were the children of Israel terrified with the voice of the Lord? When he spake unto them they fled away, and stood a far off, and cried to Moses, Talke thou with us and we will hear: but let not God talk with us, least we die. What a vain and ungodly thing were it to persuade ourselves that we could

believe if we heard God himself speak, or if one came from the dead, to tell us what we should believe, when as the very earth will quake at the voice of God? And our Savior Christ telleth us plainly, that if we believe not the true Preachers of his word, we could not believe though a damned soul should come from hell to preach unto us: the reason is, because the ordinance of God, which is unchangeable hath appointed our brethren to teach us the way unto salvation. And truly it is a notable place where our Savior Christ doth separate his from the reprobate: Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long doest thou make us doubt? If thou be that Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believe not: the works which I do in my Fathers name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not: for ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of mine hand. We see then it is a great argument of reprobation, when our hearts be so hard, that we cannot believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for this is an infallible truth, that those which are the Lord's, in his time he calleth, and they shall abide and never fall away; but those that are not his shall fall away, although they have been passing cunning hypocrites in outward holiness. The children of God will acknowledge this means, and praise the wisdom of God, which hath thereby quite transformed them, and changed their whole man, in sanctifying them by his holy spirit, and giving of them assurance of salvation, which they confess could never have come to pass without the preaching of the word. This authority is given to the Ministers to pronounce the terrible judgments of God against sin, and whosoever he be that doth not repent and turn from the same, shall be as sure of everlasting damnation, as if he were already in hell. (Rom. 10:6-8, Rom. 10:17, Luk. 16:31, Matt. 16:19, Exo. 20:18-19, Joh. 10:24-28, Rom. 8:30)

Again, to the penitent, whose consciences are burdened with grief for their sins, he may pronounce the sweet promises of the Gospel, how Jesus Christ hath died for them, and hath discharged them before the judgment seat of God, and they shall be as sure of salvation, as if our Savior Christ should speak from heaven himself, (who is Truth and cannot lie) and say: Whosoever's sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: and whosoever's sins ye retain, they are retained. This is a wonderful thing, and this shall God's children confess an unspeakable goodness of the Lord God, in sending our brethren with such power. Since then this is so necessary, they which will not confess this to be the ordinance and mean appointed of the Lord God, to bring his children home unto his heavenly Kingdom, either never heard of Jesus Christ, or else in miserable hypocrisy have heard and professed the Gospel, which shall be a testimony to their consciences, even to their utter condemnation. (Joh. 20:23)

Now we have heard the necessity of a Pastor, and the use whereunto he is appointed it is requisite that we consider what duty the Pastor oweth unto his flock: for as the Lord, when he establisheth a Kingdom, will choose a King, so will he also give him, first a Kings heart, before he setteth him in his seat; so when he prepareth a spiritual father to beget souls unto himself, he giveth him gifts and power to do the same, as Saint Paul testifieth, writing to the Ephesians: But unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gifts of Christ: Wherefore he saith, when he ascendeth up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men: so that first the Lord giveth gifts, and secondly men. This must be the duty of the Minister (as the holy Ghost telleth us) to watch over the souls of his people, to be so careful over them, as that he will not suffer one through his negligence to perish, but by his earnest laboring in preaching the word of God, to build them up into a stronger faith, which are already begotten unto the Lord, and also to

win others to Christ, and so increase the mystical body of Christ, so much as his diligence by the blessing of God shall be able. (Eph. 4:7-8)

1. First, therefore, it is requisite in the Ministers office, that he study the word of God, that he do diligently read the same, and also give himself unto prayer.

2. Secondly, after that he hath studied the word of God, he must come out of his study to teach and instruct his flock, to deliver forth unto them wholesome doctrine, for the nourishment of their souls.

3. Thirdly, he must live a godly life, showing himself an example and pattern of godliness for his people to imitate, that the mouths which are ready to slander the Gospel, may be stopped, and he must watch over his flock, that they be not deceived with false doctrine.

4. Last of all, he must not refuse to give his life for them.

Concerning the first, that Ministers must give themselves diligently to reading, as it is manifest in the fourth chapter of the first Epistle to Timothy, where he exhorteth Timothy, with these words: Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine. If that reading the word of God were not very needful, yea, and the first point of the Ministers of God, this faithful servant of God Saint Paul, would never have willed Timothy to use such diligence therein, who never moved any to do those things which were not profitable, and himself for the example of others, used the same: therefore it is certain that Saint Paul using great diligence therein, found such commodity as moved him to exhort Timothy, and in him all other Ministers thereunto. But if Saint Paul, who was more than a Minister, even an Apostle, called thereunto extraordinarily, by the mouth of Jesus Christ himself from heaven; if he I say, which was

placed in so high an office, and called with so worthy a calling, gave himself diligently to reading and studying the word of God: how much more ought the Ministers, which have not so excellent a calling as he had? The Prophet Malachi sheweth a reason hereof: The Priests lips should preserve knowledge, and the people should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts: if the people must learn the will of God at the Ministers mouth, it is requisite that he himself study and read the word of God diligently, where his holy will is revealed, that he may be able to declare the same unto the people, to the which end the Lord hath placed them over his people. So that he must be as it were the storehouse of the Lord, and the children of God must come to learn, and he must minister necessary doctrine unto them, as occasion shall be offered, that all several heresies may be rooted out of the people's hearts, and so be brought unto God, to serve him in true holiness according to perfect religion; and hereby we may know, that whosoever doth not thus, is not the servant of the Lord. The reading and meditating in God's word is so necessary, that the Lord commanded Joshua being a civil Magistrate, That the book of his law should never depart out of his mouth, but that he should meditate therein day and night: Noting thereby how hard and impossible a thing it is for Magistrates to govern the Common-wealth aright and orderly, without continual study of God's word, which is the perfect and absolute rule, whereby as well Magistrates as all other sorts of people must measure their affairs and order of life: for this cause also must not the civil Magistrate be ignorant of the law of God, that their civil law might be established according to the law moral, and therefore they ought continually to read and meditate therein: but if this be the duty of civil Magistrates to be always conversant in the word of God, how much more is it the duty of spiritual Pastors, whose office consisteth in the ministry thereof? The Prophet David in the first Psalm, when he would describe who are they that are blessed, includeth them in



this number, They that delight in the law of the Lord, and meditate therein day and night: so that every private man if he will be blessed, must continually meditate in the word of God, and have his whole delight and pleasure therein. (1 Tim. 4:13, Mal. 2:7, Josh. 1:8, Psal. 1:2)

The Minister therefore of necessity must teach the people, he must learn first; for it is not possible for him to teach another that which he himself hath not learned: which is a strong argument to prove the first part concerning his study, and reading of the word: which as we have proved to be the first point in his office, so will we, God willing, make manifest in this point of his duty, that he ought also to teach the same, and must not keep continually in his study filling himself with knowledge, till he become as full as a tun that will not sound when one knocketh upon it: but he must come out of his closet and preach the word of God and deliver forth wholesome doctrine, and so declare by feeding of the flock of Christ that they love their master Christ, whose servants they profess themselves to be. Let these deep learned Clerks, which brag and vaunt of such deep knowledge and abundance of learning, come forth and show the same, that we may bear record that it is so: for if they be the servants of the Lord, they must not have knowledge buried in themselves, but in their lips, that God's children may be taught thereby to attain unto salvation: for the Lord hath ordained the preaching of his word to be the only means, whereby he calleth together his elect; and to that end hath he given gifts to men, that by their labor the body of Jesus Christ might be perfected. He gave them not a talent to hide in the ground, but to occupy and increase the same: let them be assured therefore when our King shall come to call us to account, they shall as hardly be handled, for not occupying and increasing it to his glory, as they should, if they contemptuously throw the same away. The Minister therefore of God's word must not only be learned but must teach

also: for how can he be a minister of doctrine, but in this respect that he teacheth, executing y t office of his ministry? And this teaching is none other thing, but to preach the word of God sincerely, and purely with a care of the glory of God, and a desire of the salvation of our brethren: and secondly a reverent administration of the sacraments, according to the order and institution of our Savior Jesus Christ. Whosoever therefore shall not thus labor, is not the minister of the Lord, but a robber and spoiler of the people of God, which thrust themselves into the ministry, to fill their belly only with the sweat of other men's brows.

Now as it is necessary that the Minister over and besides reading and studying the word, must also teach the same; So he must take heed that he observe the right order of teaching, and must not devise doctrine of his own head. But if he will be a good builder, his foundation must be Jesus Christ, for another foundation can no man lay, and upon the same he must not build timber, hay, or stubble; whereby is meant all curious and unprofitable questions, and vain ostentation, but he must build gold, silver, and precious stone: by which precious substance is noted the most excellent and pure doctrine of the Gospel. And hereby shall you know his argument, if he beat down the stiff-necked and obstinate sinners, by threatening the rigor of the law, and the terrible judgments of God against the violators thereof: and on the contrary, by healing the bruised and wounded consciences with sin, with the sweet promises of the Gospel. If any man therefore shall labor to lay any other foundation, and use any other order of doctrine than this, he is an Antichrist, that is to say, against Christ, and no Christian.

He must teach them all the counsel of God, and keep nothing back, but whatsoever concerneth the salvation of his flock, that must he teach them: yea, so absolute must his doctrine be, that there must be

no point of the will of God, pertaining to the salvation of his children, but the Minister must be both able and diligent to declare. Therefore it is requisite and needful, that a rare gift of God be added, who only openeth their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, wherein the most holy will of God is revealed, and nothing that is needful for our salvation omitted: so that whosoever knoweth not the scriptures must needs err and be deceived: but the Minister who must declare all the counsel of God unto his children, must be very perfect therein. (Act. 20:27, Luk. 24:45, Matt. 22:29)

Moreover, he must improve, rebuke, exhort, and stir up, first, himself to a great care of doing his duty faithfully; then must he also by all means spur forward the godly, gently and lovingly, exhorting to hold fast the profession of their hope, in the assurance of faith, making their election more surely known unto themselves, by their godly life: and the rather to bring them forward herein with willingness and great readiness, he ought to set before them the wonderful mercy of the Lord God, showed towards them, in that he hath out of all the world elected them to be heirs of his kingdom, where they shall reign forever, in such unspeakable joys, as neither eye hath seen, ear hath heard, neither hath at any time entered into the heart of man. He must not be ashamed to rebuke and reprove such as will not be obedient to the Gospel, but remain still wallowing in their sin: and if that wholesome admonitions will not serve, he must not spare to thunder out the just judgments of God against them, until he hath beaten them down to hell with the terrors thereof, and after true repentance, to raise them up even to the heavens, and daily strengthen them more and more: so that to the impenitent he must pronounce damnation because he is still under the law, and under the curse of the law, and that he shall be sure to be tormented everlastingly, if he do not repent: but the penitent that labor with a burdened conscience for sin, and are wounded with grief

for the same, he shall comfort with blessed promises of the Gospel, declaring unto him, that he is not under the law, but under grace, and so build him into a lively faith in Jesus Christ. (2 Tim. 4:2)

This must the Minister do both openly and privately: for it is not sufficient that he preach the word of God openly in the pulpit, but he must go to every man's house, and there diligently instruct both him and his house in the fear of God: and not as the manner of some is, to go to folks houses to tell them a tale, and flatter them with fair words and glozing speeches, to the end they might fill their belly sat another man's table, or get some other benefit which he hunteth after. These be hirelings and time-servers which thrust themselves into the Ministry for lucre's sake, and because they would live idly, and take no pains for their living, but contrary to the commandment of God to live of other men's labors, these are not true Ministers, but such as the Prophet Malachi speaketh of in the first chapter of his Prophecy. The true Pastor must not have any such purpose: but as it is his duty to labor to win the souls of his people unto Jesus Christ, so must he use all means both publicly, and privately, which may further his ministry and make it profitable. We might prove out of diverse places of the word of God this his duty, both by the example of our Savior Christ, the perfect pattern for all men to follow, who did not only preach openly in the Synagogue, but privately in men's houses. The Apostles did so likewise, and S. Paul witnesseth the same in the 20 chapter of the Acts with these words: I kept back nothing that was profitable, but have showed you, and taught you openly and throughout every house. This is the duty of a good Pastor. The reason hereof is very good, because that which is spoken generally to all, is regarded of very few or none: so wonderfully hath Satan stopped men's ears and blinded their understanding, that either they will not hearken at all, or else hearing, will never apply the same to their consciences: and therefore to prevent this, the Minister shall not

stick to instruct them privately, when as they shall have no such occasion to apply that to other men that is spoken particularly to themselves. By this means, if the Lord hath appointed so, they may be brought home, or else have the testimony of his word in their consciences, even to make them inexcusable at the latter day. (Gen. 3:19, Luk. 10:38-39 & 19:9, Act. 20:20)

Furthermore, this must he not seldom, now and then once in a month, or every quarter do, he cannot so discharge his conscience before the Lord, who hath appointed him to feed his flock continually: but this cannot live and continue without food, no more can the soul live, unless it be continually fed and nourished with the milk of God's word. He must therefore feed them continually, as we read that careful shepherd S. Paul did, when he took his leave to depart from Ephesus, after he had committed the keeping of God's flock unto the Elders of the Church, and given them warning of false teachers which would be busy with them after his departure, and therefore exhorted them to watch. Remember (saith he) that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone, both night and day with tears. This diligence must be in Ministers to be evermore teaching, that if the Lord do not bless at one time, yet he may at another, they know not the time wherein the Lord will call any of his flock, he must therefore use the means diligently at all times, both in season and out of season, as S. Paul writeth to Timothy: I charge thee therefore before God, and before the Lord Jesus Christ, which shall judge the quick and the dead at that his appearing, and in his kingdom. Preach the word: be instant, in season and out of season, &c. It is no small matter to have such a charge laid upon him, as is here set down, and is given to all Ministers as well as to Timothy, that even as they will answer before the judgment seat of God, when the secrets of all hearts shall be opened, so they will preach the word instantly, purely and continually, both in season and out of season,

omitting no occasion that may be profitable. It is the manner of men to count it out of season, if it be not the Lord's Day, and therefore they will not let a little business of other days to hear the word of God preached, which tendeth to their welfare. The Ministers must labor for their sakes both out of season and in season: but if they be more mindful of their worldly pleasures or business, than of the salvation of their souls, their blood shall be upon their own head. (Act. 20:31, 2 Tim. 4:1-2)

But when the Minister hath thus studied the word diligently, preached the word purely, declaring the counsel of God, exhorted both gently and sharply, labored to win men's souls both openly and privately, and that very carefully as well out of season as in season, to what end will all this come? Paul may plant, Apollo also water, but it is God that must give the increase. Though the Minister laboreth never so earnestly, doing his duty absolutely, yet if God doth not bless and increase the same, all is in vain. As therefore the Minister is the mouth of God to speak unto the people, so must he be the people's mouth, and pray unto the Lord both for himself and for them, that the Lord will bless him and them, and grant that the ministry of his word may be profitable both to himself and to them, and that the glory of God may be increased by the same. Thus we read our Savior did, who being very God as well as man, and had power of himself to sanctify the ears and hearts of them which heard him, and to make his preaching profitable in such measure as himself listed, yet for an example to all other which should come after, he prayed to his father both for himself and us. S. Paul also in all his Epistles testifieth how continually he maketh mention of them in his prayers. The Ministers therefore must pray, and that without ceasing, as well privately by himself, as openly in the congregation: and this promise hath our Savior made, that whatsoever we shall ask

the father in his name shall be granted unto us. (1 Cor. 3:6, Duet. 10:8, Num. 6:23, Psal. 118:26, Joh. 17, Rom. 1:9, 2 Tim. 1:3)

In administering the Sacraments he must also be very circumspect, and although children are to be received into the Church by Baptism, and not to be denied, because the promises do as well pertain unto them, as unto the aged; yet are they to be baptized in the faith of the parents; for there is no promise made to the infidels. The Minister therefore must require an account of this faith of such as bring children to be baptized, least otherwise he seal to a blank, and so profane the Sacrament, which appertaineth to none but to the faithful. Furthermore he must not admit all men that come rashly to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, for it is no small matter: but first they must eat it by faith out of the word of God, and when he hath so done, the Minister shall administer to him the outward seals of bread and wine, to confirm and strengthen his faith.

The third point of the Ministers is; He must live a godly life, showing himself an example to all his flock, least the word of God be slandered through his evil behavior: for although he preach never so good doctrine, yet if his life be wicked, and contrary to his doctrine, such is the subtilty of Satan, who thereby will bring the Gospel into contempt, and be counted a vain thing of men, because the Minister teacheth one thing, and doth another: this were a grievous and intolerable matter, that the Minister should open the mouths of the wicked to blaspheme the Lord God and his most holy word, which is the power of God unto salvation. Therefore S. Paul together with pure doctrine giveth it in charge to Titus, in all things show thyself an ensample of good works with uncorrupt doctrine, with gravity, integrity, and with the wholesome word which cannot be condemned, that he which withstandeth, may be ashamed, having nothing of you to speak evil of. The Apostle law no small occasion to

use so weighty an admonition, that above all other things join to pure doctrine a godly life, yea such an ensample of gravity, integrity, and all other good works agreeable to the most wholesome word which no man is able in any respect to reprove, that the contemptuous and despiteful adversary against the truth may be ashamed to open their mouths, when as they are not able to accuse the Minister of any ungodliness; for the word itself is so perfect and absolute in all respects, that no man can find fault thereat: but if the Minister contrary to the word doth live wickedly and ungodly, he doth not only purchase evil report unto himself, but also giveth occasion unto the enemies and despisers of the truth most wickedly to slander the most precious Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Minister must therefore live a godly and unblameable life, even for an example of well doing to all his flock. (Titus 2:7-8)

Again the spirit of God in that he saith, they must watch over men's souls, declareth a wonderful care, that the Minister ought to have over his own soul: for if he be bound to watch over other men's souls to the end he may be saved and not perish, if in the meantime he letteth his own perish, what shall he get? Truly it will no whit profit him though all his flock be saved, if he himself be condemned. It is manifest in the first Epistle to the Corinthians and 6. Chapter, that no unrighteous person shall inherit the kingdom of heaven. Therefore the Minister must of necessity (according to the admonition of S. Peter) give diligence to make his calling and election sure by his godly life and good works as well as other, if he will approve himself the child of God, and heir of everlasting life. It were a vain thing to flatter himself in sin, because of his office, and think that God will deal the more mercifully with him therefore; when as it is most certain, that as the salvation of mankind cometh by the merits of one which is Jesus Christ, so is there but one mean for man to attain thereunto, that is, by a true and lively faith in Jesus



Christ; and whosoever cannot assure himself in this life by the trial of his faith, that he is the child of God, although he can persuade and flatter himself never so much with other vain hope, all is to no purpose: for he may be assured whatsoever he be either Minister or other, that he shall never taste of the joys laid up for the children of God. In the 20 of the Acts, where S. Paul giving charge of the Church and flock of God's people unto the overseers thereof, giveth this charge first: Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, whereof the holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with that his own blood. The Minister must watch over the souls of his flock, but first, over his own, for he that cannot keep his own soul, can much less keep the souls of others: he that cannot govern himself, cannot rule another. The Minister must watch over the souls of his flock, so carefully and warily feeding them with wholesome and necessary doctrine, and so hungering after the salvation of all, that he must not suffer one through his default to perish: therefore above all it is requisite that he keep his own very sure. (1 Cor. 6:9, 2 Pet. 1:10, Act. 20:28)

Then when he preacheth damnation unto the obstinate, and such as remain in their sins, thundering out the judgments of God against them because they will not repent, by that means to beat them down, and bring them to a sight of their misery, he must be assured that the same belongeth not to himself. Again, when he preacheth of election and remission of sins, by the merits of Jesus Christ, he must have an assured and infallible testimony to his own conscience, that he is an elect vessel of the Lord, that he is redeemed by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and that he shall enjoy all the promises of the Gospel, as all other children of God: if he be not assured hereof, his case is worse than all other men's; for in preaching condemnation to others, he condemneth himself, and in offering the kingdom of heaven to others, he quite excludeth himself: so that he which helpeth other out

of an hole, falleth himself so deep into the same, that it is not possible for any man to help him out.

Last of all, the Minister must not only read and study the word of God, preach the same purely, by exhorting, and all other means that may be profitable, using them both openly and privately, continually in season, and out of season, praying also for his flock, that his Ministry may be profitable unto them, and setting himself an ensample of all godliness unto them, carefully watching over their souls; but he must also love them so dearly, that his own life must not be dear unto him for their sake. Which tender and loving affection was in that good child of God Saint Paul, as it is manifest in his Epistle to the Thessalonians, where he writeth in this sort. Neither sought we praise of men, neither of you, nor of others, when we might have been chargeable, as the Apostles of Christ: but we were gentle among you, even as a Nourse that cherisheth her children. Thus being affectioned towards you, our good will was to have dealt unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also your own souls, because ye were dear unto us. So singular love had he towards them, that they were dearer unto him then his life; this affection did he not bear to them only, but to all the elect children of God, and suffered all things for the elects sake, that they might also attain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. The reason thereof is, because wheresoever the Gospel is sincerely and purely taught, there be always adversaries seeking the overthrow thereof, by persecuting such as profess the same, to the great dismay of the children of God, who so soon as they take upon them the profession of Jesus Christ in truth with a good conscience, are straightway resisted with great combats of affliction, which were able to make them forsake the faith of Jesus Christ, and the profession of the Gospel, if the Lord should not hold them upright in this distress. The Apostle therefore whom the holy Ghost hath filled with all wisdom,

knowing that the cross was the greatest hindrance of the Gospel that could be, and also that where the Gospel was truly professed, there the cross would not be absent, because by it the Lord bringeth his children into glory, of a great desire that he had to the edification of the Church of Jesus Christ: willingly suffered all kind of afflictions, thereby to confirm and strengthen the faith of God's children, and did rejoice in that he suffered for the Churches sake, for their commodity, in that by his example the Lord did not only work in them a greater credence and belief in the Gospel, but such an earnest zeal also, that they were ready and willing to suffer all manner of afflictions for the same, and that with great joy. Whereas (if the Apostle, who preached unto them this glad tidings,) should have shrunk from the testimony of his doctrine, when any afflictions were laid upon him for the same, the people which were guided by him, the spirit of God so providing, would have fallen away from the truth, and even have hardened their hearts against it. But this child of God was so ready to confirm the faith of God's people by these means, when it was told him of a Prophet called Agabus, that he should be bound at Jerusalem, and delivered into the hands of Gentiles, he being entreated of the brethren that he would not go up, who even with tears besought the same. Then Paul answered and said, what do ye weeping and breaking mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. This affection must be in every good Minister toward their flock, that for their souls sake he shall be ready to suffer all things, yea even to give his life for the confirmation of his doctrine, the strengthening of their faith, and the glory of God. Our Savior Christ also that good shepherd refused not to give his life for his sheep: and truly in that place of Saint John he doth notably declare the difference between the good shepherd and the hireling. I am (saith he) that good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep: but a hireling, and he which is not the shepherd, neither his sheep are his

own, seeth the wolf coming, and he leaveth his sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth them. So the hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling and careth not for the sheep. This place teacheth us plainly that the Ministers of God's word, must not be hirelings, such as have no care of their flock, but respect their own profit only: and in time of danger, they will forsake them, howsoever before they have fed their flock: but the true Ministers must not be such; they must not measure their duty and affection towards their flock according to their profit, but he must know that he is placed over them to watch over their souls, to defend them from the devil that ravening wolf, by the wholesome word of God: and not to watch for his own gain. And hereby shall he be known, if in time of danger he stand by his flock and will not forsake them: nay rather than that they should perish, he will give his life for their sake: for if this affection be not in them, the case is very manifest, that they are not good shepherds, but hirelings. For the true understanding of this point we will, consider when the Ministers may fly; for if we should deny that they might not fly at any time, we should not say truth: for our Savior Christ hath bidden that when we are persecuted in one city, we should fly into another. It is manifest also that our Savior Christ himself fled, as when the Jews took up stones to cast at him, he hid himself and went out of the temple: and he passed through the midst of them all, and so went his way. And in the tenth chapter of John we read, that when they went about to take him, he escaped out of their hands, and went his way beyond Jordan: yet afterward when the time appointed, wherein he should suffer, was come, he fled not. Saint Paul also and Barnabas, as it appeareth in the fourteenth of the Acts, being at Iconium, when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles and of the Jews with their rulers, to do them violence and to stone them, they being aware of it fled unto Lystra, and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia. Yet as I declared before out of the one and twenty of the Acts, at another time Paul went willingly

up to Jerusalem to lay down his life for the glory of God. So that if we should deny, that we might not fly at any time, we should deny the words of Christ, who biddeth us fly in time of persecution: and again if we should plainly say that they might fly, we should put no difference between the true Minister and the hireling. This therefore must we note, if so be that the people over whom he is placed, shall be in danger to be seduced by false teachers from that most true and wholesome doctrine of Jesus Christ, having received as yet but a taste as it were thereof and are not grounded; he must not in any case fly and give place, no though it cost him his life: for it were a dangerous case to fly then, because that his constancy in sealing his doctrine with his blood, may wonderfully confirm the faith of his flock and draw them forward by his example, rather to die for the profession of Jesus Christ, than to deny him: whereas on the contrary, if he should fly, they could not but fall from the truth, being not grounded therein, when as they see their pastor to hide himself. But when this affection and love is in the Minister to consider that he is betrothed to Jesus Christ to defend his spouse and Church from his adversaries, and to bring them as it were by the hand unto the bridegroom, of which he hath so singular a care that he will never forsake them, although by earnest study he should even shorten his life, and all his Physicians in the world should tell him plainly that it will end his days if he doth not give over the same: yet (I say) when he hath such a love and affection to his people, whose souls he laboreth to feed and nourish with the word of God, that he will resign his life into the hands of God, and give over himself unto his providence, and rather to end his days with laboring and studying for his flocks sake, than by withdrawing and saving his own life to suffer them to want: then no doubt the Lord by his holy spirit shall teach him, when he may without danger to his flock, even with all their consents depart and save his life from the hands of his adversaries. As we see by the examples of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, who

sometimes fled and saved their lives: and otherwhile abode by it and suffered all things patiently. So will he teach his true and faithful Ministers, when it is good to fly, and when not. We have known many godly Ministers which have spent their time in studying and teaching their flocks, and have rather desired their salvation than their own lives. All these things observed, the Minister shall yield a joyful account unto the Lord, and stir up his people to be thankful unto the Lord, which hath showed them such mercy, as to place over them so loving and careful a Minister, which so hungereth and thirsteth after their salvation, that he esteemeth his own life less than it. (1 Thess. 2:6-8, 2 Tim. 2:10, Col. 1:24, Act. 21:10-13, Joh. 12:11-13, Matt. 10:23, Joh. 8:59, Joh. 10:39-40, Act. 14:5-6,

The second part concerning the duty of the people to their Minister.

Now we have declared the duty of Ministers, it followeth that we show next the duty of the people unto their Ministers, which is the second part of our division: and truly this declaration of the Ministers duty doth very manifestly show the other: for if the Minister be bound to apply his study, and to exercise himself diligently in reading; and when he hath studied, to come forth and teach the people all things necessary for their salvation; and moreover must set himself a lively pattern of godly conversation for them to follow, letting no means unassayed, whereby he may beget their souls unto God, neither in life nor doctrine; but must so carefully watch over their souls, that rather than they should perish he must give his life for them: what shall the people then do unto him for his entire love and affection? The holy Ghost telleth us in these words: Obey them, and submit yourselves. So that obedience is the duty of the people to their Minister. The reason hereof is very good, seeing the case so standeth that the Minister must labor to bring then home to Jesus Christ by the Gospel, which is the power of

God unto salvation: if the people notwithstanding his pains will remain obstinate, to what end will his labor come? All will be in vain, the people shall not profit by it, and himself shall be grieved and molested with sorrow to see their disobedience. The people therefore must be obedient unto their Ministers which labor for their profit, which is a great grace of God who worketh all this in all creatures, when he hath given the people obedient hearts to be governed by his word, for which end he hath appointed the Ministers thereof. And as it is a grievous and the most dangerous thing to be obedient to such superiors as shall lead us out of the way into destruction, whom our Savior Christ calleth blind guides, which together with the people fall into the pit: so it is on the contrary the greatest virtue to become obedient to the true Pastors and Ministers of the word of God. It hath been evermore the charge that the Apostles laid upon the children of God, of which thing S. Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians, as in diverse other places requireth, after that he hath declared the great humility of Jesus Christ, in that he became obedient unto the death of the cross, thereupon taketh occasion of his exhortation: Wherefore (my beloved) as ye have always obeyed me, not as in my presence only, but now much more in mine absence, so make an end of your salvation with fear and trembling. It appeareth by his words, that the Philippians to whom he wrote had been very obedient unto his ministry from that time, wherein it pleased God to touch their heart with a care of their salvation by his preaching; yea so obedient were they, that not only in his presence among them, they used great submission unto his doctrine, but much more in his absence they declared their dutifulness, in that with great ease they labored to make it profitable by practicing the same in their life and conversation: whereby it may seem that the Apostle needed not to have exhorted them unto this duty of obedience, being already so forward and prone thereunto: but we may hereby learn how needful a thing it is that the people be obedient, and that in no small measure, but so far

forth as they shall be able to frame their lives according to the word of God in all points, which he preacheth unto them sincerely and purely to the feeding of their souls unto eternal life, which they can never obtain unless they become obedient to be taught and instructed at the Ministers hand by the most pure word of God, which with the operation of the holy Ghost worketh faith in the children of God, whereby they apprehend the merits of Jesus Christ, and have his righteousness, obedience, and holiness imputed unto them of the free grace and mercy of God, as surely as if in their own persons they had wrought it, and so made heirs of the kingdom which Christ by his blood hath purchased for them. It is necessary that so many as desire to be saved, be obedient unto the Minister, whom God hath placed over them as his instrument to bring them to his heavenly kingdom, as before I have declared unto you. And the rather to stir them up unto a continual obedience he addeth this: Make an end of your own salvation with fear and trembling: As if he should say, Beloved brethren, as you have hitherto submitted yourselves to be reformed by the most glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, and have obeyed us in the Lord to the increasing of your faith, and the assurance of your salvation: so I beseech you to continue, and even with fear and trembling make an end of your salvation: for if you should wax obstinate in the end, and become disobedient to those that labor in the Lord for your behoove, I tell you truly all your former obedience shall no whit profit you, nay your end shall be worse; be lowly therefore and reverence your Teachers in the Lord that you may with great humility, as it becometh the children of God, receive the promises. And least the adversaries should persuade, that this your obedience and willing following of the Gospel hath come unto you of your own nature, that by that means he may draw you to disobey the Ministers of God, whom you cannot disobey but you must also despise the word and him that sent them, and so fall from all grace: I tell you therefore plainly, that it never came of yourselves,



for it is God that worketh in you both the will and the deed; and that not of your desert, but of his own good pleasure. We see then that the people must obey their Minister, and give diligent heed to be taught by them the whole counsel of the Lord concerning the salvation of their souls: which thing also our Savior Christ doth manifest in the tenth of John: My sheep (saith he) hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, &c. Our Savior Christ giveth us a notable token here to know the children of God by, and that is, If they hear his voice and follow him: for they that will not be obedient unto him are none of his, neither yet partakers of those benefits which he hath purchased for his. But peradventure some will say: It is true, that if a man will not obey the voice of Jesus Christ he is not for him: but where is Jesus Christ that we may hear him and obey him? O brother take heed how thou seekest such cavillations to maintain thine obstinacy, for thou canst not so shake of thy duty to thy Minister: but if thou confess it thy duty to be obedient unto Jesus Christ, I tell thee plainly thou oughtest no less to obey the Minister in that he bringeth the message of Christ, than if himself were present. For he being the very Truth itself hath said plainly on the Ministers behalf: He that heareth you heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me. What a heinous thing were it to refuse the Minister and to be disobedient unto them, when the case standeth so that the disobeying of them is not only a contempt of Christ, but also of God the Father, who is a severe judge to be revenged of all his enemies? But they that be of the sheepfold of Jesus Christ will be obedient to their shepherd, even as willingly as the sheep are. The reason hereof is drawn from the nature of sheep, which is the simplest of all creatures to shift for itself, and yet more profitable than any other cattle, when one of them is strayed out of the way, it is caught in the brambles and briers ready to be lost in every pit or hole, yea subject to a thousand dangers, and cannot help itself in the least of them: and when the

shepherd hath fetched her home, how obedient is she, and glad to be guided by him for fear of falling into the like danger: so is it required of the children of God, that they be obedient as sheep; yea if he were the wisest or mightiest in the world, he must not take scorn to become as simple as a sheep, if he will enter into the kingdom of heaven: for before such time as the Lord by his instrument the Minister doth bring them home into the sheepfold of Jesus Christ, they wander in innumerable dangers, and are no more able to deliver themselves out of them, then the silly sheep is to save herself from the wolf: but when they are brought home, then they see their infirmity, and what great need they have of a shepherd to preserve and help them out of so many perils, which tend to the destruction both of body and soul, then they gladly obey him which is careful to guide them in the way of salvation, with the most holy word of God, and to refresh their hungry souls with that heavenly food and milk. The holy Ghost saith, that they must be born again, and that not of mortal seed, but of the immortal seed of the word of God, who liveth and endureth forever. And therefore it is necessary that they be obedient unto their spiritual father which hath begotten them with the word of God, that he may joyfully extend a fatherly affection towards them: which thing the Apostle S. Peter exhorteth them unto: As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby. The Apostle here sheweth a familiar reason why they should be obedient, they be as new born babes. We see that little children are not able to guide themselves, no not to feed themselves at the first, but must be guided and nourished by the help of their parents, until they be able to shift for themselves: So must the children of God be guided and nourished by the word of God, that they may grow from strength to strength, from faith to faith, till they come to a perfect age in Christ. Therefore it is necessary that the people be obedient unto the Minister, to whom the Lord hath given his word to distribute unto his children, and to increase and

strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ. (Phili. 2:12, Joh. 10:27, Luk. 10:16, 1 Pet. 1:33, 1 Pet. 2:2)

But some will say, is this given to the Ministers only? What if they teach their own devises, and not the pure word of God, and make us believe we are in an happy case, when we are in most misery, and yet desire to be directed in the true pathway unto salvation? I answer, that you must therefore try the doctrine which he bringeth by the touchstone of God's word, and see that it accord therewith: for in that the Lord giveth the understanding and interpreting of the scriptures unto the ministers, it is not without great cause that he doth it, when as he appointeth them by the power of his word, as the means without which they can do nothing, to bring together his children, yea, by the sharp sword of the word to pierce their souls and consciences to the utter slaying of sin, and with the excellent virtue of the same word to heal them again: which thing if the Ministers for their part shall not faithfully execute in such order as before I entreated of, speaking of the duty of Ministers, even that gift the Lord will so straightly call to account, that he shall bear the danger of every soul that hath perished through his default. Yet shall not the people be hereby discharged: for they must try his doctrine (as I said before) and take heed that they be not seduced; for if they be, they shall die in their own sins. If any will say that he is ignorant, truly I say, he is in a dangerous case; but if God hath showed him such mercy as to make him desirous to be instructed in the right way to salvation, let him crave knowledge at the Lord's hand, never cease, but be importunate upon the Lord in craving his holy spirit, to work in him all spiritual grace, to work in him true Faith: and to assure him of his salvation, all other worldly respects set aside: and let him use great diligence in harkening to the word of God, and be obedient unto the same. Moreover, let him withdraw himself from all evil company, and frequent the company of the godly, and no doubt but

the Lord will strengthen him to work his will, whereby he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or not, according to the rule which our Savior Christ giveth us to know it by, He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, the same is true: and such must we obey in the Lord. Now we see as it is our duty to obey the true Minister, and such as carefully watch over our souls, with the most wholesome word of God: so must we beware that we suffer not ourselves to be seduced by false teachers; and therefore we must prove their doctrine by the word of God. But last of all, if any shall preach Jesus Christ sincerely and purely, having some infirmity, we must not therefore reject him, but obey him for the truth sake; and consider that we are all subject to infirmities, and that to someone more than another: and therefore it is our duty Christian like to admonish him thereof; and no doubt, if he be the servant of God he will give him more strength against the same. (Joh. 7:17-18)

Besides this obedience, the duty of the people toward their Minister must extend further, and they must also reverence him, and give him honor, else it is most certain that obedience cannot take place: which we may see by the example of the woman of Samaria, who notwithstanding the great courtesy of our Savior Christ in telling her what he was, and what he could do for her, yet would she not obey him at the first, but tell to taunting and overthwarting of him too unreverently; but when he had touched her conscience and laid open her wickedness, so that she saw plainly he was another manner of man than she took him for, then she began to reverence him, and said, O sir, I see that thou art a Prophet, and then she obeyed him, and desired to learn of him: so, before she obeyed, she conceived a reverence of him, and accounted of him as a Prophet. It is also manifest in the 2. of the Acts, when as the wonderful miracle could not bring the people to obey the Apostles, yet afterward when Peter

with his sharp sermon had touched their hearts in such sort that they felt the power that God had given them, they began to reverence them, and whereas before they were not ashamed to say that they were drunken with new wine, now they cried out, Men and brethren what shall we do? Which words do plainly declare what a reverent opinion they have conceived of them, and after that they became obedient unto them. Common experience showeth us the same, for which of you will commit your matter to any Lawyer, except you have a reverent opinion of him, that he can pleasure you, and a sure trust that he will do the best he can for the furtherance of your cause? Likewise in Physic there is no man that will commit his life into the Physicians hand, unless he be first persuaded that he can by the help of God ease his grief, and that he is willing also to do what lieth in him: except (I say) a man be thus persuaded of the Physician he will not commit himself into his hands, nor yet obey those orders that he shall prescribe: so is it in this, the people must be obedient to the Minister, therefore they must reverence him, or else it is not possible that they should obey him. The Apostle S Paul doth notably amplify the honor due to the true and faithful Ministers. The Elders that rule well (saith he) let them be had in double honor, specially they which labor in the word and doctrine, as if he should say, let those Elders which are appointed to watch and look to the manners and behavior of the children of God, if they execute this charge faithfully, be had in double honor: but above all, let the faithful Ministers, such as labor in the word, be honored: for why? The other are overseers of your outward behavior, but these have another manner of office, they watch over your souls, which tendeth to the salvation both of body and soul. (Joh. 4, Act. 1, 1 Tim. 5:7)

Moreover, it is requisite that they also fear the Minister, or else can they in no ease reverence and honor him: for where fear is not, all honor is absent, and so consequently all duty extinguished. And this

fear must not be a feigned and counterfeited fear: but when he shall come before the Minister to ask him any question, he must consider that he cometh to talk with the messenger of the Lord, whom he ought to hear as well as if the Lord himself were present. For this is most certain, where a faithful Minister is that doth sincerely and purely preach the word, it is all one as if the Lord himself dwelt personally among us: and his own self hath verified the same, saying: He that heareth you, heareth me. And therefore it behooveth us to give a proof of our fear, love and obedience towards the Lord, by receiving his word with such fear and reverence as beseemeth his subjects, although the same proceed out of a mortal man's mouth. It is a common thing among us, the Ambassador of a Prince is received with great honor and reverence, yea his message is to be received as undoubtedly, as if the King were present himself, yea they that shall despise his authority shall be as heinously accounted of, as if they resisted and rebelled against the Kings own person: And shall the Ambassadors of the living God, who is King of all Kings, be received less worthily than the other, whose authority is both greater and the message weightier? Truly whosoever shall take scorn to yield this duty of fear and reverence unto the Minister, let him be assured that he scorneth not him, but the Lord that sent him. But some will object: what shall we make a God of our Minister, and is he so to be feared as you say? I answer thee, that I mean nothing less, nay I hold him accursed that shall challenge such dignity unto himself. But this fear must ye yield not to the person, but to his office which is by the word of God, to remit your sins, and to give you assurance that they are washed away by the blood of Christ, if you be truly penitent for them; and that you are made heirs of the kingdom of heaven, whereof you need not to doubt. On the contrary, if you be not penitent, by his office he hath authority to bind sins here on earth justly to everlasting condemnation, which the unpenitent may be as sure to suffer as they see the light of the day: fear him therefore (I

say) not as he is a man, but as the Minister of God. With what a reverend fear did the Galatians receive Paul? His own self doth report, that they received him as an Angel of God, yea more than so, they received him as Jesus Christ himself. And that was not for the excellency of his person, which he testifieth was simple, base, vile: and to all the world contemptible, yea and subject to all infirmities: but they received him with such fear and reverence for that excellent message which he brought unto them, for those glad tidings which he published among them, and for that he was a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the power of God to save all the believers. Thus reverently must all God's children fear their Minister, even for the worthiness of his office and ministry: for if they should not fear him, they could not in any case obey the word, when he doth sharply reprove them for their sins: but even as a light wife so long as her husband pleaseth her, so long and no longer will she be obedient unto him; for if he show a sharp countenance of very love to drive her from some lewd conditions, then will she begin to scorn, to fret and chafe, and instead of obeying him, she will deadly hate him and despise him: so is it with the people, if they stand not in fear of the authority which God hath given him, they will obey him no longer than he preacheth pleasant things: for when he shall touch their consciences with threatening the judgments of God against their sin, then can they not abide him, but harden their hearts not against him, but against the Lord which hath sent him, and so fall away to their utter destruction: the children of God must therefore fear their Minister, and be obedient to the word of truth which he bringeth unto them. (Luk. 10:16, Gal. 4:14)

When the people are come thus far, that they will willingly obey the Minister, and that with fear and reverence submit themselves to be guided by the pure word of God, they must show further their dutifulness towards him, and must also be ready to do for him

whatsoever lieth in their power: which thing S. Paul earnestly desireth of the Thessalonians: We beseech you brethren, that ye acknowledge them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, that you have them in singular love for their works sake. Where the holy Ghost sheweth a reason why they should acknowledge their Ministers which carefully and faithfully do execute their office, which is for their works sake; and his exhortation is in effect thus much: Brethren, this one thing do I heartily crave at your hands, that you be not so oblivious as to forget those which labor among you in the Lord, and are by his appointment even of great mercy towards you, placed over you to the end they may admonish you of your sins, and to stir you up by the word of God to a more zeal of the glory of God, and to walk more circumspectly before him: I beseech you (I say) be not forgetful of them, but have them in a singular love; yea let nothing be dearer unto you than such, for this work sake which they have taken in hand; for I tell you truly there is no labor under the Sun so profitable unto you as this, which bringeth not store of corruptible silver and gold, not large kingdoms and empires of this world which shall perish and come to an end: but this profit cometh of their labor, even the salvation of your souls, such a treasure as all the world, no not a thousand worlds are comparable unto it: for this cause love them. (1 Thess. 5:12-13)

Besides this, it is their duty also to provide for him all things necessary, for that he may have to supply his want at their hands, as we may by diverse places of the Scripture prove: In the 6, to the Galatians, the Apostle giveth this commandment: Let him that is taught in the word make him that hath taught him partaker of all his goods. The reason is very good: if the schoolmaster taketh pains in teaching, the scholars owe to him other necessities. Such is the subtlety of Satan, which rageth and stormeth at the Gospel of Jesus



Christ, the reaching whereof he seeth is the decaying of his kingdom, when as by no other means he can overthrow the same, yet doth he mightily heave at it by drawing the people's hearts from nourishing and maintaining the Preachers thereof, that they being oppressed with penury, might be constrained to forsake their ministry. So that it is no marvel though the Apostle giveth so straight a charge thereof, seeing so great danger might ensue. If they sow unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if they reap of you carnal things? If the Ministers give unto the people gold, is it much for them to give chaff again? Yet there is a greater difference between that, that the Minister distributeth among the people, and that which he receiveth of them, than is between gold and chaff. For he giveth unto them by the preaching of the word the kingdom of heaven: what treasure may be compared unto it? And will not they give him of their worldly commodities to maintain his living? Truly it were a token of too too much infidelity, and a manifest argument that we are not Christians, but very Heathen, if we should refuse to nourish the Minister that laboreth for our profit. It is manifest in the law that the Priests which waited on the Altar, lived of the Altar: Even so hath the Lord appointed that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. Natural reason teacheth us this, and yet is it written in the Scripture also, that no man goeth on warfare at any time of his own cost, for the soldier receiveth his stipend. Neither doth any man plant a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof, for to that end doth he plant it, because he would enjoy the fruit. And again, No man keepeth a flock and eateth not of the milk thereof. But if the case standeth so in earthly matters, that every man enjoyeth the fruit of his labor, and is maintained by the same; how much more ought the Ministers and Pastors live of their flock, to whom they are so profitable, and for whose sake they take such pains? If therefore you will have such an one placed over you, that shall refuse no pains in studying night and day, in preaching the word in season and out of

season, in exhorting and trying all means to do you good; and that shall love you so tenderly that his own life shall not be dear unto him for your sake: you must know it is your duty to provide all things necessary for him, for you must not make him your slave, but you must so minister unto him, that he may give himself wholly unto the faithful doing of his duty, that he may not be drawn away with other cares from the same. If the Lord hath commanded not to muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn, much less to withhold the Minister from things necessary to preserve his life. The laborer is worthy of his wages. How wonderfully forward were the Galatians in fulfilling of this duty, when as they would not have refused to pull out their eyes, if it had been possible, and have given them to the Apostle? Which words although they be of supererogation, yet do they express such love and readiness in administering of their worldly commodities, that they would have plucked out their own eyes and given them unto him also, if by that means they might have pleased him. Truly there is good cause why they should thus love and provide for their Minister which laboreth faithfully: for if the child cannot recompense the pains and kindness of his parents in bringing him into this world, and providing things necessary for his education; neither the scholar the pains of his master, which hath garnished his breast with wisdom and knowledge: much less can the child of God recompense his spiritual father who hath begotten him unto the Lord. Refuse not them to bestow part of thy worldly commodities upon him, that hath brought thee such heavenly treasure, without the which thy estate were more miserable than the condition of brute beasts. But because it may seem very much to the worldly minded man, who respecteth nothing but temporal things, to think that he must be so liberal toward his Minister, as to provide him all things that he hath need of (although the children of God which are already called, and have tasted how sweet the Lord hath been to them by the Ministers means, whom the Lord hath used as

an instrument to bring them home, will not think it much to do their duty, and that very liberally in providing for their Pastor) you shall understand in what sort you ought to provide for him. First, you must see that he hath sufficient for to find himself and his family necessary food and apparel for their bodies. Secondly, you must give him wherewith to keep hospitality, that he may be able honestly and decently to entertain strangers which come unto him to ask his counsel in matters of conscience concerning their faith and salvation. Thirdly, you must provide him books for his study, and all such as may enrich his knowledge, whereby he may the better be able to answer and help all their doubts which come to him. Thus must you provide for him that he may not be troubled with any cares that may with draw him or hinder him in doing of his duty. And whereas the Apostle saith, make him partaker of all your goods, it is nothing less meant than that your goods should be at his pleasure, or that you should make him abound in superfluity, wherewith he should be filled until he burst as they say, there is no such thing, but to provide for him for those causes aforesaid. (Gal. 6:6, 1 Cor. 9:11, Deut. 18, 1 Cor. 9:14, Deut. 25:4, Matt. 10:10, Gal. 4:15)

Here may they ask a question, whether they ought to pay tithe unto such Ministers as be wicked livers, because we have spoken only of the duty which they owe unto the true Ministers and faithful laborers in the Lord's business. You shall therefore understand, though he be a wicked liver, if he teach true doctrine, hold nothing back from him, but let him have his duty, that if it shall please the Lord to convert him from his wickedness, he may love you the more dearly, and have the more care over you: but if he teach false doctrine, not the word of God purely, but his own brains, yet because you have a conscience of disturbing the common weal, and seek rather peace than trouble, let him have his duty, that your diligence in doing your duty may move him to a more care of his; or else if the Lord doth not give him that

grace, yet thereby shall you leave a testimony in his conscience to his condemnation. Moreover where any such Ministers be placed over the people, as the wicked livers, false teachers, or dumb dogs, it is most certain that the Lord hath set them even to plague the people for their sins.

Last of all, the people must pray continually both for themselves and for their Minister, that the Lord may bestow upon him the perfect gifts of prophesying, and upon us obedient hearts to the word, that the Lord may be glorified in our life and conversation, which thing S. Paul desireth in his Epistles, as in the 4 Chapter to the Colossians, Continue (saith he) in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Pray also for us, that God may open unto us the door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, that I may utter it as becometh me to speak. The like thing doth he require in the 6, to the Ephesians. In both which places the Apostle noteth how needful a thing it is for the people to pray not only for themselves, but for their Minister also, for that the Lord God giveth his gifts to none but them which faithfully call upon him, and continually crave the same at his hand. It behooveth the people therefore to pray for their Minister, that the Lord will pour upon him the abundance of his spirit, which may open unto him the mysteries of his most holy word, that he may be able to teach them all the counsel of the Lord. In the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, and 3 Chapter, he useth these words, Furthermore brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free passage, and be glorified even as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men, for all men have not faith. Here doth the Apostle give charge also that the congregation do pray for the flourishing of the Gospel, and the faithful Ministers thereof, that the word might so much be preached, and the Church of Christ thereby increased, he willet them to pray for the quiet estate of the Ministers, that the Lord would deliver them

out of the hands of their adversaries, which seek not so much the destruction of the Ministers, but the overthrow of the Gospel, because they have not faith to become partakers of the promises thereof, which is only the gift of God unto his children which shall be saved: for if that all men should be saved, all should have faith, but because all cannot be saved, all cannot have faith. Then we see a notable mean to attain those things which are profitable for us, even by prayer. If therefore you desire such a Pastor as shall love you, and you him again, pray unto the Lord for such a one. If you would have him able to teach you, and yourselves made obedient to his doctrine, pray heartily. If you would have him long, pray unto the Lord to continue him among you, and to give him favor in the eyes of the Magistrates, and to defend him from all wicked adversaries, that ye may live peaceably together, and be built up into a strong faith by the word of God without any perturbation. Now as it is the duty of the whole congregation generally to pray together with one consent both for themselves, their Minister, Prince, Magistrates, and all other people: so it is every man's duty particularly at home at his own house to pray for them, and that not once or twice, now and then, very seldom, but daily, yea continually. Thus shall both the Minister and the people do their duty to their wonderful comfort, and glory. (Col. 4:3-4, 2 Thess. 3:1-2)

The third part concerning the fruits that come of the well doing of these duties, both to the Minister and the people.

These duties thus performed bring wonderful commodity: And first of all, if the Minister do his duty in preaching, exhorting, living, praying, and watching over his flock with that care of the glory of God, and that desire of the salvation of his people that he ought, this profit shall he have; The Lord will bless his labor, and he shall make an acceptable and joyful account, and this which far passeth all the

rest, he shall save his own soul, and because he hath been a faithful servant over a little, the Lord will make him his governor over a great deal even in his kingdom of blessedness. (Luk. 19:17)

If the people do their duty unto the Minister in obeying, reverencing him, fearing him, loving and providing all things for him, and last of all in praying faithfully for him, they shall make him a glad man, and stir him up with great joy to do for them all that he can, and even in great afflictions the remembrance of their dutifulness and constant faith shall minister abundance of consolation, that he shall be forced to say with the Apostle Paul, What thanks can we recompense to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we rejoice before the Lord for your sake? Thus shall they fill him with joy, and so win his heart, that he had a thousand lives, he would gladly give them for their sakes to do them good; and moreover, the Lord will bless him in great measure for their sake, with knowledge, that he may be the more profitable unto them, and in the end their souls shall be saved, which is an unspeakable treasure far passing all other things. (1 Thess. 3:9)

Moreover, though the people do not their duty, but become obstinate, and storm and rage against the faithful Minister which hath a care over them, so that they do grieve his heart through their disobedience, yet if he do his duty in reading, preaching, and other points which I have already declared, he shall notwithstanding save his own soul, and also if the will of God be so, he shall by his diligence win them; if not, he must be contented to submit himself and his doing to the will of the Lord, and know the word of God shall have his effect even to make them inexcusable at the dreadful day, whereby the Lord shall be as greatly glorified as if they were saved.

Again, if the people do their duty faithfully in the Lord towards their Minister being either a wicked liver, or not so zealous and true a

teacher as he ought to be, either the Lord will remove him and place over them a faithful shepherd, or convert him, and bring him to do his duty more carefully, or else stir up other helps for them. So their souls shall be saved and he shall perish.

The fourth part of the danger for not doing these duties faithfully.

Now we have seen the great fruits that come of well doing these duties both to the Minister and the people, we may thereby see what danger ensueth of the contrary, that is, not of doing them. For whereas if the Ministers do their duty faithfully, the Lord will bless their labors, so that their account may be acceptable, and their souls, saved: so on the contrary, if they do not their duty truly, as they ought, and seek the glory of God by their doings, the Lord hath pronounced by the mouth of his Prophet Malachi, that he will bring a curse upon them, and will curse their blessings, he will corrupt their seed, and cast dung in their faces. Thus will the Lord deal with such unfaithful servants, that nothing shall prosper, but even their very seed shall be corrupt, and he shall be called to a straight account, and he shall bear the burden not only of his own sins, but of all the sins of the people, and every soul that hath perished thorough his negligence shall be laid to his charge, and so shall he become a notable Devil in hell there to be tormented with everlasting and intolerable pain. Finally, if the people do not their duty unto the Minister, they shall make him full of grief and sorrow marvelously troubled in spirit, nothing joyful in his calling, but always mourning: and moreover the Lord will harden the people's heart, that the word shall not be profitable unto them, but even as S. Paul testifieth a savor of death unto death, and in the end they shall be rewarded in hell fire which shall never be quenched, nor the worm shall never die, but there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Mal. 2)

1. Thus have we learned first how necessary a thing it is to have Ministers in the Church of God, because without them the people should be as sheep without a shepherd, ready to be devoured of their adversary the devil: secondly, that the Lord hath appointed them to this use, by them to call together the number of them that shall be saved by the preaching of the word, wherewith he hath given them power to open heaven to all believers, and to give as good assurance of their salvation by the word, as if Jesus Christ himself were present to certify the same; and on the contrary to shut out all the unpenitent from the kingdom of heaven, and to bind them over to everlasting woe, which they shall be so sure of as they see the light that shineth in the day. And therefore it behooveth all such as desire to be saved to learn the way to salvation of them, and to hearken unto them, for because the Lord hath appointed no other means in the world for to attain to the knowledge thereof, and hath said plainly, that whosoever will not believe the truth at their hands shall not believe though one should come from heaven to tell them who shall be saved, and another from hell to tell them who are damned.

We have also heard that when the Lord determineth to beget souls, he appointeth spiritual fathers fit and able for that purpose, by reason that he giveth them gifts for the accomplishing of that business: and here withal we have learned what is the duty of these spiritual fathers or Ministers, which we find to consist in four principal points. 1. He must read and study the word of God diligently, that he may be able to teach and instruct his people. 2. When he hath studied he must come forth and deliver wholesome doctrine, that their souls may be refreshed; for therefore must he study to have knowledge for them, and sing to himself and his muses, not filling himself so full of knowledge, till he become as a tun that will give no sound, but he must keep knowledge not only in his heart, but also in his lips; for the Minister must be the mouth of the



Lord, from whence God's people must know the will and counsel of God: also he must observe the true order of teaching, that is, to build upon the true foundation Jesus Christ: for he that buildeth upon any other foundation is an Antichrist, and not the Minister of God, but the messenger of Satan. Moreover, he must by all means prick forward the godly to increase in godliness, beat down the obstinate and hardhearted with the terrible judgments of God, and after to raise up the penitent with the sweet promises of the Gospel: the which he must do not only openly in the pulpit among the congregation, but privately also in every house, because that general doctrine doth not drive the people to such a consideration of their estate, as when they are particularly admonished of their sins, and exhorted to repent for them. Thus must the Minister labor to make his doctrine profitable, and that continually, supposing it not sufficient to be done now and then, but he must do it in season and out of season, omitting no opportunity wherein the Lord may call home some into the Church of Christ: and that God may the rather vouchsafe to bless his ministry, he must pray continually for himself and his people both openly and privately, and be very circumspect in administering the Sacraments. 3. He must live a godly life, and set himself as example for his flock to follow: and so much the rather ought he to look more nearly to all his ways, because the adversaries, if anything be otherwise than well with the Ministers, will straightway with open mouth blaspheme the Gospel, which is most pure and unreprouable: whereas if they have nothing whereof to accuse the Minister, neither can they blame the word which they only heave at to overthrow it if it were possible, taking occasion by the Minister to blame the word. For another cause also must he live unreprouable, and that is, because he must watch over the souls of other, which charge he cannot perform, except he be able to watch over his own. Thirdly in this respect, that his election may be surely known unto himself, least in preaching of the election unto other he

be a reprobate himself. So that when he threateneth the judgments of God against other, he shall condemn himself, and when he raiseth up the penitent with the promises, he himself shall fall into the hole of his own condemnation, and no man shall be able to comfort him, 4. Last of all, he must love his flock so dearly that he must give his life for them. But because it were contrary to the words of our Savior Christ to say he might not fly at any time; and on the other side if we say he may fly, we should put no difference between the true Ministers and the hirelings; we have heard that the Lord will teach his faithful Ministers by his holy spirit, when it is good to fly, and when not. Thus much have we learned concerning the duty of Ministers.

2. In the second part we have heard the duty of the people towards their Ministers, which we have learned to consist, first in obedience, because it were altogether in vain, and an unprofitable labor for the Minister to teach the people if they should not be obedient unto his doctrine; and also because it is impossible for any to be saved that will not be obedient unto the word of God, besides which the Lord hath appointed no means for man to attain unto the knowledge of salvation, and therefore hath he given it unto his Ministers to be preached sincerely and purely unto his people. And here we learn by the way that the people must beware that they be not seduced with false doctrine and man's invention: therefore they must prove the doctrine to accord with the word of God, and then be obedient unto it. Secondly, besides obedience we have learned that they must also reverence him, because they cannot obey his doctrine, except they have a reverent opinion of him, as we see by the woman of Samaria, and the people that S. Peter converted. Thirdly, it is requisite that they fear him, for where fear is not, there honor and reverence must needs be absent. And thus have we heard that they ought to fear him, not in respect of his person, but for his office sake; not as he is a

man, but in that he is the messenger and Minister of God. Fourthly, they must love him and that unfeignedly with all their heart, being ready to help him in all distresses Fifthly, they must provide for him that he may have to maintain himself and his family, to entertain strangers and buy him books, that he may not with any worldly care be drawn from doing of his duty. Sixthly, they must pray for him continually, and for themselves also, that he may be able to teach, and they to receive the word profitably.

3. These duties being well performed bringeth this commodity: The Ministers labor shall be profitable, his account acceptable, and his soul saved. The people shall make their minister joyful and loving unto them, willing to labor for their profit, and in the end they shall reign together in the kingdom of heaven. Also if the Minister doth his duty faithfully, though the people do not theirs, yet he shall save his soul. Likewise if the people do their duty, and not the Minister, the Lord will so provide that they shall enjoy eternal felicity.

4. Last of all, if these duties be not performed, we have learned how great dangers they are in that neglect the same, if the Minister his labor shall be cursed, he shall be called to a straight account, and shall answer for every soul that hath perished, and so become a devil in hell forever. If the people do not their duty, they shall grieve their Pastor, make him unprofitable, and in the end be tormented in utter darkness forever.

The Lord of all power deal mercifully with us for his dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, and grant such grace both unto the Ministers of his word, that they may carefully do their duties with that fear of his name, that reverence of his Majesty, that zeal of his glory, and that desire of the salvation of his people that they ought: and that the people may so obediently and willingly receive thy word and

Ministers thereof, as shall be most for thy glory and the profit of their souls: that after this life ended, we may dwell together in thy kingdom of glory with thy Son our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom with thee and the holy Ghost, three persons and one true and most wise God, be all honor and glory forever.

Amen.

FINIS.

# SERMON XV

## OF THE CONFESSION OF SINS

Prov. 28:13.

He that hideth his sins shall not prosper: but he that confeseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.

There are two parts of this verse: Hiding of sins with punishments, and Confessing with mercy.

It is not my manner to restrain a precept general, but according to circumstances to speak of general things generally.

Here both the sin of hiding sins is taught to be avoided, and the virtue of confessing sins to be practiced.

A matter not observed: for error hath been much spoken against, but truth not so thoroughly taught, which is the cause of the small proceeding of the Gospel.

Example in Consubstantiation and Transubstantiation in the Sacrament, where the true manner of Christ's presence is not known, because it hath not been taught as it should.

Example in superstitious holidays, the breakneck of the Lord's Sabbaths, men now not sparing to work on the Lord's Day also, because they have not been taught to sanctify it.

Example of Lent fast, wherein the abuse of fasting having been checked, and the manner of right fasting so little opened, it is come

to pass that men know not how truly to fast.

Example of the butcherly discipline once entered, the truth of discipline not being spoken of, it maketh men think that now to speak of it, is to make everyone a Pope in his own parish.

So likewise of Ear confession, the gross abuses whereof having been reproved, but the right use of confession passed over untaught, men care not to confess either to God or men: and if they do either, it is rather upon the commandments of men, than upon the consideration of judgment and mercies. Whereby also all conference and examination is taken from the Minister, to whom examination is not to be denied, though all things be not to be disclosed. And again, acknowledging of sins and private and public reconciliation have utterly ceased.

My brethren, teach the truth, teach the truth: for by want hereof it is come to pass, that first the peace of men's consciences is not provided for: secondly, our winnings are not so great as our losings: thirdly, God is not glorified.

The peace of conscience is not looked unto: for when thou knowest what thou shouldest not do, thy conscience straight accuseth thee for doing the evil thou shouldest not: but because thou art not taught the good thou shouldest do, thou canst not pursue after it with comfort.

Our losses have been greater than our winnings, because the good of men hath not been provided for by building then up. For though they hear sins spoken against, yet seeing godliness and religion to decay, the Lord's Day not being celebrated with reverence, men not prepared for the receiving of the holy Sacrament, never fasting, never confessing, &c. yet the weak are not stayed or drawn on, but fall

away: the adversaries mouth is not stopped, but set wide open, because truth is not enough spoken of and practiced.

God is not glorified: for they who are won, are not so truly won, but become hypocrites: and many are not won at all, because the truth is not fully delivered: for hearing some things spoken against, they are led to contrary heresies, by reason they were not grounded in the truth, which teacheth itself and errors also, as good showeth evil and itself also.

We must then teach, love, and practice good things: as we must reprove, hate, and not do that which is evil. Which manner of teaching, because it hath not been in use, we cannot now get credit to, people's minds being inured with other kind of teaching.

Confession is either private, or public: Private first unto the Lord, secondly unto men: first, for our own sins: secondly, for the sins of others. Public, first unto God with men, and before men: secondly, unto God and unto men.

That which cannot be done publicly must be done privately. And if ever public exercise be done with fruit, the private must prepare thee for it, as reading, fasting, prayer, conference, admonishing and rebuking thyself. And without confession privately, we will never confess publicly.

Confession to God is never to be omitted, nor to men, when the occasion is necessary.

Though carnal men of all sorts think it is an easy thing to confess to God: yet if we consider how hardly we are drawn to confess to men, we may thereby know how loath we are truly to confess unto God: which appeareth both in the unregenerate and the regenerate.

As Adam for example, who was ashamed of the nakedness of his body: but when he looked at his soul he pleaded not guilty, but went about to derive his sin to the woman, and the woman to the Serpent. Everyone will say he is a sinner; but who will speak wherein he hath sinned, or acknowledge it when he is charged withal? Yea a miserable sort of excuses will be pleaded; for all are graven out of Adam.

The regenerate also are willing to confess, for all are born again but in measure as infants for a great while more carnal than spiritual: so much as we are failing from God's image, so much ready are we to be deceived and to cover sins.

So Abraham and David being patterns of God's mercy, are also patterns of our weakness. Abraham in denying Sarah to be his wife both to Pharaoh and to Abimelech: David's confession not found at the first: the sin was left of him, yet he had not repented; sin was past, but grace not come: his heart was hard until the Prophet had been with him, as Psal. 32, which is a Psalm of forgiveness of sins, notwithstanding he there sheweth the hypocrisy of their heart: for being in great affliction, as a bladder dried up, he could not come then to confess his sin. This is general: Job. 33:9. I am clean, I am innocent.

And marvel not that men are unwilling to confess, for confession presupposeth accusation: and who will accuse himself by name, except he be moved by grace, or be frantic? Yea being accused, whose natures will yield, seeing what grief, what sorrow, what shame, what humility must needs follow? For sin is grievous, God is glorious, the law is holy. It is hard to be covered, punishment is fearful, a precious price is rejected; and who will see the judgments of God, by



condemning themselves, and will not be ready to despair? Naturally therefore confess we cannot.

Thou having done sin, wouldest not now do it: but where is grace to love God? How hard a thing then to confess where God giveth not grace?

We must begin with ourselves. I have marveled at many who could weep bitterly for other men's sins, but could not shed a tear for their own: but when thou hast felt the smart of sin in thyself, then canst thou rightly acknowledge the sins of others: then art thou come to some good measure of this grace: And being escaped, with the Prophet Ezech. 9, thou mayest fall down upon thy face and cry and say: Ah Lord, wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel, in pouring out thy wrath upon Jerusalem?

Having confessed mine own sin, then must I look unto others; and to God's judgments against others, and so upon mercies showed to others, that I may learn to prevent and remove judgments, and to obtain and continue mercy by confession.

And though we have no Nehemiah's to confess publicly, Nehem. 9, yet let some stand in the gap privately to pray for the people, that the people also may pray for us; and everyone must so much more lament as his calling requires. Whose sins thou hast not acknowledged, thou art partaker of them; and if thou admonish not, and do what thou canst with thy kinsfolk and friends to recover them, thou canst not clear thyself of being guilty of their iniquity: but if thou be grieved, and confessest and prayest privately for the sins of thy brother, then mayest thou avoid vain-glory in the public.

True it is we may use private means and yet neglect the public, but we must read humbly with the Eunuch, and pray with feeling, that

the prayers of others in public may be profitable; and feeling wants in the private means, we must desire the help of the public.

Public confession unto God with men and before men is, when generally general sins are confessed, or some particular sins as before the Sacraments.

Thankfulness can never be received except confession of unworthiness go before: and therefore prayers usually begin with confession of sins and judgments; yet many abstain and care not to come to the confession of their sins: but they must know that the Ministers mouth is to confess their sins.

When the Church hath offended against God, then all must confess, Levite. 18, Dan. 9, Ezra. 9.

No one thing is more pleasant to God than confession, nothing more displeasing than hiding: nothing more public, the more acceptable.

But herein is required judgment and affection, for they do not only offend who confess not, but also such as will confess general sins and not particular, in seeing wherein and after what manner they have sinned: therefore a beadroll of the number and greatness of their sins would be made, and so fashion and hypocrisy would be avoided. Labor then to see thy sin in time of confession, and say, Lord move the heart of the Minister and people to confess my sin when I look into it.

Fault is not only in judgment, but in affection also: for if a man come to confess unto the Minister he will hang down his head, though but two or three be present: but care not how publicly thou do it.

We must be touched otherwise then when we sing Psalms, there must be reverence in bowing of the knees, for thou must give thy body and thy heart also. The Publican needeth not to be taught to cast down his eyes, for the humble heart will bring down thy look. Again, we must give good example in our outward gesture to provoke others to come reverently before the Lord. If confession be thus acceptable, then when we are to receive more grace, we must be more humbled in acknowledging our sins; and that we may do it as we ought, we must labor for a deeper sight of our unworthiness by our sins.

The way to obtain mercy is, as soon as we see our sins to acknowledge them. I acknowledged my sin, and then thou forgavest the punishment of my sin, not my sin only. The debtor loveth much that hath much forgiven him, because he sorrowed much. The prodigal son returning after much sorrow and humble confession, found much kindness. Though we have been unkind children, is there more love in a natural man than in the Lord? In natural fathers and masters when their servants and children confess, anger ceaseth; is not this from the Lord; and will not he show favor unto us? Doth God give thee this charge, that if thy brother repent seventy times seven times, thou shouldest forgive him? Doth he persuade him truly confessing that he will forgive him? And shall not then the Lord be merciful unto thee if thou confess; in giving thee remission of thy sins, and sanctification from thy sins? Yea God is more merciful than man, when man truly confesseth.

We are to pray that the ministry may be recovered, that the Ministers being humbled the people may also join with them.

Another kind is to confess to men and not only unto God, otherwise it is hypocrisy; as it is, though we confess to men and not to God.

We must confess to men when we owe some duty, or when we are to receive a benefit by them. We owe them duty when we are admonished: secondly, when we have offended them.

They that use good means, and come by authority, we must confess unto them, Mat. 18. Where there must be a yielding or a proceeding with farther process, Luk. 17. It is required that a man should acknowledge or he cannot have forgiveness.

Where men offending are admonished; I will confess, say they, unto God, not unto you: when as the Lord requireth that it should first be done unto men: First reconcile thyself to thy brother, then unto God.

We offend our brethren when we injury them: secondly, when we are authors or counselors of them unto evil: or thirdly, when we give them evil example.

Whether we have injured them in their bodies, goods, or good name. Levite. 6:4, the same day the sacrifice was to be offered, the same day must satisfaction be made. And where judgment is threatened, men refusing to satisfy the parties, God will not forgive, who is also offended: for God requireth confession, and man satisfaction.

Many have charged others to do evil, and have wrought evil with others, the one being humbled, the other will not be persuaded it is so: but having hurt them in their souls, though by confession we cannot recover them, yet we must shame ourselves unto them, that they may have the cause of sin upon themselves. If thinking of these things in our studies, yet if we practice them not, our prayers will not be acceptable.

We are to receive benefit when we would have advise from them, or would be comforted of them: and we would have advise when we are

tempted unto sin, or accused in our consciences for sin.

Though men cannot accuse us, yet there are many times special sins that we cannot get peace with God for, or power to overcome them: these must be confessed to men, that we may get strength in wisdom, Jam. 5.

Where I take acknowledging to be more than confession: for a man cannot acknowledge a thing but he must needs confess it; but he may confess, and yet not acknowledge. And there the Apostle speaketh of recovering one from sin when they are tempted, as the whole scope of the place showeth.

In accusation the Devil will lay sin to our charge, and the conscience is feared both in reason and affection: then there must be recourse to our friends.

Experience woeful enough will witness this, some for light matters have hanged themselves, who if they had opened their griefs might have been recovered, as some have been, whose throats have been ripped, and others who have been found lying in the waters.

God hath appointed a communion of Saints, and if we will not partake of their counsel we may be brought down for not disclosing as others have been.

There is another higher sight of divinity and better faith of godliness, when there is grief for sin; or for temptation to a sin; or thirdly, for lying in sin and not getting out of it, and also for being provoked to gross sins.

Many men lying in a sin when neither by praying, nor fasting, nor hearing, nor otherwise they can get out of it, they must seek for

strength at others, and desire their prayers.

The Papists will have us bound to the Ministers: S. James more large.

To come out of sin is the best way to shame ourselves and acknowledge it; and this means used plainly will drive Satan away for coming near us.

The temptations are many times strange thoughts, to blaspheme God, and injury highly whom most we love, and many such like things.

The family of love had these temptations, and many others who have been given over grossly, because fighting with an evil conscience, they did not use the means of getting out. And these are laid upon men for corrections for things past, for remedies for things to come to pass, and for provocations unto prayer.

No remedy is so great as to disclose them to thy friend who loveth thee, and will pray with thee.

Choice must be used of those in whom we will disclose, especially of a spiritual father must our choice be, spiritual for discerning well of the temptation, and for wisdom in prescribing a remedy.

Not those who say it is fond, lessening the sin which should be weighed as it is, that the just proportion of God's judgment may be seen, neither to those that shall aggravate it, least they terrify thee too much.

When sin fighteth, then learning will not so much prevail, Satan is such a subtle Sophister.

A father he must be, a brother, a sister, a righteous man, as S. James saith, who must have the affection of a father for compassion, taciturnity, and not upbraiding: Compassion, that the heart may bleed as of a tender father and mother, that though the sin be not ours, yet we may have a fellow feeling; for the merciful is blessed which followeth the poor in spirit: Taciturnity, that the sin being close, it may never go further than the cause is.

Upbraiding is such a thing as it feareth many, because it is the property of worldly men to keep men under by that means, but these fathers may not do it.

Though it be true that many meeting such a father, they will not use him as a father; which appalleth the spirit of a good father, who if in wisdom he shall but touch anything that may be thought to be disclosed, he is thought to do it to upbraid them.

FINIS.

## **SERMON XVI**

### **OF THE FIRST EFFECTS OF CHRISTS CROSS PT. I**

Gal. 6:14, 15.

Be it far from me that I should rejoice, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

Having finished in a late Treatise the doctrine of the true observation of the Sabbath, as a furtherance to nourish religion in them that are already called, we now have purposed considering the small proceeding in Christian profession, which ought to be found in this ripeness of the Gospel more glorious and abundant, to entreat of such matter, as being most agreeable to them that as yet have not tasted how sweet Christ is and his Gospel, and very profitable for our senseless age wherein Christ is almost utterly forsaken, may breed some love of religion, and begin at the least some care of our profession in us. And to deliver you from further suspense of mind and musing with yourselves what this thing should be, it is the comfortable doctrine of Christ crucified, and joyful tidings of the passion of Christ: whereof, because I know none that have gone with a through stitch in this matter, but either, if they wrote soundly, they did it more sparingly than so excellent an argument doth deserve; or if any have labored more largely, they have done it more corruptly, than the history of the Gospel will permit them: by the grace of God I have purposed, and by the blessing of God I shall perform, to write of this matter more at large. Now for a preface or preparation hereunto, we have made choice of that holy protestation of Paul, Galath. 6:14. But be it far from me that I should rejoice, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. 15. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. 16. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace shall be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. The Apostle having written against such corrupt teachers and false Prophets, as, after he had preached the liberty of the Gospel, labored to bring in again the politic government of the Jewish ceremonies, and to intermingle the beggarly rudiments of the law with the glorious profession of the Gospel; and having declared already, that the firm faith of Christians needeth not the painted pomp of ceremonies, sheweth in the two verses immediately



going before these, that these false Apostles and bold Doctors of circumcision kept no good course, both for that they sought to avoid trouble and persecution, because being a menstruous people and monstrous company of Christians and Jews, they might be safe on both sides and hurt of neither part; as also for that they carnally sought their own glory, credit and estimation, by boasting themselves of the solemn troupe and notable number of disciples, whom they schooled and trained after them in their profession. Now in this place Paul opposing his sincere ministry to their carnal gospelling, and the pure faith of Christians to the impure relics of the Jews, saith with a bold emphasis and godly protestation: But be it far from me, that I should rejoyce, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. As if he should say, God forbid that I should rejoyce in anything saving in this, that I know by the cross of Christ the forgiveness of my sins, that his righteousness is imputed unto me, that mine iniquities are nailed on his cross, and buried in his death, so that I am not henceforth so much tempted to the things of this world, neither make I any great matter, how basely soever the world accounteth of me. For why, I know it is not material, whether we be circumcised or uncircumcised, for that I neither find benefit in being circumcised, neither any hurt in being uncircumcised: but herein I have comfort and matter of rejoicing, in that I am become a new creature in Christ, and am freed from all other shows of Jewish pomp. And this I dare boldly affirm, that this cause of rejoicing is not to me alone, but to all other faithful Ministers teaching, and all other godly people willingly and diligently embracing this doctrine of the cross of Christ. Briefly then we see in these principals, first that the cross of Christ being never so obscure is more to be joyed in, than all shows of ceremonies be they never so glorious, because it worketh in us these excellent effects, which the other can never do, it crucifieth us to this world, and maketh us to become new creatures. Lastly, it is showed that this is no variable or particular doctrine but general, no

private passion of Paul, but a common joy to all Ministers, and not to Ministers alone, but to all the whole Israel and company of professors, that have their joy either in soundly teaching, or in sincerely learning of Christ crucified, so that all shall have the joy which Paul enjoyed, if they will keep the rule which Paul observed: by which duties both of Pastors and people is insinuated, that whosoever shall willfully forsake or spitefully reject this doctrine, he is neither of the number of true Ministers, nor any member of the true Israelites. And if we shall more deeply consider, how many and how great the crosses of Christ were for us, and therewithal shall mark how unfaithfully they be thought of the most part of professors, if we shall see the little meditation of them, the slender thankfulness for them, the small fruits of mortification in being crucified to the world, the few tokens of sanctification in becoming new creatures, which come by them; we shall easily grant the necessity of this doctrine to be taught, and comfort of it to be learned, especially seeing in the old age of the Gospel we have so few true rejoicers in Christ crucified, so many enemies of the cross of Christ both among them that be teachers, and them that are taught. As for the enemies of Christ his cross, they be either professed enemies, or not hearty friends: the professed enemies are either such, as be without all religion, or such as are seduced by a false religion: they without religion are Atheists, Epicures, and worldlings, unto whom Christ crucified is a laughing stock, and a matter of scoffing, in that Christ is ridiculous in their eyes, and absurd in their judgment: those that are corruptly seduced (that I omit Turks, and Jews) are either superstitious Papists, or erroneous Heretics. The superstitious Papists, notwithstanding their wooden cross and painted banners, and for all their Passion Sundays, and good Fridays, are the greatest enemies to the passion and cross of Christ. For woeful experience hath taught, that these foolish devices of men having but once crept over the threshold into the doors of the Church, did thrust out with

the loathsomeness of their presence the holy ordinances of God, in that when men could not brook the crosses and afflictions which are incident to true Christians, they would invent for a further ease a cross of wood; and when they were weary of hearing their filthy sins laid open to bring them to Christ, they provided for that: and instead of preaching they had Mass singing. Wherefore it may truly be said of superstitious ceremonies and Christian religion, as the Heathen man reporteth of the Hedgehog and the Satire, who entertaining the Hedgehog which he had found for his guest, was so pricked with his thorny bristles, as he was constrained to go out of his house. A very ill guest displacing his host, a perilous tenant dispossessing his landlord. Howbeit we know, that these superstitious worshippers pretended a very great devotion to Christ on their Passion Sunday in a solemn making of sepulchers, in chaunting diverse songs sometime in Pilate's tune, sometime in Herod's tune, sometime in the Pharisees tune, and sometime in the Disciples tune: in all which the devil bereaved them of the pure use and due consideration of Christ crucified. And yet some of these would hate a Jew, some would spit at a Jew, some would weep to hear the name of Christ, and would pity his death. I am the longer in these things to make the judgments of God in them profitable instructions to us, by provoking men to thankfulness for their deliverance, if in truth they be delivered, that is, if they be not now as profane, as ever they were superstitious, not forsaking but changing the sin.

As for the erroneous heretics, not to speak of all, let us add somewhat of the most pestilent family of love, who shoot as much too short at this prick, as the other shoot too far. For in speaking of the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ, these men as fools flying one extremity, run post-hast into the contrary extremity: and therefore these wretches imagining to themselves a spiritual Christ, are as much to be maliced, as the Papists are to be pitied. For after Popery

yet some cause was given of rejoicing, in that the truth of the history was left unto us; but these fellows under a color of not being ceremonial, but altogether desiring to be spiritual, take away all from us, and yet most deceitfully will seem to grant all. If ye demand anything of Christ his birth, they will grant it; if ye ask whether he was born of the seed of David, and of the Virgin Mary, they will confess it, but as understanding it after this allegory, for that Mary, as they say, signifieth doctrine, David the beloved service: so that this is their judgment of Christ his birth, that he was born of the doctrine of the service of love. In like manner they will grant the resurrection of Christ his death and his burial, but in this sense, that Christ suffereth in our suffocated nature, and is crucified, when sin dieth in us, and when they suffer for the doctrine of love, and that after they have suffered and begin to be illuminated, then Christ riseth again in them, and lastly, when the light of nature getteth some clearer light of judgment, then Christ is ready to come to judgment. Thus a number having refused the Antichristian Pope, are fallen into the hands of Antichristian Atheists, and having eschewed the dregs of popery, they have wallowed most filthily in the mire of heresy. And thus much of the professed enemies. Now of the not hearted friends, whereof the one sort is not well advised, the other are not very faithful friends. The unadvised friends under a pretense of knowing nothing but Christ, condemn all human learning, arts, and sciences, all manual professions: and these men, though as yet they are not plunged in heresy, yet without the special grace of God preventing them, are in the high way as ready to be trained up to heresy, and thus being over wise and over just they cannot in truth rejoice in the cross of Christ. The unfaithful friends being both protestants and professors, though they be no plain atheists, but give some countenance to the Gospel, do neither chiefly rejoice in Christ, nor truly sorrow for their sins, which notwithstanding are so great, as neither the virtue of Christ his death, nor the power of his

resurrection appeareth in their lives, or in their deaths: and these men be either by degrees tending to profane atheism, or they are brought up to be superstitious Papists, and gross heretics. Contrary to all these professed enemies and not hearty friends are they, who so truly meditate on Christ his birth, death, and resurrection, as they chiefly mourning for their sins, think this the greatest knowledge to know Christ crucified, and count this their highest joy to rejoice in the cross of Christ: by which knowledge not of any spiritual and imagined Christ, by which joy not in ceremony or superstition they labor to crucify the world, not to forsake or utterly to neglect the necessary things of this life, they endeavor to restrain, not to destroy their flesh, and finally to become new creatures, and yet not here to live like Angels. Thus we see how requisite this treatise will be, both that we may be delivered from the Papists superstitions, from the monstrous conceits of Heretics, from the sinister meditation of unadvised persons, and the carnal consideration of worldly professors, as also by it to come to some sound fruit of Christ his death, and from the fruit feeling to engender faith, that from true faith may spring true love, and from our love may grow true practice.

Now to come to the words of our Apostle: Be it far from me. He here sheweth how his choice came of a settled purpose, and that in respect of this whereof he had made a sound and special choice above the rest, he abhorred and vilely esteemed all other things. And this vehement phrase of speech is used of the Apostle in things which rather are to be detested, than to be disputed against, as Rom. 3:4. when Paul abhorreth the blasphemy against the grace of God, in that the unbelief of a few should disannul the belief of many, he crieth out, God forbid. And when he would show his hearty hatred to the accusers of the righteousness of God, Rom. 3, he saith, God forbid. As also in the end of the same chapter, the Apostle more vehemently meeting with the objection of them who say, in that justification came

of faith, would live as they listed, and would make the law of God of no purpose, saith, Be it far from me. Likewise Rom. 2, abhorring them that would willingly divorce holiness of life from justification, and remain in sin, that Christ his grace may abound, he breaketh out, God forbid. Thus then the holy Ghost useth this phrase, when either he showeth something thoroughly to be hated, or speaketh of something principally to be chosen and preferred. And the Apostles meaning in choosing above all to rejoice in Christ crucified, and in mourning for nothing more than for that which hindereth the cross of Christ, is nothing else but to declare, that whosoever doth rejoice in anything more than in Christ crucified, he freeth himself from all the things that are in Christ, and as yet he cannot assure himself to belong to Christ, as also he showeth what a necessary rejoicing this is, in that there is no comfort in salvation, no mark of God's child in him, who either rejoiceth not in this, or at the least longeth for it.

That I should rejoice. Mark, he saith not, Be it far from me, that I should use, think, speak, or do anything but the cross of Christ: but he wisheth, that his affection should not principally be tied to anything, but to Christ. Neither must we from hence unfitly gather, that we should not eat, drink, apparel ourselves, marry, or walk in some honest trade of life; but this we must learn, that we set not our hearts on these things, so as our joy in them should become either greater or equal with the rejoicing in the cross of Christ: but rather, that having wives we be as though we had none, and buying as though we possessed not, and using this world, as though we used it not. For otherwise the things of this world vanish away, and therefore they are no such things, as we should desire to stay our affections in them. 1. Cor. 2:2. the Apostle speaking of the like thing, saith, I esteemed not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified, purposeth not to show that he knew not anything else, or that he would deny unto men the knowledge of tongues,

learning or handicrafts: for we know that he was a Pharisee, brought up in good learning at the feet of Gamaliel, and how he reporteth of himself, to speak as much in the tongues as any of the other Apostles, and that he was a Tent-maker, exhorting also in some of his Epistles men to get their livings with some honest trade: but his meaning is, that he thought nothing worthy to be known, or coveted no knowledge as excellent in respect, and in comparison of the knowledge of Christ and him crucified. And therefore whereas there were some among the Corinthians, a people very famous for their learning and knowledge, who pleased themselves in a conceit of their great gifts and sciences, the Apostle not wanting these things, protesteth unto them, that he never made this human knowledge the full scope, drift, and foundation of his labors, and that he never used them as the treasure of his heart, although he could tell how far to give them their reverence, their due time, and place in others; but that he esteemed them in that measure, as they stood him instead the better to offer his service to Jesus Christ. Again, we must not here think, that the Apostle knew not parents, Magistrates and governors, the gifts of men, and the duties to be given to every one of these: but if he saw that men did glory in themselves, in their titles, and in their dignities, then he knew them not in the flesh, that is, he did not esteem them for those things, but so far he knew them in the spirit, as he could rejoice that they were new creatures. And therefore men must not think, that for these gifts we are all in all, but that the cross of Christ is the mark we shoot at, without the which all authority, learning, and knowledge is accursed of God. Nevertheless we see it is the weakness of judgment to reject all other things, in themselves being the good gifts of God, as our unadvised friends have done, as though the knowledge and practice of Arts, Sciences, tongues, and handicrafts did defile a man; or as though a man were the more holy for not using these outward means. But in our days few labor of this disease of such superstitious austerity, and in our careless times men

are not so much overwise and benumbed in judgment in this behalf; but most men on the contrary rejoice either as much or more in these things, than in the cross of Christ: and this is the evil wherewith most men have surfeited, this is the evil whereat the Apostle striketh. For though men will grant, that Christ is to be rejoiced in, yet their works do show that they rejoice in something more than in the cross of Christ; and if they show any joy to religion, it is rather done to countenance their own gifts, than to gain any credit to Christ. How many, I pray you, in our days rejoice in open wickedness, as the adulterer in his lusts, the wrathful man in his revenging, the covetous man in his riches, the envious man in his emulation, and the ambitious man in his honors? Why do men learn but to get preferment? Why do men so labor, but to attain to profit? Why do men take such pains, but in the end to reap pleasure? So far are we off from rejoicing in Christ crucified, that men now rejoice in open sins, and that so manifestly, as covetousness and ambition creeping under the cloak of virtue, plead for ability and maintenance, for place and countenance, without which, as they say, a man cannot do good. But these men that thus labor more for promotion, profit and pleasure, than to find Christ crucified, and cannot find the uncomparable joy, if they were new creatures, may happily carry the face of Christians, but surely by outward calling as yet they belong not unto Christ. And what are these outward things to be rejoiced in? Admit that a man had all learning, authority, riches, and credit; are they not common as well to the wicked as to the godly? Are they not so transitory and insufficient, that the more a man hath of them, the more he may have? Do they make the possessor the better, can they keep evil from him, can they minister comfort to the afflicted conscience, can they make us rejoice in the hour of death, or can they save us from confusion before God his judgment seat? Surely this is not in wit, eloquence, learning, friends, glory, riches, and authority, all which the wicked know better to abuse, than the godly to use; but



in Christ, which was accursed, and in his cross which was a blessing unto us. Seeing it is so, well did the Apostle to rejoice in this above all. For were a man never so good, so glorious, so learned, so well brought up, of such authority, he must stoop at God his judgment seat, and there fall like a miserable caitiff, unless he used these things to God his glory, and above all rejoiced in the cross of Christ.

But now let us see what is meant by the cross of Christ. Some understand it of the afflictions which he did suffer for the profession of Christ, because the Apostle saith in another place, how he did bear about with him the marks of his sufferings in his body. But this sense were too hard to be brooked, that we should rejoice in nothing but in affliction; albeit this is a truth, that we may rejoice in those afflictions which we suffer for Christ his sake. Again, the cross of Christ taken for affliction, cannot be said to be a principal cause of the world crucified to us, or of crucifying us to the world, although in some respect it may be counted an inferior cause. Further if we compare this place with other places of the scriptures, we shall find it to be understood of the cross which Christ suffered for us, rather than of the cross which we suffer for him, as 2. Cor. 2:2, where the Apostle laboreth to know nothing, as here he rejoiceth in nothing more than in Christ crucified, as he calleth it in that place, or in the cross of Christ, as he speaketh in this place. The Apostle his meaning then briefly is this. Be it far from me that I should chiefly rejoice in any, but in Christ crucified, because he can present me blameless before God his judgment seat, he hath nailed my sins to his cross, he is the immaculate Lamb that was sacrificed for me, and will present me as clear without spot before his father, as ever I was created. Wherefore Paul knowing the cross of Christ able to perform all these things, good cause there was why he then, and we now attaining in some measure to the like knowledge, should rejoice in Christ crucified, by whom we become crucified to the world. First we are to note, that

they that with delight lie in sin, or have no desire to come out of sin, cannot rejoice in the cross of Christ. For if thou be filthy, and wilt be filthy still in thy flesh, how darest thou presume to rejoice in the scourged and torn flesh of Jesus Christ? Canst thou, O miser, still like and love this world so much, when thou doest more prick and pierce Christ with thy sins, than ever he was pricked with thorns and nails? Or can the thorns of Christ crucified be precious to thee, when the thorns of worldly cares do so delight and choke thee? How canst thou still boil in thine anger, when thou doest remember how mildly Christ crucified suffered the bitter anger of his father for thee? Doest thou look for great matters in this world, considering Christ to be born for thee so basely, to live so poorly, and to die for thee so painfully? Surely thou mayest appertain to Christ in secret election, but thy sins thus with delight reigning in thee, thou hast no assurance of Christ by thy walking. Well on the contrary, doest thou, thou poor sinner, feel the lusts of thy flesh loathsome unto thee, that thou even quakest to remember the place, the time, the occasion where sin overtook thee, and feelest more terror to think of them, than ever thou feeledst pleasure in doing of them? Then for thy comfort remember, thy sins are pardoned, the precious flesh of Christ was torn for thee, and that thou seeing the wrath of God due to thy defiled flesh, shalt receive mercy, because the crucified flesh of Christ doth acquit the filthiness of thy flesh, and the punishment due unto it. Again, doth the world begin to be vile in thine eyes, and thou art ashamed that thine heart hath been so long set on things below, and the thorny cares do now prick and wound thine heart with sorrow? Then remember the head of Christ was planted with thorns, and Christ for thee despised the world, his hands and feet for thee being nailed, his side pierced, his whole body for thee being crucified. Art thou angry with thyself that thou hast been so much given to anger, and canst willingly take judgment of thyself, because thou hast abused God his presence, and defiled his holy house in

coming thither with an angry heart? Then remember how Christ for thee sustained the anger of God his wrath to take from thee the imputation of thine anger. Canst thou not be content to be a worm of men, and as it were trodden on? Thinkest thou more vilely of thyself than of any other? Art thou now afraid of hypocrisy, and feelest thyself troubled that thou didst not more earnestly seek God, and never didst so much desire the favor of men, as now thou desirest the favor of God, and thinkest it a great mercy to have one foot in the earth? Then remember how vile Christ was to make thee precious to God, consider how he was the servant of all, a reproof of men, a worm, and not a man, trodden down even of the worst kind of men, that he might free thee from thy vain-glory and secret pride. Art thou grieved that thou hast presumed on the mercy of God, and doest thou now think no more, nor so much to be in thee as in other men, and that thou art not a sinner alone, but a sinner vilely infected, not resting thyself in any opinion of a civil life? Art thou now as deeply plunged in despair as before thou wast puffed up with presumption? Call to mind that Christ was not only rejected of men but of God, to bring thee in favor both with God and men, and that he was troubled when he said, Father if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me: remember how he labored in a sweat and agony, not in a cold sweat, but so as the warm blood was fain to run out of their veins: behold how he was hanged between heaven and earth, as spewed out of the one, and accursed in the other, and suffered the heaviness of his soul to free thee from presumption by his mighty humility, and to help thee from desperation by his painful cross. To be brief, there are two kinds of men that cannot rejoice in this cross of Christ, the one, because they have an opinion of their own righteousness; the other, because they are senseless for the security of their sins. For the one, because the feeling of the sore causeth us to make much of the salve, and the sense of sin worketh a joy in the deliverance from sin; it is sure they cannot rejoice in the forgiveness of sin, that never could

lament for the guiltiness and grievousness of sin, which are the cause of Christ his death. Wherefore our Savior Christ Luk. 22, seeing certain women following him with lamentation, and mourning that so good a man so innocently should be put to death, saith to them, weep rather O daughters of Jerusalem, for your sins, teaching them, that their most special cause of weeping was their own iniquity, which was the cause why now he should suffer death. Now then because we are ignorant, many see not their sins, and for that cause cannot mourn for them. For they need no joy that feel no sorrow, they need no comfort that taste no grief, they need no release that are in no bands, and none can truly rejoice in the cross of Christ, but they that see their sins have crucified Christ. Wherefore to help our blindness in seeing, and numbness in feeling sin, we must come to the law of God, and to the judgments of God there with adjoined. Why cannot men come to the sight of their sins? Because they know not the law. Why have not men a sense of their sin? Because they consider not the threatening of the law. So that the remedy to make us see sin, is the knowledge of the law, the remedy to make us feel sin, is the sense of the judgments of God threatened in the law. And why cannot the Papists rejoice in Christ, but imagine other histories? Is it not because they have imagined a colored persuasion of the law, thinking that the law may be kept of man, measuring the interpretation of the law and the observation thereof by gross sins, and not otherwise, as did the Pharisees, counting all the spiritual interpretation of the commandments but good counsels, not necessary precepts? So that they not seeing the law spiritual, nor themselves carnal, cannot see themselves sold under sin. The Apostles knew gross sins as well as they did to be the breaches of the law of God, yea and the worldly-wise Philosophers could confess as much, but he saw further, that every little thought rebelling against the spirit and fighting against the law, was sin, which they never dreamed of. And therefore Paul sifting his corruption so low, thought

himself even as a slave or dead man, howsoever before he might have thought himself, and did account himself as upright a man as the best of them. If we likewise shall look narrowly into the law, seeing the good things commanded, and the evil things forbidden, and both of them infinite, and then shall consider ourselves to be infinite, our affections not being angelical, but our whole nature corrupt, and our whole will rebelling, this will rid us of all imagined righteousness, and will cause us to cast off our hold of our own perfection; for finding the law commanding good things so plentifully, and forbidding evil things so manifoldly, and then seeing ourselves to do so many evil things, and to leave undone so many good things, we shall not only be convicted to be sinners, but we will confess ourselves to be most miserable sinners. But why are not our affections moved with a sense of sin, as in judgment we have the sight of sin? Because our eyes are still set on the things commanded and forbidden, and withal we look not into the curses of the law, and threatening's against them that commit the evil things, and omit the good things.

FINIS.

## **SERMON XVII**

### **OF THE FIRST EFFECTS OF CHRISTS CROSS PT. II**

Gal. 6:15.

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

As we have spoken of the former fruit of the cross of Christ, which was, that the Apostle was crucified to the world, and the world

crucified to him: so now we are to speak of the latter effect, that is, he was made a new creature. And here note by the way, that though mention here be not expressively made of the resurrection of Christ, as was before of the cross of Christ: yet it is necessarily understood, and that according to the meaning and custom of the holy Ghost; because as it is the virtue of the cross of Christ that crucifieth sin in us, so it is the power of his resurrection that raiseth us to newness of life; and as Christ died for our sins, so he rose again for our justification, Rom. 4, and as he died to cleanse us from our sins, so also to crucify sin in us; and as he rose to impute righteousness unto us, so also to work in us righteousness and holiness. In that the Apostle speaketh here of a new creature, as also he doth 2. Corinth. 5:27. If any man be in Christ, let him be a new creature, &c. we are taught, that it is not sufficient to be crucified to the world, but we must be also new creatures; we must not only put off the old man, but we must put on the new man, and look what we detract from the one we must add to the other: it is not enough to die, unless we be born again; it is not enough to be corrupted, unless we be changed. For as it was not sufficient for Christ to be crucified, but he ought also to rise again: so it is not sufficient for us to be freed from the guiltiness and corruption of sin, which we received of Adam, but we must also be clothed with that righteousness, and be made partakers of that holiness which floweth from Christ, so that as none of our sins shall be laid to our charge: likewise all Christ his obedience is as fully ours, as we ourselves had done it.

Now the better to conceive what it is to be a new creature, we must consider for the one part that which is Ephes. 4:22, 23, 24. Cast off, concerning the conversation in time past, the old man, which is corrupt through the deceivable lusts, And be renewed in the spirit of your mind, And put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness: and for the other part, that which is

Coloss. 3:9. Ye have put off the old man, with his works, 10. And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: briefly the word importeth thus much, that whatsoever we lost in the first creation, we must receive in the second; and whatsoever we have been deprived of by Adam, we have it restored in Christ. Adam not in substance but in qualities was made like unto God, and we are new creatures, made partakers of the godly nature, as witnesseth Peter, not in things essential, but in holy qualities to resemble the Creator. And as Adam in the beginning, and we in Adam were made wise, righteous, holy, and in perfect felicity, and both he and we through sin have lost this heavenly image: for in Christ it is renewed so fully, as he is our wisdom, and taketh from us ignorance; he is our righteousness, and acquitteth us from our sins; he is our holiness, and freeth us from our corruption; he is our redemption, and restoreth to us our liberty. And because we are then renewed, when we are a wise people, righteous, holy, and waiting for the coming of Christ: we must on our parts in some measure have our earthly wisdom mortified, spiritual wisdom renewed, our earthly affections slain, godly affections quickened, our old conversation quelled, and our conversation from hence-forth in heaven, we must not live as we were wont, but our lives must be changed to the obedience of the word, which we must testify in thought, word and deed. Briefly then we are renewed by faith in Christ, when we assuredly believe, that (1. Cor. 1:30) Christ Jesus is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and by the fruits of faith, by (Rom. 12:2.) not fashioning ourselves like unto this world, but by being changed by the renewing of our mind, and by (Ephes. 4:24) putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness. First therefore we must believe, that Christ is made to us wisdom, because naturally (Ephes. 4:18.) our cogitation is darkened, and we are strangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in us. How blind we are

by nature, and what need we have of the Spirit of Christ to enlighten us, the Prophet David even in that image of a new creature, Psal. 119, by his often praying for the same, doth plentifully declare. And when it shall please God thus to enlighten us, then must we labor for a certificate in our consciences, to have our sins clearly discharged in the death of Christ, and to assure us that Christ his righteousness in his resurrection is as surely imputed unto us, as if we had done all righteousness, and though we have been sinners as others, yet that our sins shall not be laid to our charge. This the Philosophers and wise men could never see by the light of nature, because it is a mystery of mysteries, undoubtedly to be persuaded that for Christ his sake we shall appear righteous before God his judgment seat, as though we never had sinned, but had fulfilled the whole law of God. For we are imputed righteous, as Christ was an imputed sinner, and as we hope for the joys of heaven even as we had committed all the righteousness, which Christ alone did; so he did bear the pains of hell even as he had committed all the sins, which we alone did commit. Besides, he must be our holiness, that is, our flesh must be so crucified in his flesh, and his holiness must so be communicated unto us, as of profane worshippers, we may become truly religious; of blasphemers of the name of God, pure users of the name of God; of breakers of the Sabbath, observers of the Sabbath; of careless governors, careful governors: of disobedient, obedient; of cruel, meek; of unchaste, chaste persons; of unrighteous, righteous persons; of evil speakers, coverers of the infirmities of others; of such as have let their thoughts run uncontrolled, careful watchers even over our least affections. The want of the knowledge hereof is punished by the devilish vermin of the Family of love. They say Christ in them is their new birth, we say new birth is wrought in us by the Spirit of Christ engrafting us into Christ; they say the work of sanctification is perfect in this life, we say it is begun here, and continued, but ended in the life to come. For as our wisdom is not



perfect in this world, unless it be by imputation of Christ his wisdom, but still groweth by degrees, and we are not perfect at the first in faith covering the imputation of Christ his righteousness unto us, and we grow from faith to faith: so our wisdom is not here so perfect when we are renewed, but stained with many blemishes. And as we see in the natural birth children are not at the first old men, but from infancy they grow to childhood, from childhood to their nonage, from nonage to perfect age and old age: even so in the spiritual birth we grow from strength to strength, from measure to measure, until we come to perfection. Our wisdom is often captivated, our faith is often weak, our righteousness is often defiled, our holiness is often corrupted. Now as in the cross of Christ our sins are discharged, as in the fullness of Christ we have wisdom as in his resurrection we have righteousness, and by the working of his Spirit he communicateth to us his holiness: so also in his coming again we steadfastly look for the fullness of our redemption in him, who was born for us, who lived for us, who died for us, who rose for us, who ascended for us, who liveth in us, who will come again to redeem us, delivering our souls from sin, from grief, and reproach, our bodies from sickness, pain, and trouble, wiping away all tears from our eyes, and setting us free from death, misery and corruption: for whom we all cry in our afflictions, Come Lord Jesus, who shalt change our vile bodies, and make them like to thy glorious body, at such time looking for the accomplishment hereof, as he shall come from heaven with his Angels, to gather together the elect and the reprobates, the one to receive the sentence of salvation, the other to receive sentence of condemnation. We are now new creatures by faith in Christ, by hope of our redemption through him, but we shall be so in effect; we are here renewed in righteousness, in holiness, in wisdom, but in part: yet we have remnants of sin, as they that neither through the grace of God sin to death, neither by reason of our own corruption are altogether free from sin. And therefore we had need to look for Christ

to come a Redeemer, who will clean rid us from our pride, who will rid us from our unthankfulness from our unbelief, and from whatsoever thing may hinder the glory of God or our salvation, who will rid us from all sickness, poverty, soreness, and calamity in our bodies, that what freedom we now hold by faith, we shall then have in fruition and most absolute possession, which, when it draweth near, must cause us to lift up our heads and rejoice. Being thus made new by faith in Christ, we must not stay, but testify this faith to others by effects, in becoming no more like unto the world, but putting on a new conversation, after the likeness of him that hath so called us. It is to no end to say thou art a Christian, if thou art not there withal a new creature, as the Apostle proveth, 2. Cor. 5:27. These effects are partly in the soul, and partly in the body: in the soul we must be renewed in our understanding, in our memories, and in our affections.

As our understanding sometime hath been darkened concerning the things of Jesus Christ: so from hence forth we must covet to understand nothing more than Christ Jesus, and him crucified: as our memories have been as fresh in retaining, as our understandings in receiving earthly things; so now forgetting the things of this life, we must chiefly remember those things which perish not with memory, but are heavenly, spiritual, and eternal: as we were wont to love, hate, like, and dislike for ourselves, now we must love, and hate, like, and dislike for the glory of God. We are therefore to pray, that the Lord would frame in us new hearts, that as we have been carnally minded, we may be spiritually minded; and as we must have new hearts, so also must we labor for new affections. Our love, as I said, which was mingled with self-love, must be taken up for the Lord his behoove; our anger, which was in the defense of our own cause, must now be bestowed in the maintenance of God his glory, and what power soever is within us, it must be spent on the Lord his

behalf. And yet we must go further in this work of regeneration, offering to the Lord our bodies, as we have offered our souls, that as we have given our members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity; so now we give our members servants unto righteousness in holiness, from hence-forth having new eyes, new ears, new tongues, new hands, and new feet.

Our eyes have sometimes lusted after popish pomp, they have been ravished with a delight in the creatures of God, but carnally and without all glory to God; they have been haughty, full of pride, fraught with disdain, nourishers of uncleanness, the wickets of death unto our souls, and carried away with the covetous desire of worldly things; now they must be renewed not in substance, but in their duties: whatsoever we behold with them, we must make them teachers of the soul thereby, and all things seeming beautiful to the eyes in this life, where the creatures are defiled, ought to provoke us to the beauty of the Creator, which is infinite, we must testify our humility, our piety, our chastity, and our upright affections by them.

Our ears, which have been more carried away with the vain chaunting of Papists, than with the reverent singing of the Church, and have more greedily attended on lies than on the truth, that have heard sin without grief, and filled themselves with unchaste songs, must so be framed and fashioned anew, as we lend them only to the word, to gracing speeches, to chaste communication willingly; and whatsoever we shall hear contrary to these, to stop them up, and to make known our hearty misliking of them.

Our tongues have in time past either in praying ignorantly, vainly, and superstitiously, or in not praying at all, in abusing the name of God, in irreverent, uncharitable, unchaste, untrue speeches set themselves against the Lord and his people; now they are to be the

spokesmen of our hearts in understanding, in truth, in sincerity praying to the Lord, they must be the most glorious advancers of God his glory, they must be dipped and seasoned with salt, with grace, with reverence, with meekness, chastity, and truth, as the unfeigned witnesses of a renewed mind.

Our hands having been lift up to false gods, being full of blood, violence, concupiscence, bribery, deceit, and false dealing, are now to be stretched out to the true God, and to show forth his power in relieving the needy, in giving of alms, in helping the afflicted, in punishing all filthiness, bribery, and falsehood unto the uttermost.

Lastly, our feet that have run so swiftly to sacring and to the resurrection, that have run so fast to Idol service, to hunting's, bearbaitings, and interludes on the Sabbath day, that have been so full of contemptuous disobedience, so ready to shed blood, so swift and nimble in dancing, so expert in carrying the things of other men, must now run to the Church of God, to the hearing of the word, to offer pure prayers, to receive the Sacraments, and must now run as fast from those profane exercises on the Lord's day, they must now carry us to prisons, to sick persons, to the house of mourning, we must from henceforth number our steps, and order them a right, to the glory of God, and the good of our brethren. Thus it behooveth us to do, that will make claim with comfort to the death and resurrection of Christ, namely, as we desire to have our sins pardoned by his cross, so must we desire to have our sins in some measure pared away by the virtue of his cross; and as we desire to have the imputation of Christ his righteousness by his resurrection, so must we pray for the communication of his holiness in some measure to work in us righteousness by the power of his resurrection, laboring from henceforth to have our conversation in heaven, and being risen with Christ, to seek those things that are

above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, Coloss. 3:1. But alas, many men would have him a Christ to answer for their sins, that they may be justified, but they labor not that he should crucify sin in them, whereby they might be mortified, and what is this, but to make a mock of Christ? And yet I do not here mind to exclude the forgiveness of sin by Christ, nay I rather grant a continual forgiveness of sin through Christ, adding only this, that as we desire to have our sins pardoned, so we should desire to have them purified. Neither do I dream of being clean without sin, or of any imagined perfection in this life; but I require that we should not wittingly and willingly lie in sin; and though we cannot come to perfection, yet to strive to come to perfection. For we are said to be new creatures not in being perfectly renewed, but in that we are in renewing, and finding the remnants of sin withstanding the work of new birth, we look for Christ a Redeemer to make an end of sin in us. Wherefore we must beware of the doctrine of heretics, imagining great things of perfection, as also of the profaneness of hypocrites and dissembling professors; we must neither be too righteous, nor too sinful, neither too wise, nor too foolish, neither to look for Christ alone to be without us, neither to imagine any spiritual Christ to be within us, neither with proud heretics must we please ourselves with any indwelling righteousness, neither must we rest in Christ without new birth, as the drowsy Protestants: for if thou liest in sin, thou art not in Christ, because old things are gone, and new things have succeeded their place. It is marvelous that the wretched heretics cannot see their imperfections, when they still hunger, and eat, thirst, and drink, sometimes subject to sickness, sometime needing marriage, and dying as well as other men; all which things should be laid from them if they were perfectly invested in Christ, and already had entered into the kingdom of glory, where we shall neither need to eat, to drink, to sleep, where we shall neither marry, nor give in marriage, there dwelleth incorruption, and immortality. No more

than are they perfect in this life, than they need not these outward things, and still they shall show themselves unperfect, whilst they shall show themselves to stand in need of them. We then groan here under infirmity, and hope for our perfection in the life to come; and this is the excellency of Christiana. But where is this wisdom, where is this faith in Christ his righteousness, where is this new heart, new mind, and new affections? Where be these new bodies, where is this bold courage in persecution, and comfortable looking for Jesus Christ to come a Redeemer, so that with a joyful heart we can think of our resurrection? Alas we are as yet but chickens, we are but as children, we are but as babes in Christ, and tender novices, yet cleaving to the cradle, and sticking to our swaddling bands, and well are we if we so be, and labor still to grow on.

But let us further consider of the words of the Apostle: In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision. We have heard before that the false Apostles and secret supplanners of Paul's preaching did not mislike that the Gospel should be preached, but therewithal they would induce Moses his government, and the discipline of the Jewish traditions. Against this mixture of the Law and the Gospel of Moses and Christ the Apostle beateth, fearing least a little leaven would sour a great piece of dough. Against such, the teachers of our times had need to preach, for many make a mingle mangle of religion, neither flat Papists, nor sound Protestants, who not for any conscience sake, but for the easing of their flesh provide a safe shelter against the storms of persecution. The Jews rejoiced in that they were circumcised, the Gentiles rejoiced in that they were not circumcised: but both rejoiced amiss, saith the Apostle, in that they should rather rejoice that Christ Jesus was crucified, than that their foreskin was either cut or not cut. Again, by circumcision in this place the Apostle meaneth all other ceremonies, putting part for the whole, whereby he would show, that

no ceremonies whatsoever, no not circumcision, whereof their Doctors so much vaunted themselves, could do anything to a new creature. Now if Moses his ceremonies, which in their time and place had some authority from God were not available hereunto; then man's traditions, which at no time nor in any place are in season, or credit, in that they never were authorized by the Lord, can neither be means nor fruits, neither causes nor effects of regeneration. If then the Jews were deceived with their ceremonies, as the Papists were by their traditions, what shall we think of our traditions? For, if the Lord would not suffer his own ordinances, which for their time were lawful, then he will never suffer traditions, which were never his, but man's. What shall we then say? We have pompous Papists, and politic Protestants. Ask the Papists if they rejoice in the cross of Christ, and if they be new creatures? They say they be so, and they show it in their crosses, altars, holidays, metallic gods, banners, roods, resurrection, in finger crosses, in crosses at their lying down, in crosses at their rising up, in their oil, salt, wafer cakes, pans, ashes, and such like. Here is their rejoicing. Well, suppose we had to deal with the more learned Papists, the Jews did not only now rejoice in their ceremonies and circumcision, but they thought it good policy to retain these things with the preaching of the Gospel, and our more subtle Papists will confess, that their traditions are not specially and only to be rejoiced in, but they will have them mingled with the Gospel as necessary helps, and furtherance's thereof. But in what order soever they are placed, of them Paul here remembereth them to make nothing for a new creature. And as in civil matters fools to avoid one extreme run into another, some seeing the superstitions of these men, and that popish religion is more ceremonious than the Jewish religion, straight affirm, that neither Baptism, nor want of Baptism; neither receiving of the Sacrament, nor want of it; neither hearing, nor not hearing; praying, nor not praying, is available to a new creature. And these Anabaptists, and heretical family of the

doctrine of love so far reject holidays, that they take away the Lord's Day also; and as under the pretense of the Gospel they take away the set days of fasting, which were to the Jews, they reject fasting altogether, and wholly relinquish that exercise, unless they maintain a Sabbath in resting from sin, and continue the fasting in fasting from sin. Thus we see how we sail between two rocks, and between two flats, and therefore need the stern of God his spirit and government of the word to sail aright. We must not think that the Apostle in speaking of a new creature excludeth, but rather includeth the means to come to this new creature. For both our Savior Christ, and the Apostles teach as well by practice as by precept, that we must hear the word, offer up our prayers, receive the sacraments, and reverence true discipline. First, our Savior Christ exhorteth us to search the Scriptures, which testify of him, and commandeth them that have ears to hear, speaking most sharply even against them that hear not fruitfully. Paul, 1. Thess. 5, forewarneth us not to quench the Spirit, nor to despise prophesying. And 1. Pet. 2:2, the Apostle exhorteth the Jews as new born babes to desire the sincere milk of the word. As for prayer besides that our Savior Christ did commend the use of it to his disciples, he also prescribed them and us a form of prayer, whereby we might level our requests. And Paul often stirreth up the Churches, unto whom he wrote, continually to frequent this exercise. Of the Sacraments the Apostle speaketh plentifully, 2. Corinth. 10, 2. Cor. 11, 2. Cor. 15. as also of discipline; 1. Cor. 4, 2. Cor. 5, 2. Cor. 10. And although the Apostles abrogated the Jewish Sabbath, yet they substituted the Lord's Day, Act. 20, 1. Corinth. 16, Revel. 2. And albeit we have not a prescript time of fasting, as had the Jews, yet we know Christ told his disciples, that there was a time to fast in, as then the Bridegroom should be taken from them, and the Apostles in their election and instituting of Preachers fasted. So that we affirm nothing to help to true joy but a new creature, and the means to a new creature.



It remaineth: And as many as walk according to this rule, peace shall be upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. That the Apostle might show, that this was no special prerogative to himself alone, but a benefit common to all, not a work of supererogation in him, but a duty required of others, he saith, As many &c. As if he should say, Let no man look to have peace in his conscience, and mercy at the hands of God, unless he can thus rejoice in the cross of Christ. And by the way observe this mark of a faithful Teacher, he layeth not any charge upon others, until he had applied it to himself, and from his own practice he adviseth us. The word which he here useth, is a rule, whereby he noteth such a thing, as a Christian man cannot well want, being a chief instrument, which worketh in us mortification and sanctification. He termeth it not a good counsel, or a good advice, which we may take up and lay down at our pleasure, which if we could do, it were well, if we do it not, it is no great matter, as the Papists account of the spiritual interpretation of the Law, which our Savior Christ useth, Matth. 5. For Popery, which is no better than country Divinity, thinketh it were a good thing if we could live so carefully: but it shaketh off this thing as a charge, and will not acknowledge it to be a rule, wherewith they stand bound before the Lord. A rule, we know, is commonly used in building, leveling, or framing, whereby one thing is made fit for another, and therefore usual to Carpenters, Masons, Geometers, or such, who measure all things by square and compass. Now because there is a glorious building in the word, and a man needeth continually to be built up in Jesus Christ, to have his affections levelled, his heart framed to faith and obedience, the Apostle borroweth this word rule. But what is this rule? Be it far from me, that I should rejoice, &c. So that we must especially rejoice in our sins pardoned, in the world crucified, in our hearts, bodies, and souls renewed. This is the rule of all. And why? Is it not rather an effect than a rule? Yes, but it is usual to put the name of the effect for the cause, and the fruit for the means: as we may see

Jam. 1:27. Pure religion and undefiled before God is to visit the fatherless: that is, the effect and fruit of true religion, which God requireth with the hearing of his word, is to visit the fatherless. And Isaiah. 58:6. Is not this the fasting that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, &c. That is, is not this the fruit of fasting, which I have chosen? And so likewise is it meant of the Sabbath in the same place, the fruit and effect whereof is to rest from sin. But why then doth the holy Ghost rather name the effect than the means, the fruit than the cause? Even because though we have the means, and do not use them to effect, it were altogether unprofitable, as we see many carnal professors, who rest too long in the means, but make no conscience to show the effect of them. What then? Shall we so rest in the effects, as with the Heretics of our time we should condemn the means? Shall we not eat and drink, because we live not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the word of God? Shall we not build, because unless the Lord helpeth, the builder buildeth but in vain? Nay, as we confess, that the means without the effect are unprofitable: so we affirm, that to come to the effect we must carefully use the means. Wherefore because the cause not producing it effect is nothing worth, the effect is rather set down than ye cause. Let not a man separate those things, which God hath joined together. If we rest in our Sacraments, as the Jews in their Circumcision, we shall never see the fruit of them. If we keep the Sabbath, if we use fasting, until our bodies be made most lithe, and labor not to become a new creature, all is in vain, we separate those things which God hath joined together, that is, the fruit from the means. Again, if on the other side we think now we must obey and not hear the word, if it be all that God requireth to do good, and not to pray, or that we can believe enough without the help of the sacraments, we deceive ourselves with a false imagination of righteousness, and we make as great divorcement on the other side of the means from the effect, as before we make a separation of the

effect from the means. Ask now the Papists what is their rule, and they will show many means, as the rule of Heremites, of Dominican Friars, of their Franciscan Monks, of their Augustine Friars, and such like. Demand of them what rules they have of their effects; they will say, they are come out of the world to live in monkery, they have their shavings, pilgrimages, whipping of their own bodies, voluntary and monastical vows, traditions, and such like. But come to the other rabble, who are worse than the beasts of Egypt, forsaking the sweet land of Canaan, and they will deny all means, and brag they never so much of effects, yet in pure effects they be most barren hypocrites. If they were as wise as Solomon, or as holy as David, or as zealous as Paul, yet they might frequent the Temple, and think it a blessing to be in Zion, and rejoice in the company of Christians. But to leave these, let us learn as much as we cast off the traditions of the Pharisees, so much to put on the sweet yoke of Christ, and let us carefully use the word, and with the word join prayer, and to prayer add practice, using the sacraments, and by them grow in faith, that by faith we may increase in repentance, and with the cause marrying the effect, and from the fruit never divorce the means, because God is neither pleased with our fruitless ceremonies, if we rest in the means, neither with our holy hypocrisy, if we refuse his ordinance. This rule the Apostle saith, is both for the preachers, and for the people: for preachers, because he opposed this rule against the rule of certain false teachers: for the people, in that he nameth them here the Israel of God.

By this word peace, he meaneth the favor of God, or the good success in our enterprises: by mercy, he understandeth the goodness of God in pardoning our sins, and relieving of our infirmities. First, it is probable, that he speaketh of these things to Teachers as well to discourage the false teachers, as to embolden the pure Preachers of the Gospel against all the glorious assaults of their adversaries.

Again, because the preachers of the word have taken upon them the guiding and government of the people as well in life as in doctrine, and in good example to go in and out before them, he preventeth the subtlety of Satan, who might by the evil slanders of the false Apostles move these men to some remission in their calling. And to put away this temptation, the Apostle Paul putteth them in mind of this rule, and propounding here a promise, he encourageth them, notwithstanding their persecutions, against all attempts of men, and assureth them of God his merciful protection. This promise of the favor of God to his faithful Ministers is not only in this place, but used elsewhere of the holy Ghost, as Deuter. 33:11. Moses the man of God blessing the tribes of Israel, saith thus of Levi the Priest of the Lord, Bless ô Lord his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite thorough the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again. Thus he comforteth Levi, showing that his ministry should not be contemned without revengement. And Zacharias. 3:1, 2. it is said, And he showed me Joshua the hie Priest, standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him, and the Lord said unto Satan, the Lord reprove thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem reprove thee. Where we see, that where God his true Ministers are, there is a strife with Satan, who is ready for them, but yet they are before the Angel, that is, Christ, who will smite the proud force of Satan, that he shall not be able to withstand us. And Christ showeth, that he hath a common ministry in and with his preaching, by them beseeching some, by them also threatening others: and therefore as he hath given them gifts for his glory, so he is armed with power to confound all that lift up an high hand against them. Hereupon he so much authorizeth his Apostles, telling them, whatsoever they bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Neither doth this or such like promises only concern them, which in every

point of doctrine and discipline are sound, and without error, but even them also, who holding carefully the foundation, which is Christ Jesus, through some infirmity of judgment build timber, hay, or stubble, as we may see 1. Cor. 3. Wherefore, if a man preach that we are all condemned through sin, and that there is no salvation without Christ, and no condemnation to them that believe in Christ, and teacheth that we must be crucified to the world, and become new creatures, though he doth not all other things perfectly and absolutely, yet keeping this foundation, he shall find mercy. But if a man destroy the Temple of God, that is, labor more about the establishing of ceremonies, and maintaining of errors, than he doth to maintain and establish the power of the Gospel, the Lord will surely destroy him. As then we dare not say, that a man purely preaching Christ crucified, though he fail in some smaller points of discipline, shall be damned: so we affirm, that a man maintaining corruptions, and nothing laboring to preach the cross of Christ, and neglecting the doctrine of being crucified to the world, and of becoming a new creature, is to fear, least that if he repent not, the Lord destroy him. For if they destroy the Temple of God, that is, the people of God by not teaching the truth, and by keeping out from entering into the truth, not only themselves, but others, the Lord will undoubtedly destroy such. This place maketh much also for our comfort against heresy and popery, because as God promiseth peace and mercy to them that preach and embrace the doctrine of our salvation by Christ; so he threateneth on the contrary his curse and vengeance both to the preachers and followers of the contrary doctrine, howsoever they hope for a day, or contemn the flock of Christ. For the same God that made the Israelites a valiant people in pursuing their enemies, so long as they continued in the rule he had appointed them; brought them low, and made them fly before their enemies, when they forsook this rule, so as one chased ten of them, and ten put to flight a hundred of them. Let us boldly then both

preach and receive this doctrine of Christ, and not fear any corrupt Teachers whatsoever, seeing their supposed felicity shall be accursed, and our supposed misery shall be blessed. Which curse manifestly appeareth in many Papists this day, that become rebels, traitors, and murderers, as also in heretics, who are become mad and frantic, the Lord watching over them for evil and not for good.

And upon the Israel of God. Here with the Preachers the Apostle joineth the people of God, showing that they that willingly hear, and carefully embrace the doctrine, That by the law we are condemned for sin, and by the Gospel we are saved through faith in Christ, and therefore from henceforth endeavor to have this world crucified unto us, and us to be crucified to the world, and to become new creatures, shall also be saved, and find mercy and peace. Israel properly signifieth one that prevaieth with God. Now, because there was Israel in the flesh, which many did boast of, he here speaketh of the Israel in the spirit, as he speaketh of the Jews Rom. 2, and therefore calleth it the Israel of God, making a distinction between that counterfeit Israel, resting in the ceremony and outward title of the name, and that true Israel, whose praise is of God, and not of men. Before the Jews took the whole privilege of the covenant of God, but now the Gentiles also are contained in the covenant, because all ceremonies abolished, there is one shepherd, and one sheepfold. This promise then belongeth no more to all professors, than to all preachers, but to them alone which are truly called to be the true Israel of God. Whereby we are to learn, that all Christians shall not obtain mercy and peace, but the Christians of God, that is true Christians in life and doctrine. Wherefore all counterfeit Christians are to fear their estate, can they never so well say their catechism, were they never so well baptized, or confirmed, were they never so often coming to the Church to hear the word and receive the sacrament. Now if Israel the beloved of God not rejoicing in the cross

of Christ, not being crucified to the world, not being a new creature, shall not find mercy and peace, what comfort are we to look for being Gentiles wanting the same things? And yet we must remember the consolation above named, that though Christians be in some points infants in doctrine, judgment, life, and conversation, yet if they carefully hold the foundation and build thereupon a godly life in truth and sincerity, though in some weakness, infirmity and imperfection, they shall obtain mercy and peace in the end. The truth of this promise, and sure wrath of God on the wicked may appear to us both in the life and in the death of the true and counterfeit Christians, in seeing what mercy and peace appeareth in the one, what anguish and impatience breaketh forth in the other. The dear Martyrs of God neither were afraid of death on the one side, but rejoiced, in that they were made worthy to suffer for the truth, neither senseless and blockish as feeling no pain on the other side. The learned heretics which would seem to suffer, either yielded being overcome with the pain, or else died like stocks and stones, being half dead before they came to be executed. As for others that have died in their beds, the Lord hath given a manifest distinction between the true prophets and false teachers, between Christian professors, and obstinate Papists. The children of God ever have labored to make confession of their faith, to make known their hope, to witness their abundant joy at their departure, neither overcome with immoderate fear, neither sinking down in too much blockishness: the other have died some desperately without hope, some presumptuously without true faith, some murmuringly without all joy.

FINIS.

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