

THE SAINT'S DESIRE;

OR

A Cordial for a Fainting Soul.

Declaring that in Christ's righteousness only, {and in nothing else} there is life, happiness, peace, strength, comfort, joy, and all fullness of perfection.

Also, the happy estate of a man in Christ, the life he lives, wherein he is exercised, his experiences, and his desires to enjoy God, &c.

"Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed." Isa. 45:24.

"I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." Psal. 71:16.

"And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." I John 1:4.

By SAMUEL RICHARDSON.

I heard sweet Jesus Christ unto me say,
Rise my love, my fair one, and come away.

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Samuel Richardson

(1602–1658)

Biographical Sketch

Samuel Richardson is essentially known only as an author; as no memorials exist of his private life, and his works afford but scanty materials to supply their place. According to the best information available, his date of birth was about 1602 and his death occurred sometime in 1658. It is reported that he was from the Northamptonshire region of England; a county located in the southern part of the East Midlands, about 75 miles northwest of London. One source mentioned that he appears to have been "a substantial London tradesman and was certainly one of the shrewdest and most influential of the Baptist leaders in London." From his writings we can easily observe that Richardson was a Firm Advocate for the Cause of Religious Liberty; a Loyal Supporter of the Government of Oliver Cromwell, and the Parliamentary Cause; and above all an Exalter of Christ Alone & fervent Setter Forth of Christ's Glory & Preeminence in Salvation. He most definitely was a formative leader of the early English Particular Baptists, and one of the twelve signers of the 1644; and slightly revised 1646 London Confession of Faith. In fact; as one studies these two Confessions, Richardson's influence seems predominant, and one cannot but wonder; in light of his own writings, the precise wording of the Confession itself; {especially the 1646 Confession;} and closely comparing its contents to the writings of Kiffin & Spilsbury, {to whom, most often the Confession is ascribed;} if he was not indeed the chief compiler of these articles; if not the immediate author himself?

The signers of the 1644 Confession were: William Kiffin, Thomas Patient, John Spilsbury, George Tipping, Samuel Richardson, Thomas Skippard, Thomas Munday, Thomas Gunne, John Mabbatt, John Webb, Thomas Killcop, Paul Hobson, Thomas Goare, Joseph Phelpes and Edward Heath. These were demonstrably some of the major Particular Baptist leaders of

the period. Notable names added to the 1646 Confession were: Benjamin Coxe and Hanserd Knollys.

A fascinating entry from the Journal of the House of Commons, dated January 29th, 1645/46, tells us that Richardson and Benjamin Coxe were summoned before the Civil Authorities to give an account of this {1644} Confession. The Journal entry is as follows: "Resolved, &c., that the Serjeant do apprehend Benjamin Coxe and Samuel Richardson, the Parties that delivered a Pamphlet at the Door to the Members of this House, intituled, A Confession of Faith of Seven Congregations or Churches of Christ in London, which are commonly, but unjustly, called Anabaptists; and do take Bail of them, to appear, from time to time, at the Committee for plundered Ministers; {the Committee for Plundered Ministers were loyalists to the Presbyterian Cause, essentially Presbyterian henchmen, appointed by the Long Parliament, in 1643, to suppress and persecute any who would deviate from their form of Papal hierarchy;} and that it be referred to the Committee of plundered Ministers, to examine the Book, and the Parties, whose Names are subscribed; to send for the Licenser and Printer; and state the Business to the House with all Speed; and that the Committee of plundered Ministers shall have Power to advise with such of the Assembly of Divines, as they shall think fit to send for upon this Business. Ordered, &c., that the Masters and Wardens of the Company of Stationers do forthwith take diligent Care to suppress a Pamphlet, intituled, A Confession of Faith of Seven Congregations or Churches of Christ in London, which are commonly, but unjustly, called Anabaptists. Ordered, &c., that the Serjeant at Arms do immediately send some of his Servants to seize and suppress the said Books. Ordered, &c., that the Parties that delivered the said Pamphlet at the Door be called in; and demanded, by what Order and Authority the said Pamphlet was published; and who licensed it. Samuel Richardson and Benjamin Coxe were accordingly called in; and, being demanded, who printed the said Pamphlet, said, one Simonds; and that he got it licensed; and Richardson said, that the Printer told him, that Mr. Downham licensed it; that this was a Second Edition; that they had Meetings every First Day of the Week; that there were Seven Congregations of them

English, and One French; and that the Subscribers were two of every Congregation.”

In the 1647 work by Richardson, entitled, *Justification by Christ Alone*; there is recommendation/preface to the work by William Kiffin, which ends in the following statement: “Beloved, these are the last times wherein it behooves you to beg with much earnestness, strength from the Lord that He may put straight steps to your feet so that you may walk to His praise, exalting Him alone as your life and glory. This was the main end of the Author presenting these few lines to your consideration. Wherefore, read it carefully and noble Berean - like, try all things, and hold fast that which is good. It shall be his desire, who desires nothing more in this world than your growth in the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and your walking as the children of the light, that the God of all grace may cause all grace to abound in you to His own glory; So prays he; that is yours in the Lord, in all services of duty and love. William Kiffin.” Note in particular Kiffin’s remarks as to that which he felt was pre-dominant in these writings; namely, the exaltation of Christ “alone as your life and glory;” a principle which our author never departed from.

Though nothing exists by way of a memoir, we learn from some passages gleaned from his “*Divine Contemplations*” book, that prior to 1640; whilst under a black cloud of spiritual bewilderment, Richardson was brought by the effectual in-working of the Spirit to an acknowledgement of the true gospel, in seeing that his salvation was accomplished by Christ on the Cross; for he says that, “about twelve years ago, {written in 1649,} in the viewing of my defects in prayer, earnestness, &c., I had prayed and concluded that if I had the Spirit of God, I should not have so prayed as I did; then I concluded that I had been fourteen years or more mistaken; afterwards I resolved that if God had intended me good, he would have manifested it to me before this time, then was I as fully satisfied as ever I was satisfied of anything in the world, that I should never be saved; I thought my condition was very miserable; but in this extremity I apprehended no remedy in this condition, till an interpreter, {very possibly the printed sermons of Tobias Crisp, whose writings he valued,} one of a thousand, did by the truth convince me, that I did believe, and should be saved; and I was

forced to confess that he that did desire to believe, did believe; yet I was not fully settled until I did see that my salvation was effected by Christ on the Cross, &c."

Also; referring to a time when his understanding was still darkened; that is, prior to the Lord granting him true repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth of the Gospel; he recalls how that he had once been "wrapped up and sunk in Arminianism," darkness; and so says that he would have "so continued, but the Lord in mercy pulled me out. Oh how sweet {says he} should that love be to us, which keeps us from these errors, or brings us out of them; and the Lord will in his time be full Redemption to all his." {Saint's Desire} Again; a few years later he says, "we did walk in the way of works for salvation, till God did hedge up our way with thorns; for our works were those thorns which did pierce us and wound us at the heart, and instead of saving us they killed us; these thorns did so prick us, that we were not able to go any further in that way, for God opened our eyes that we saw nothing but death in them, then we ceased to work for life and salvation." {Divine Contemplations}

Early in 1645 Richardson defended the Baptist position in his book entitled, "Some Brief Considerations on Doctor Featley; his book, entitled, the Dipper Dipt." Daniel Featley {1582-1645} was a leading Calvinist Disputant of the 1620's; and a translator of the King James Version of the Bible; who fell into difficulties with Parliament due to his loyalty to Charles I in the 1640s, and therefore imprisoned towards the end of his life. It was in prison where he came into contact with the Baptist minister Henry Denne, {himself imprisoned at the time for preaching against infant baptism,} and upon their release Denne {seemingly hurt by the sharp tone of Featley's attack} challenged Featley to a public disputation on the subject; and soon drew up his own reply, in his book entitled, "Antichrist Unmasked."

Richardson's book soon followed; and without any introduction he went straight on the attack with the following seven propositions: I. Dr. Featley; his secret and heinous accusing the honorable Parliament. II. That he is guilty of greater errors, than to go into the water to be dipt. III. His false Accusations against the Anabaptists, examined and answered.

IV. How in a Disputation he discovered his subtilty and pride. V. That he justifies dipping in rivers to be a lawful manner of baptizing. VI. Some Reasons alleged against Infants being baptized. A question proposed to consideration, that it if be an error to be baptized again, whether the punishment, some would have inflicted upon them, and some have suffered, be not too great? VII. How many sorts of Anabaptists he saith there are, and what they hold.

Regarding these 'greater' errors from his 2nd propositions, he names, amongst others, the following: "Doctor Featley holds these errors, viz., that Archbishops, &c., are not Antichristian, {pg.32;} and that the Ceremonies of the Church of England are not Idolatrous nor Antichristian, {pg.32;} and that baptism is a means of salvation, {pg.40;} ... and furthermore also the Doctor saith, that Christ is the Son of God, not only in respect of His temporal generation, but also in respect of his eternal generation, {pg.3;} and that the Spirit is said to proceed from the Father, because he proceeds from the Father originally; and that the Spirit hath a dependence from both, {pg.23;} but if Christ, as He was God had a beginning, he could not be God. How can Christ, as He is God, be the Son of God in respect of His eternal generation any more than the Father is His Son by eternal generation? Secondly, if the Spirit of God be God, {as He is} equal with the Father and the Son, all Three infinite, without beginning, each having the whole Divine Essence and yet there is but One Essence; how can the Spirit proceed from the Father originally, any more than the Father from the Spirit? And how can the Spirit of God have any more dependence upon the Father and the Son, than they have upon Him, seeing whatsoever is infinite can have no dependence upon anything? Therefore the Doctor's words contain in them the nature of blasphemy; and to define how One can be Three, and Three but One, and always so remains, is above the reach of any man. I may say to him as Luke 6:41,42."

This last assertion is of particular interest, for herein we detect a statement which also was the basis of a revision of the 1644 London Confession. The 1644 Confession regarding the Being of God, and more specifically the Godhead; {Father, Son & Holy Spirit;} reads: "In this Godhead, there is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; being every one of them one and the same

God; and therefore not divided, but distinguished one from another by their several properties; the Father being from Himself, the Son of the Father from everlasting, the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son." Note the careful revision and re-wording of the 1646 Confession which reads: "In this Divine and Infinite Being, there is the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; each having the whole divine essence, yet the essence undivided; all infinite, without any beginning, therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being, but distinguished by several peculiar relative properties."

Notice that the revised 1646 Confession was careful to stay to the wording of Scripture; or rather say no more than the Scriptures positively affirmed; and for this reason they eliminated the Papal concept {which was blindly embraced by their Protestant cohorts} of what is called the Eternal Generation of the Son of God; to some a heretical affirmation that sets forth that Christ's Supreme Godhead is a derivative Godhead; that it is not original, absolute, self-existent, independent and eternal; and such a denial of his self-existence is {according to some} a subtle denial that he exists at all; that is, as an absolute, eternal, independent and self-existent God. {Is Jesus Christ the eternal God or not?} The same is true of God the Holy Spirit, both God the Holy Spirit and God the Word being self-existent in their One Divine Nature. Likewise there is no mention made of the concept of three distinct persons in the Godhead; an almost universal phrase found in all 'Protestant' Confessions, which {again, according to some,} unscriptural and irreconcilable concept destroys the Unity and Absolute Oneness of God; for three divine persons, would be three divine individuals, and what would that be but three gods? This is speculating on the mode of God's existence further than he has seen fit to reveal in his Word. Whilst God has declared Himself as Father, Word and Holy Ghost, Three, and that whilst He is thus Three, He is absolutely ONE; which Divine Declaration is to be received, and with it, as made, faith rests satisfied.

Between 1647 & 1649 Richardson's heart was engaged in setting forth a definitive declaration of gospel truth; and published {in 1647} his doctrinal tract entitled "Justification by Christ Alone;" which in essence was a reply to objections made against his earlier work entitled "The Saint's Desire;" made by

one Mr. Huet & Holmes. {Apparently Nathaniel Holmes – 1599-1678, who was an English Independent theologian and preacher.} In this important work, Richardson argues against the concept that any aspect of eternal salvation, be it legal or vital, is by external means. Richardson wrote to affirm “that we are justified by Christ alone and not by our believing,” and to set forth “the true place of faith in salvation as an evidence of interest in Christ but not a joint-partner with Christ.” To the potential objection some would make to his position; namely, that “God has decreed the means as well as the end, and faith is one of the means,” Richardson says, “we grant God has decreed the end and the means, and whatsoever God has decreed shall unavoidably come to pass. But we deny that faith is any means of our Redemption, Justification, or Salvation. Nothing but the Lord Jesus Christ is the means of our salvation. There are means that are necessary to the revealing and enjoying the comfort of it, as the Holy Spirit and ministers to reveal it and faith to receive it; also, there be fruits and effects of the love of God, as faith, love, and obedience to Christ...yet these are no means of our salvation.”

Regarding the vital issue of a sinner’s justification before God; Richardson says, “some place justification to be only in the conscience. But we place it only in Christ where it is, and to whom it belongs. Justification consists in taking away of sin. None but Christ can do that. Justification and acceptation are one. For without justification there is no acceptation; and seeing that we are accepted in Christ, we are justified in Him. If our justification be a spiritual blessing, {as it is,} then it is in Christ where all spiritual blessings are, “Blessed be God, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ.” {Eph.1:3} Where our redemption and righteousness are, there is our justification. Righteousness and justification are one. This we have not in ourselves but in Christ, “who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” {I Cor.1:30} “In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” {Col.1:14} Our justification is a part of our completeness. Therefore, where we are complete there we are justified. But we are not complete in ourselves, but in Him. {Col.2:10} If all things on which depends

our happiness were accomplished, {Jn.19:28,} then was our justification also. For without that no man could be saved."

In reference to the important distinction between ascribing our justification to an act of faith, as opposed to Christ alone; he makes this observation, "men please themselves with a conceit that they do not dishonor Jesus Christ in ascribing their justification to faith, because faith is a grace of Christ, and so from Christ. But, by the same reason, we may ascribe our justification to love, patience, temperance, goodness, etc., because they are from Christ and fruits of the same spirit faith is. {Gal.5:22} And may we not also by the same reason ascribe our justification to all our spiritual performances such as prayers, tears, and all our good works, because the power by which we do these is from Christ? "For without me," Christ says, "ye can do nothing." {Jn.15:5} Oh all ye sons and daughters of the Most High, lift up your voice, and cry, No inherent holiness to justification, as well as no works of the Law; for whatsoever is in us, and acted by us, and passes through us, is defiled by us, as "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." {Isa.64:6} "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." etc. {Tit.3:5-9} "Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." {Is.45:24-25} Christ is our Righteousness; "in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." {Jer.23:6} "I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." {Ps.71:16} "My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long." {Ps.71:24} No other righteousness can be compared to this!"

In 1648 Thomas Killcop {Particular Baptist & Millenarian; who signed the 1644 & 1646 London Confession,} attempted to refute Richardson's "Justification by Christ Alone" in his work entitled "Ancient & Durable Gospel," which was a millenarian work that oddly maintained that the redemption of the elect was not accomplished by Christ alone on the cross, but would occur at his Second Coming, at which time, according to

Killcop, the Jews would be restored to Palestine; and Christ's Kingdom established on the earth.

Though this attack was met with only a brief rebuttal on the part of Richardson, {who asserted that such an attack "deserved no answer;" and that Killcop's book was but a labyrinth of contradictions, and thus needed no answer to throw it down, as it would fall alone,} we can only imagine how painful such a departure from clear Scriptural ground must have been to these who just a few years previous rejoiced together in the following affirmation of their mutual faith in Christ, in accord with their Confession of 1646, in stating that, "Jesus Christ by his death did purchase salvation for the elect that God gave unto him; these only have interest in him, and fellowship with him, for whom He makes intercession to His Father in the behalf of, and unto them alone doth God by his Spirit apply this redemption, as also the free gift of eternal life is given to them, and none else." So likewise, "those that have union with Christ, are justified from all their sins by the blood of Christ; which justification is a gracious and full acquittance of a guilty sinner from all sin, by God, through the satisfaction that Christ hath made by His death for all their sins. And this applied through faith." The Confession concludes with this declaration: "We know but in part, and that we are ignorant of many things which we desire and seek to know; and if any shall do us that friendly part to show us from the Word of God that we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful to God and them. But if any man shall impose upon us anything that we see not to be commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ, we should, in his strength, rather embrace all reproaches and tortures of men, to be stripped of all outward comforts, and if it were possible, to die a thousand deaths, rather than to do anything against the least tittle of the truth of God, or against the light of our own consciences." Such deviation from sacred truth necessitated separation from evil; and so Richardson asserts that "concerning the doubt which does arise in many concerning communion, whether we may have communion in the ordinance of the supper with such as hold contrary to this truth so much contended for, I answer to the question, whether we may walk in communion with those that deny this doctrine. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" {Amos 3:3} The saints cannot walk together

warrantably and so not comfortably without these two things. A oneness of faith in the principles or doctrine of Christ, known, owned, and declared. Love to the truth and to each other so as to desire to walk together. For my part, I would not join to that church who denied any foundation truth and this is one!"

Like Tobias Crisp before him; whose sermons he sought to vindicate in his well-written tract entitled, "In Defense of Crisp;" the foul blur of Antinomianism was hurled upon him, by those who mingled Law & Gospel; but like those who were accused of Antinomian tendencies before him, Richardson was ever careful to maintain good works and obedience to all Gospel precepts; but never in order to obtain any aspect of salvation, but as flowing spontaneously from a heart overcome with love to Christ. He says, in his book entitled "Saints Desire;" that "by nature we are prone to desire liberty, and abuse it; we need to be exhorted that we use not our liberty as an occasion to the flesh, to sloth and ease, &c. {Gal.5:13} Liberty to sin is no liberty, but the greatest bondage that can be to have a free heart to serve God, and the lets outwardly removed is sweet liberty to enjoy God, is liberty to be set free by Christ from sin, Satan, hell, is to be freed indeed; and though we have nothing to do to be saved, we have something to do for his glory, which is to be our meat and drink, therefore let no difficulty hinder thee in serving thy Lord, say not it is impossible, consider, Luke 1:6 & II Pet.3:14. Press after perfection, the nearer the better, watch and pray to prevent sin, to do good; make it thy business to keep Christ's commands."

His coming to the aid of Doctor Crisp, who could not answer his critics, {Crisp died of small-pox in 1643, at the early age of 42,} was according to Richardson out of pure necessity. He says, "neither do I know that I take any pleasure in writing against any, no further than I think myself bound in conscience to witness to the truth, and then especially when others omit it. Mr. Geree's book {Stephen Geree "Doctrine of the Antinomians," published in 1644} against Dr. Crisp has been published above four years, and no answer given to it by any. Neither have I heard that any other hath given any answer to the other foul Treatises. The most of them have been published several years. O ye that love the truth! Is it a small matter to you for Christ to be dishonored, and his truth condemned? Do

ye not regard what violence is offered to the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice? If yea, why are ye so silent as if there were none to answer?"

In 1649 Richardson brought forth another work entitled "Divine Consolations; a fountain of life and comfort. Declaring that the Elect were justified from the punishment of sin by Christ, when he was upon the Cross; and the objections against it are answered. And that Christ alone is our life, happiness, peace, strength, comfort, joy, and all perfection." This work was dedicated to Oliver Cromwell, Thomas Fairfax, Henry Ireton & Major-General Thomas Harrison, all most loyal supporters of the Parliamentary Cause; of whom he says, "God hath made you special Instruments in saving this nation from ruin and destruction; he hath honoured you with his protection, presence and blessing, even to admiration...the saints love you; England fareth the better for you; the children unborn shall praise you, and bless God for you; and though there be them that revile you, yet the memorial of your names shall be forever precious." Needless to say, Richardson was a loyal supporter of the Protectorate.

From the Preface to this work we soon detect that which stirred our author in an earnest vindication of the Gospel of Christ. "Holy and beloved in the Lord; Behold I present to your view Christ crucified, which is the sum and substance of the Gospel; the Priesthood of Christ, and the sufficiency of his Sacrifice to save, is the main thing I contend for against the Papists, who say, Christ's sacrifice is not sufficient without their sacrifice. Charity saves, says one; without good works, no salvation, says another. A third says that Christ's sacrifice is not sufficient for our Salvation without believing, that believing saves, and that without believing, we cannot be saved. Ye see, they all urge a necessity of something for salvation besides Christ's Sacrifice, without which something, they say, we cannot be saved, so that they deny the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice to save, and so deny that Christ does save. For those he saves, he saves by his sacrifice. Also if Christ and something else saves us, Christ saves us not. For he is no Saviour if he be but a part of a Saviour; therefore, in adding something to Christ's sacrifice, they deny the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice so that their opinions are dishonorable to Christ. Therefore, as we tender the

honor of Jesus Christ, we are to hate and abhor them, being enemies to the Cross of Christ, and therefore abominable. If we consider how generally these are received and scarcely contradicted by any, thus believing, and Christ and believing together saves us; sure it should greatly stir us up, and provoke us to contend for the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice, though our contending should cost us our lives. There is no truth more honorable to Christ, nor of greater concernment to his glory, and our salvation, than this is. Take away anything of the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice, and our salvation is destroyed. What a dishonor were it to God to send Christ to save us, and yet for him not to save, and not to be sufficient to save. There is no opinion in the world, that my soul doth more abhor, nor against which I would more freely lay down my life for than this. This Treatise tends to exalt Christ alone."

From a second preface in the same book; we read, "Christ and him crucified is the best and most desirable object that can be presented unto your view. What can be better or more desirable. This is our happiness and glory and our chiefest joy. Joy sweet, satisfying, unmix'd, pure, spiritual, glorious, full, and eternal. There is no sweetness like to this of Christ's dying for my sins. His suffering for us the whole punishment of sin so that God will not impute sin to that soul for whom Christ died. Therefore, we are forever freed from the punishment of sin. The more we know this truth, the more sweet is Christ to us and the more fixed on Christ our hearts will be, the more we love and obey him and contend for the truth once delivered to the Saints. This subject is love, the best love, which is most sweet and full of divine consolation. In the view thereof, I trust you shall find some sweetness. And if you had not enjoyed this sweetness, you could not have sent it forth so naturally, fully and sweetly to me as you have done. I have great cause to be thankful to you, and God for you. Your love to me has caused me to dedicate this small Treatise to you as a testimony of my hearty thankfulness to you for your love. The Lord bless you and keep you from all evil. So he prays that remains; Your much obliged, Samuel Richardson." {Divine Consolations, 1649}

Richardson was no friend to the Presbyterians, who sought by their Westminster Standards to impose their form of 'holy law' upon all England. To him the Westminster Assembly

was comprised of "the men that have often deluded us, and thrust upon us error for truth; and so have deceived us and yourselves." In his work "Necessity of Toleration," 1647, he speaks of the Presbyterians in no kind terms, for he tells us, "for the matter of things they impose upon us, we find it not so written in the Word of God, therefore we slight it; for we are resolved not to presume above what is written in the Holy Scriptures, and therefore we cannot submit to you, nor to your faith. Also, you have not studied a religion for us out of the Word of God, but have borrowed us one out of Scotland, and as some say; as wicked king Ahaz brought a pattern of the altar from Damascus to Jerusalem, which is unjustifiable by the Word of God...so that we had as good be under the Pope, as under your Presbyterian check." Further on he warns us, "Mr. Presbyter, your principles are large and dangerous, for who can tell what you will judge tolerable? Such as cannot dance after your pipe, and rule in your way, you judge heretics, and they must appear before your dreadful tribunal, to receive your reproof, which is sharp and terrible, and strikes at our liberties, estates and lives. Your care is to destroy, which is contrary to the Word of the Lord, which saith, they shall not kill nor hurt in my holy hill. Is your Church of this holy hill, seeing it is so corporal?" For know this, that "it is not in the power of man to suppress errors. If you can, first, so speak to the blind and open the eyes of our understanding, as to expel the darkness that is in them; secondly, if you can command the heart and reform it; thirdly, if you can hinder and destroy the vain imaginations of men's hearts and hinder Satan's suggestions of errors, and men's speaking each to each other; if you can place light in the soul, for there is no light until God gives light, and until God speak all is nothing; if you can give the Holy Spirit to men to direct to reform them, for until the Spirit comes there is no Reformation to purpose; then are you able to suppress errors. If you cannot do these things, give place to him that can and will do these things in his time; and, in the meantime, will so order all errors to his own glory, and the good of his elect. As for the Reformation that some men cry up to suppress errors, what is it but, first, a sinful Reformation, in that it forces men to sin even against their own knowledge and conscience, for many men before they will suffer death, or be undone, will say and do

anything. Secondly, it is a foolish Reformation, in going the wrong way to work, in offering to reform the outside first; whereas God, when he reforms, begins within, at the heart, because if that be not first reformed, it is no spiritual Reformation, but a carnal and hypocritical one, as the Pharisees made clean the outside and remained filthy within. Thirdly, it is a carnal Reformation, and therefore it is attended with carnal instruments, prison and swords, &c.; whereas Christ's kingdom is spiritual, and all that belongs unto it. Fourthly, it is a cruel Reformation that hath more destruction than edification in it. It is a terrible Reformation, there waiteth on it confiscation of goods, fines, imprisonment, banishment, death with fire and sword. Is there no better cure of the pain of the head than beating out one's brains? Lastly, it is a deceitful Reformation, in that it makes men to appear to be sheep, when they are wolves; also, in that under the notion of suppressing errors, it suppresses the Truth, and stops the passage of the Gospel, which, instead of running, cannot go by reason of it."

Several of his subsequent writings were devoted to the defense of the Parliamentary Cause, and of the Government of Oliver Cromwell. In his pamphlet entitled "An Answer to London Ministers, &c., 1649;" he says, "because, therefore, you have saved our lives, and more, have not esteemed your own lives too much for us, but often have offered them up for us, we resolve to live and die with you." In the light of these words, we find it somewhat ironic that Richardson died the same year as Cromwell.

In the following passage, from a book that he published in 1656, entitled "Plain Dealing," we have his estimate of the services Cromwell had rendered to his country, and of his personal qualities as a man and governor. "His Highness aimeth at the general good of the nation, and just liberty of every man. He is also a godly man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil; though he is, nor no man else, without human frailty. He is faithful to the saints, and to these nations in whatsoever he hath undertaken from the beginning of the wars. He hath owned the poor despised people of God, and advanced many of them to a better way and means of living. He hath been an advocate for the Christians, and hath done them much good in writing, speaking, pleading for their liberty in the Long Parliament, and

fighting for their liberty. He, with others, hath hazarded his life, estate and family; and since he hath refused great offers of wealth, and worldly glory for the sake and welfare of the people of God, God hath given him more than ordinary wisdom, strength, courage, and valour. God hath been always with him, and given him great successes. He is fitted to bear burdens, and to endure all opposition and contradictions that may stand with public safety. He is a terror to his enemies; he hath a large heart, spirit, and principle, that will hold all that fear the Lord, though of different opinions and practices in religion, and seek their welfare. It is the honour of princes to pity the miserable, to relieve the oppressed, and the wrongs of the poor; he is humble and despiseth not any because poor, and is ready to hear and help them. He is a merciful man, full of pity and bounty to the poor. A liberal heart is more precious than heaven or earth. He gives in money to maimed soldiers, widows and orphans, and poor families, a thousand pound a week to supply their wants; he is not a lover of money, which is a singular and extraordinary thing. He will give, and not hoard up money as some do. I am persuaded that there is not a better friend to these nations and people of God among men, and that there is not any man so unjustly censured and abused as he is. And some that now find fault with him may live to see and confess that what I have herein written is truth, and when he is gathered to his fathers, shall weep for want of him."

Richardson's care for the poor, and concern for social reform is evident from his 1653 pamphlet, "The Cause of the Poor Pleaded;" in which he lamented that Papists were more charitable than Protestants, called for an increase in charitable giving and jobs for the unemployed, and praised Cromwell's liberality to the poor.

Most of Richardson's writings are saturated by an ardent attachment to complete liberty of conscience. In his "Necessity of Toleration," 1647, he states, "it is God's way to have religion free, and only to flow from an inward principle of faith and love; neither would God be worshipped of unwilling worshippers. It is his prerogative only to force religion, by working faith in men's hearts; for though religion be natural, true religion is supernatural, and proceeds from the Spirit of God." With such views of the government, and the governor, Richardson would

look with regret upon the wild and visionary attempts of the Fifth Monarchists, and other radical extremists to overthrow the government of Cromwell. Among these were many who were his brethren in the faith, but who openly and strongly expressed their disapprobation of the Protectorate, and sought its dissolution.

Richardson's last known work was, "A Discourse of the Torments of Hell, with many infallible Proofs," &c., 1658; in which he repudiated the doctrine of eternal and perpetual punishment; and whilst the subject matter may have brought him into disfavor with some; we herein also find that those sacred principles of Gospel Truth for which he so vehemently contended for in the early 1640's remained intact, and his heart fixated on the pre-eminent glory of Christ in the salvation of his elect. He says, "carnal hearts of men taketh offence at everything, except the Law of Works, a doing to be saved; for the Doctrine of Election, God's Free Grace and Salvation only and alone by Christ, without Works, {Rom.4:6,} is charged with being one of the greatest Doctrines of liberty to sin that ever was, and is by the ignorant made a stumbling-block and rock of offence; and a cause of carelessness in many." Regarding his views on the Sovereign Dominion of God we extract this lengthy quotation, "the Doctrine of the Protestant Ministers is charged, not only to be a Doctrine of liberty to sin, but a blasphemous Doctrine; for they say, that to teach that the fall and sin of man was decreed is to make God the Author of evil; for many of the Protestant Writers say that the sin of man was determined of God...God willed and decreed his glory and man's happiness; therefore he willed and decreed the means to it; for the end and moving cause of his willing sin to be, is for his glory, which cause it was necessary for sin to be. If sin had not been, how should the goodness of God in giving man eternal life in glory appeared, his love in sending Christ to die? If there had not been sin, there had been no need of Christ's coming, nor of his death and righteousness. Most of the great works of God in this world and that to come, have dependence or reference to sin. How should we have lived by Faith, exercised the fruits of the Spirit, or have any happiness or glory in the world to come, if it had not been for Christ; and Christ had not been, if there had been no sin. He that willeth the end, willeth those things that are necessarily

referred to that end; taking away sin was decreed before the world, therefore the being of sin was decreed. Christ's death was determined before the world - the Saints were chosen to life before the world; and choice hath reference to the fall, therefore the fall of Adam was decreed. If the will of man had been the first and chief cause of the being of sin, then the will of man should be the cause of God's will, and so man shall be the original cause of the salvation of himself, and so much the cause of it, that without his will it could not have been; and so the determination of God what to do, shall not be from himself, but from the will of man, which is contrary to "the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." {Eph.1:11} If man should will sin before God willed it, then shall the will of God depend and wait upon the will of man; as if God should say, 'If man will sin, then I will determine his salvation;' and if God should first will to send Christ to save man, and leave it to man's will and power whether he shall fall or no, then it was possible for man to stand, and so to frustrate the decree of God; for if man had not sinned, God's decree of sending Christ had been made void and of none effect. Mr. Perkins' saith, "God decreed the fall of Adam; if the fall was decreed, if man had power to stand, then he had power to frustrate God's decree, which no wise man will affirm;" and then that saying that Adam had power to keep the Law, is without truth. {Ezek.18:2-4} God willeth all things well; he sinneth not, nor can sin, because he is under no Law." He concludes, "it is strange to consider men are so set upon the Popish principle to be saved for their works, that they count all profane that cross their way; some have burned the Bible; and Doctor Crisp's book of Salvation by Christ Alone. In like manner, Mr. John Archer's book, {late of All Hallows', Lombard Street, published 1645, entitled: "Comfort to Believers, against their Sins and Sorrow,"} was burnt by the Hangman; and the same spirit is alive to burn this also; for I expect no better from such as are not taught of God; they condemn those things they know not, and think they do God service, when they persecute the truth and professors of it." And so it is, even to this day!

It is uncertain as to how or when our beloved brother actually died, but as his writings came to an end in 1658, most believe that he was taken by Christ, only shortly thereafter.

Following is a list of Mr. Richardson's Writings

1. News from Heaven of a Treaty of Peace. Or, a cordial for a fainting heart. Wherein is manifested, that Jesus Christ, and all that is his, is freely offered to all who see a need of him, &c. 1643.
2. The Life of Faith, in Justification, in Glorification, in Sanctification, in Infirmities, in Times Past, in all Ordinances, &c., 1643.
3. Some Brief Considerations on Dr. Featley his book, entitled The Dipper Dipt; wherein in some measure is discovered his many great and false accusations of divers persons, commonly called Anabaptists, &c. 1645.
4. The Saint's Desire; or a Cordial for a Fainting Soul, 1647
5. Fifty Questions propounded to the Assembly, to answer by the Scriptures whether Corporal Punishment may be inflicted upon such as hold different Opinions on Religion, 1647.
6. Justification by Christ Alone, a Fountain of Life and Comfort. Declaring that the whole work of man's salvation was accomplished by Jesus Christ upon the Cross, &c., 1647.
7. The Necessity of Toleration in Matters of Religion, 1647.
8. An Answer to the London Ministers' Letter from them to His Excellency and his Counsel of War; as also an Answer to John Gerees Book, &c., 1649.
9. The Cause of the Poor Pleaded, 1653.
10. An Apology for the present Government and Governor, with an Answer to several Objections against them, and 20 Queries propounded for those who are unsatisfied to consider. 1654.
11. Plain Dealing, or the Unveiling of the Opposers of the Present Government and Governors, in answer of several Things affirmed by Mr. Vavasor Powell, &c., 1656.
12. A Discourse of the Torments of Hell, with many infallible Proofs, &c., 1658.

DEDICATORY PREFACE

To the Right Honorable, Sir THOMAS FAIRFAX, Captain General of all the Parliament's Forces in ENGLAND; and OLIVER CROMWELL, Esquire, Lieutenant General to the said Forces, such honor as is promised to all that honor the Lord Christ.

Right Honorable; you two are so joined, as it were in one, that it may be said of you, which was said of Jonathan and David, {two mighty warriors,} that their hearts were so knit, that they loved each other as their own souls, {I Sam.18:1-3, 20:42;} they had such sweet experience of each other's faithfulnesses, that it was not in the power of Saul {though a King} to break it, or cut it asunder; and although many have attempted to do the like to you, yet their labour hath been fruitless; it hath been a joy to many to see the effects of love so freely flow forth from each to the other interchangeably, which is amiable, sweet, and lovely. Moreover, God hath raised you up, and set you in high places, where opportunities flow of doing good; and which is more, God hath given you hearts to improve these opportunities to his glory, and the good of his people. You have also had many and great experiences of his protection, presence, and blessing, even to admiration; as it is the Lord alone, who hath wrought all your works for you. Surely you may well stand astonished at his dealings with you; for all you can do, is too little for him who hath done so much for you. You know the sorrows, sufferings and groanings of the people of God in this Kingdom, have been many and great, by reason of the Prelates lording it over them in matters of Religion; and their sorrows and sufferings are like to be greater, if the plots and snares laid against them take place, therefore now is the time for the righteous in authority to show themselves for the people of God; and such as sleep and slumber had need quickly to be awakened, that they might rouse up themselves, and shake off that fear and weakness which possesses their hearts, and arm themselves with resolution and courage, to hazard all, even life itself, upon a possibility of doing the least good, {for to do good we live.} We rejoice that God hath chosen you, {with many others,} whom God hath kept waking for such a time as this. Next under God our eyes are upon the house of Commons of England, to deliver us from temporal slavery, {Prov.29:2,} to free us from the oppression of men in matters of Religion; and we trust they will effect this work fully, {and God shall give them a full reward,} as good Job, who was a father to the poor, and the cause he knew not he searched out, and brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of their teeth.

It is a great honor unto you, that you have done valiantly, and so have been special instruments to save this Kingdom from destruction, {I Sam.16:18,} and that God hath made you and your Armies so victorious; but it is a greater honor unto you, that you are of the number of those that love the truth and people of God, and endeavor to rescue them from the hands of cruel and unreasonable men. The people of God are in the love of God, and {which is more} they are one with God, therefore God takes the good done to them as done to himself; so abide by them, and you shall be in safety, {Prov.10:30;} hold together, for they that seek their lives, seek yours also; and as you have pleaded their Cause, {with many other worthies with you,} so still go on and prosper, the Lord is with you, you valiant men, {Judg.6:12,} the Saints love you, they pray and praise God for you; England fares the better for you, children unborn shall praise you, and bless God for you, and the memorial of your names shall be forever precious to the righteous.

Most noble Worthies, {Lk.1:3,} I may seem to pass the bounds of modesty, so to press into your presence, but such is your humility and love, that you can pass by any defect in that kind, and accept of that which is presented in love. And seeing God doth not despise the day of small things, {Zech.4:10,} I trust you will not; the great respect you have showed to the truth, and people of God, hath emboldened me to present you with the best I have, in love, out of a deep respect unto you; the perusal and acceptance of which, I submit to your wisdom, and humbly take my leave, and remain,

Your Honors much obliged,
SAMUEL RICHARDSON.

PREFACE

To all Fainting and Discouraged Souls, who are Lost and Fatherless.

Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy; that Jesus Christ came from Heaven to seek and save you. {Lk.19:10} You shall enjoy mercy, life, and glory by him; for in him the fatherless find mercy. {Hos. 14:3} You are they who hunger and thirst after Christ, and his Righteousness; this desire is from the inbeing of the light and life of Christ in you, therefore thou art for the

present blessed, and shalt be satisfied. {Matt.5:6} Therefore you may be sure, God is at peace with you, he hath loving kindnesses for you, which is better than life; yea all is yours, for God is yours, and that forever. Is not this, as good news from a far Country, welcome and savory? Oh what can be more suitable, pleasant, profitable, or delightful, better or more desirable? Christ will give you that peace which cannot be taken from you. Oh the fullness, sweetness, gloriousness, and infiniteness of this peace! It passes our understandings, as we cannot fully impart it, because we do not fully know it; for we know but in part, yet a part we know through grace, though many see not this peace, nor know not the way of it, to whom I have endeavored to declare that mystery of love and grace revealed to me, desiring to obey Christ's command, when thou art converted, to strengthen the brethren. {Lk.22:32} And did thou but know the freeness, fullness, suitability, sweetness, and durableness of God's rich grace to a creature who is nothing in his own eyes, who hath interest in it, and therefore may apply it, thou couldst not but be ravished with it. Consider what God hath given thee, and sent unto thee, and put into thy hand, even some of his rarest and choicest dainties, from his banqueting house; some flagons of his most excellent and richest wine, which is full of spirit and life, as one taste is able to cheer and revive thy heart, yea raise and ravish thy fainting soul with love into love; yet drink freely, the more the better, be filled with them, there is enough, Christ's dainties are durable, his fountain is bottomless and infinite, it can never be exhausted or drawn dry, therefore eat, O friends, and drink abundantly, and be drunk with them.

Here are means proposed, with some Scriptures, which tends to settle a troubled soul in the sweet enjoyment of the love of God; and if God please to bless them, they will be sweet and profitable to thee; instead of darkness, light shall shine clearly, sweetly, pleasantly. It's the Lord only that can cause the soul to see this light and love, so as to live in it, being overpowered with it, and to walk suitable unto it; if the Lord shall please to bless this to thy soul, acknowledge his goodness with thankfulness and joy, as some have done; and the Lord give thee wisdom to know the truth, and to receive thy own portion, without which nothing can do thee good. {I Cor.3:6-7} Men may speak comfort, but they cannot comfort, it's God that creates the fruit of the lips. "Peace," if he speak the word, it's done. {Gen.1:3} The Lord speak so to thee, that thou may profit by it, and that thy joy may be full.

Also to you belong all the promises of this life, and that to come, {Heb.6:17,} which rich treasure, God hath imparted

in several parts, that all the sons and daughters of truth might be comforted in, and satisfied with the enjoyment of God in them. To this end here are comprised many principal promises, that you may with more ease and speed find them, and suck sweetness from them, as our lives cannot be sweet without them, in respect of the many miseries that attend us within and without; but those that live by faith are not troubled in a world of troubles. Faith supplies all wants, and this life of faith is the highest, therefore the best; such as live it, know it to be a sweet, precious, and powerful life, as appears. {Hebrews 11} Faith honours God most, and the LORD nourishes and sustains all such, to whom such faith is given. By faith the Saints wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, of weak were made strong; by faith Jacob had power with God. {Hos.12:3-4} By it Job could trust God, though God should kill him. {Job 13:15} By faith we live to God a life of joy in Christ our righteousness, as if we had never sinned; by faith we live above sin, infirmities, temptations, desertions, sense, reason, fear, doubts, &c., faith sweetens the sweetest mercies, yea the bitterest miseries, faith makes great afflictions to be as none, it maintains the souls strength and comfort. Christ lives in our hearts by faith, and by faith we perceive the power of Truth and Grace to enable us to walk in Gospel precepts, as faith makes Christ's yoke easy and sweet. The fruition of God is all the soul can desire; faith helps the soul to this, as it puts the soul into possession of heaven, even whilst the body is on earth; by it we view the glory of heaven, to know its worth, to enjoy the Purchaser and the purchase itself; by faith we know ourselves to be happy, even then when to a carnal eye we seem most miserable; by faith we can part with the sweetest outward comforts, and welcome death, because we know we leave the worst place and things, and go to our heavenly inheritance in Christ; and they that live by faith, live upon God himself, and are feasted in our Lord's banqueting house, where there is all the desirable dainties, and more than enough. Eat then O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly O beloved, because it is the pleasure of our sweet Lord Jesus that his do so; it's their portion, duty, and privilege, to digest, refresh, and make their souls merry with his dainties, to enjoy himself in them, that so their joy may be full.

And because it is the will of Christ that those who have found rest and peace in him should take his yoke upon them, as appears. {Matt.11:28-29} Here is added the Saints duty and service to Christ, and the rather, for now is the time the love of many waxes cold to God and man. Religion is esteemed of many to be but a bare notion, or a little speculation, nothing of practice, iniquity abounds, many depart from the faith to

needless disputes and principles that destroy the foundation of Religion. No law, no transgression, no sin, all alike, as appears. {Rom.4:15} So that many run the round, begin at nothing, and end in nothing, so that many instead of submitting to the yoke of Christ, cavil against it, so that few will submit unto it, notwithstanding it is holy, just, light, easy, sweet, and a law of love. Call persons to obey Christ, and men are apt to think it legal and slavish, but if men were to work for life, it were so indeed, but we cannot do anything to procure the pardon of sin, we only desire such as have received mercy and life from Christ, to act from the same life and power, according to the word of Christ, to Christ again out of love and thankfulness; for surely such as have received mercy from him, vehemently desire to obey him, esteeming it a great privilege to be employed in his service; also in keeping his commands, there is great reward. {Psal.19:11} By nature we are prone to desire liberty, and abuse it; we need to be exhorted that we use not our liberty as an occasion to the flesh, {Gal.5:13,} to sloth and ease, &c. Liberty to sin is no liberty at all, but only slavery and imprisonment. A freed heart to worship God, love Christ, and a disposition of Grace, {and by Grace,} to esteem the Lord's precepts concerning all things, and to hate every false way is sweet liberty to enjoy God, {Psal.119:126-130;} even that liberty to be set free by Christ from sin, Satan, hell, which is to be freed indeed, {Jn.8:36;} and though we have nothing to do to be saved, we have something to do for his Glory, which is to be our meat and drink; therefore let no difficulty hinder thee in serving thy Lord; say not it is impossible to love Christ, and serve thy brethren. Press after perfection, {Lk.1:6,} the nearer the better, watch and pray to prevent sin, to do good; make it thy relentless business to keep Christ's commands. Indeed all have not the like time to spend herein, for the necessity of outward things, hinders many that they cannot do what otherwise they might and would; for one wants time, another a heart, another both; but we should consider whether we spare that time for these things that we might, we can and will spare time for what we love and esteem, though they are things of less importance. {Song 8:6-7} Were we so full of love, we could not but spare some time, not only from our recreation and idle visits, but from our sleep and callings, we would redeem time, {Eph.5:16,} and cut off needless expenses too by time; for that time is most sweet and precious, in which the soul beholds God and Glory, and hath communion with Christ by the Spirit. When we consider how far short we come of our obligations to love Christ, we may say with grief and sorrow, Lord, what is man, a very vanity! And notwithstanding we come far short of what we

ought to do, we are not to sit down discouraged, but to live by faith in all infirmities above infirmities, beholding and enjoying thy joy and peace with God; for when thou art at the worst, as knowing no infirmity can lessen the love of God to those who are his, yet are we to take notice wherein we come short with grief, looking up to him by faith for more strength, to serve him better, esteeming it a great privilege to be circumspect in all our actions to God and man.

There be some other things contained in this Treatise, which I trust will be of use to some; and as for the directions concerning the Scriptures, they have been observed by many to be necessary to cut off many errors. I have added some other things; my whole aim and scope in all I have written, is, first, to sustain, comfort, and encourage the discouraged soul from sinking in despair, by reason of their many and great sins; secondly, to withdraw the soul from the life of its own hand, to the life of the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Thirdly, that the soul might know and live in the assurance of the love of God, which will fill the soul full of life, sweetness, and joy. Fourthly, that the soul should obey Christ, and live to his Glory, and suffer for him. Fifthly, to prevent errors, and to rescue such who belong to Christ, who have through mistake fallen into blunders by the wiles of Satan. You are not to expect vain philosophy, nor enticing words of the wisdom of man; for here it is not. I have desired and endeavored to make the truth appear by the evidence and demonstration of the Holy Scriptures, as that which is most safe and profitable for our souls to venture themselves upon; and seeing they are to be our only rule; search the Scriptures to see whether what I have declared be so or no, and I trust you shall find it true and sweet, though others, through ignorance, may call it error. Now the Lord of Heaven and Earth, enable thee and all his to look up to him to be taught by him, to enjoy him, and to walk so before him, that they may honor him, and that their joy may be full. Extol him that rides upon the heavens by his name JAH, and ever rejoice before him. {Psal.68:4} The Most Mighty whose name is JAH; and his servant,

SAMUEL RICHARDSON.

THE MISERABLE ESTATE OF A MAN BY NATURE.

"He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand?" Isa.44:20.

Isaiah 44:20 – Opened.

These words declare the dead and miserable estate of man by nature. In this he is described to be one that is without knowledge and understanding; for the LORD hath shut their eyes that they cannot see, and their hearts that they cannot understand. "They have not known nor understood; for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand." {Isa.44:18} They are in the state of nature, in the state of death, as appears from verses 16,17, "and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image; he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god." {Isa.44:17} The food he eats is described to be ashes, "he feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand?" {Isa.44:20} He hath an appetite unto them, he lives upon them; he feeds upon ashes. The end of his feeding is, that he might live, and deliver his own soul. But he is mistaken, he is deluded, he is turned aside. The cause of this delusion, is from his own heart, which deceives him, and turns him aside. Here is the strength of his delusion, in that he cannot say, is there not a lie in my right hand? The sum of all is, his soul is taken prisoner by Satan, he is a captive to him, and so kept by him that he cannot deliver his soul.

Ashes; that is to say, groundless hopes; false conclusions; idolatry; duties; ordinances; comforts; joys; ravishment; for what else so ever ye can name, except Jesus Christ, is ashes. Jesus Christ is the true bread; other things may be taken for bread, and in appearance, have the same color, and form, like this bread, but let them seem to be what they may, they are no bread indeed, but ashes. But Christ is the true bread, his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; he is the living bread which came down from Heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst...verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am

that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." {Jn.6:32-58}

"He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand?" "Feeds upon ashes," this implies he hath an expectation to enjoy satisfaction from them, his going to them, application of them, contentedness with them, declares he hath satisfaction in them, and lives upon them. By "heart" is meant the understanding and will; and a "deceived heart" is a heart misinformed by Satan, darkened, being turned "aside;" that is, aside or away from Christ, in whom alone is deliverance, rest, and satisfaction. "Turned him," viz., the understanding and will, hath a power to turn the soul. By the word "soul" is meant the whole man, a principal part being put for the whole. "Deliver," escape the danger he is in. A "lie," viz., that is that which will deceive me, in not being unto me that I take it for, that which will not be that to me which I stand in need of, that which will not perform that which it promises to be to me. "Hand," that which holds, mystically the understanding, &c. "Right hand," that is most eminent for use, viz., in those things which are most eminent, that are of greatest concernment, the soul is deceived.

Observation.

1. A natural man is sensible of the want of something he needs for his soul, therefore he saith, "herewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Mic.6:6-7. All this is ashes.

2. There is not any life or strength to be expected from ashes, they are no food fit to eat; as ashes naturally corrupts the body, and destroys it, so here they fill the soul with corruption, and will kill and destroy the soul at last, as they that have no bread must die for hunger. "And when he came to himself, he said, how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!" {Lk.15:17}

3. The food natural men live upon is ashes, they have no better food to live upon, bread they have none, they know

not where any better is, nor do they desire any bread. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread; and your labour for that which satisfieth not?" {Isa.55:2} Ashes is suitable to their natures, judgments, desires, affections, for they know no danger in eating of ashes, they think it is a happiness to have them, and that they shall have satisfaction from them.

Eaters of ashes are in a dangerous condition, they must die spiritually and eternally; for there be many that eat ashes, when they think and dream they eat bread, but they are deceived. "It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty; or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite; so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion." {Isa 29:8} They follow vanity. "Behold, is it not of the LORD of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?" {Hab.2:13} Feed upon the East wind. "Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind; he daily increaseth lies and desolation." {Hos.12:1} And lay out their money for that which is no bread. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread; and your labour for that which satisfieth not?" {Isa.55:2} What dost thou eat and live upon bread or ashes, when thou art empty?

I. What dost thou eye, whether dost thou go? Goes thou to nothing but to Christ; "only we have hope in Christ." I Cor.15:19. Is thy hope only in Christ?

II. In what dost thou find peace, comfort, contentment, satisfaction in? Is it in nothing else but Christ? "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." {Phil.3:8}

III. Where lies thy life and strength? Is it in nothing but in Christ? "Without me ye can do nothing," Jn.15:5, for "Christ is all." Col.3:11. Will no peace, comfort, praise of men, duties, ordinances, joys, ravishments, satisfy thee? Will nothing but Jesus Christ, for Christ is all in all. If it be so, it is well. Comfort to all that eat this bread, ye shall be satisfied, ye do live, and shall live forever, for "he that eateth of this bread shall live forever." Jn.6:58. Oh, you may well be thankful for this so great mercy, that ye have bread to eat, which others have not, nor know as of, they famish and die for want of bread; yet thou hast enough, and shalt ever have enough; in my Father's house there is bread enough, and to spare. {Lk.15:17}

IV. There is nothing in him that can help him; if he follow

his own heart, he is misled, his heart is deceived, it turns him aside, and leads him to death; if he follow his light, his understanding, he follows darkness, as his light is darkness. "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" {Mt.6:23} Surely, man in himself is irrecoverably lost; as he that walks in darkness, knows not whither he goes. "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." {Jn.12:35} "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light." {Eph.5:8}

V. Consider that man's heart is not to be hearkened unto, because it turns the soul aside from Christ; what, dost thou hearken unto, and live upon, thy own heart, &c., or on Christ?

1. Many instead of living upon God, live upon a deceived heart. 2. Others live upon sense. 3. Others live upon corrupt reason. 4. Some build their hope of salvation upon other men's judgment, who if they be godly, may easily be mistaken in a close hypocrite. 5. Many live upon the report of others, which appears by this, that if men speak not well of them, they are greatly troubled, and are not able to bear it, by which it appears their life is in it; it was no wonder Laban made such ado in searching for his images, because they were his gods. 6. Many live upon their reformations, they thank God they are not so bad as they have been, therefore they have hope; it's well when men grow better, yet abstinence from evil, is no evidence of grace; for men may forbear the acts of sin for fear of hell or men, &c. 7. Others live upon duties, and as they are increased, their hope and confidence in God is increased, but if their duties fail them, their hope and comfort is gone; by which it appears, they live upon what they do, and not upon God; these count their duties, which is their righteousness gain; but if they belong to God, they must count again, as Paul did, this their gain to be loss for Christ. {Phil.3:8} 8. Some live upon their peace, they thank God, they are quiet, there are no terrors, nor fear of hell in them, therefore think they are in a good estate, which can be a most subtle delusion. 9. Others live upon groundless hope, because their sins are few or small, {as they think,} as so they have hope. 10. Many live upon their inward comforts and joy, which appear by this, that whilst they last, they have much assurance of the love of God, and are sure of salvation; but as soon as their frames and feelings, upon which they do so depend, do fly away and leave them, out goes their confidence, which leaves them in a sad condition. 11. Others upon ravishments of glory and exercises of godliness, &c. 12. Many live upon the ordinances of men, and stand ready resolved to

be of any Religion the Authority will impose upon them; and the more easy it is for their persons and purses, the more it shall have of their hearts. 13. Yea and many there be that live upon the ordinances of God, without God, so these they may frequent the ordinances, and thus are satisfied, though they see not God in them, and be never the better for them. 14. Others live upon their confidence of salvation. 15. And some live upon creature comforts, and conclude, because they possess them, God loves them. 16. And many live upon the devil himself, and his word, that is, when Satan's suggestions are hearkened unto, liked, believed, embraced, obeyed, as if he should say, their sin shall never be pardoned, nor subdued, they believe him, and are ruled by him; this is to live upon the suggestions of the enemy of our souls, as to hearken unto God. Isa.51:1-7. To believe in him, I Jn.3:23, and to submit themselves to God, Jam.4:7, is to live upon God. A false foundation and a false life go together; therefore whosoever they be that live upon anything besides God in Christ, as their foundation is unsound, so certainly it will deceive them, whatsoever their sparks be, they must and shall lie down in sorrow, Isa.50:11, they are all lying vanities, and they that hearken unto them forsake their own mercies. "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." {Jon.2:8}

A man is prone to follow the advice of his own heart, and the reason is: 1. Because he thinks his heart knows. 2. That his own heart will not deceive him, Prov.28:26; but who so trusts in his own heart is a fool. "How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? Yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart." {Jer.23:26} 3. He is ignorant of the desperate wickedness of his heart; for the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? {Jer.17:9} 4. He knows no better Counselor; but happy is he who is so acquainted with his hearts deceitfulness, that he will not trust to it, nor hearken unto it. 5. The heart is the source of all the errors and miscarriages of men; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, Lk.6:45; what men think, speak, or do, is from the heart. "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man." {Mt.15:18-20} 6. A man by nature desires that his soul may be delivered, because he apprehends his soul is in danger, and that it is of great concernment unto him for his soul to be delivered. 7. A natural man doth endeavor to save and deliver himself; men seek deliverance for themselves from themselves.

Reasons. 1. He judges it a reasonable thing that his soul

be delivered. 2. He knows no other way of deliverance, save that of his own, either wholly or in part. 3. He thinks it concerns him most, therefore it is his duty to do it, who else should? 4. He is persuaded he may deliver his soul, or that without him it cannot be delivered. Man can do no better, till God manifest to him the perfection of Christ's righteousness, then shall he see the insufficiency of his own. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." {Rom.10:3} 5. He cannot deliver his own soul, all that man can do is perish in his own deceivings, for it is impossible for man to save himself in whole or in part, it is beyond his power, he cannot do it; and until a soul be convinced that he cannot deliver himself, he rests in himself.

**God hath not left it to the will and
power of man to deliver himself.**

Reasons. 1. That no man may boast. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." {Eph.2:9} That the pride in man might be dashed in pieces. 2. That no man might live in and upon himself, nor joy in himself, but rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." {Phil.3:3} 3. That God's power and free love might be manifested. "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." {Eph.1:19} 4. That God might have all the glory, Eph.1:6, and that no flesh should glory in his presence. I Cor.1:29, Gal.6:14. "In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." {Isa.45:25} 5. All ways besides Christ are bypaths, aside out of the way. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." {Jn.14:6} 6. Christ's way and man's way are contrary each to the other; Christ's way leads the soul to Christ; man's way leads only to himself, to deliver himself. 7. We should not be led aside from Christ by anything; hearken then only to Christ. 8. Nor say, "is there not a lie in my right hand," Isa.44:20, an idol, which his right hand hath made, a lie, a mere conceit, never to be depended upon and trusted in. 9. The means of deliverance is so hid from man, that he hath no power to use them. 10. A lie, all that man doth rest upon while he is in the state of nature, is nothing but a lie; oh, he is miserably deluded. 11. The strength and confidence of a deluded man, may be so great, that it may seem to him unreasonable once to question it. 12. Men's confidence of

salvation, may be greater and stronger than the faith of some of those who belong to the Lord; and yet it is false and nothing but the delusion of a deceived heart, and Satan. 13. The greatness or strength of any man's confidence, cannot assure him that hath it, that it is not a delusion; but it is proved to be true or false by the ground of it, the cause and foundation thereof. If it be built or caused by any of man's qualifications, either abstinence from sin, doing good, or from his inward peace, comfort, joy, &c., it's delusional and false. But if it be founded upon Christ, only in his free grace, from the word and promise of God, Rom.15:4, it is true, for it is founded upon a Rock. I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. {Psa.130:5} "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel." {Col.1:5} "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." {Eph.2:20} Indeed, "thy word is truth," Jn.17:17; and if God did so convince thee, that thou didst become lost and fatherless in thyself, Hos.14:3, without him, hereby declaring that the Lord was the only Saviour; that there was salvation in Christ, and in no other; and that thou hast trusted in no other Salvation, but that which resides in Christ; that thou dost look to the mercy of God proclaimed in him, and communicated from and through him, and to his mercy alone for eternal life; in whom the most destitute persons, as the fatherless, who are destitute of friends, of help and assistance, of counsel and advice, find favour, kindness, and mercy, even such as are most hopeless and helpless; which is a great encouragement to look to the Lord, to trust in him, and hope in his mercy; who indeed hath persuaded thee that this mercy is thine in Christ, and caused thee to hope in him for it. "Our soul waiteth for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee." {Psa.33:20-22} This is no delusion!

FINIS.

NEWS FROM HEAVEN, OR A CORDIAL FOR A FAINTING HEART.

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." {II Cor.5:20-21} Behold, and hearken, for here are tidings of great joy, that Christ alone doth free the soul from sin, and makes the soul to enjoy the righteousness of God in him; in which is sure, sweet, clear, full, durable and Divine Consolation, sufficient to cheer, revive, raise and ravish the sinking soul, by reason of sin, in the want of a righteousness of God in him. These words contain many divine truths, and I shall endeavor to declare some observations from them for our instruction and consolation. In that he saith, "be ye reconciled to God," you may observe; that the best estate of men by nature is an estate of enmity against God, who is the chiefest good; for if these need any reconciliation, how much more enemies? "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." {Rom.5:10}

"For he hath made him to be sin for us." God hath in his wisdom and love found out a way to save lost man, and hath sent the Lord Jesus to effect it, Zech.9:11, and manifest it, and hath sent Ambassadors, and given us his word to declare his great grace, Jn.1:17, infinite love, Rom.5:8, and the unsearchable riches of Christ. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." {Eph.3:8-9}

Be ye reconciled to God, for he hath made him to be sin for us. Herein we find strong reasons and earnest entreaties, yea the arm of the Lord being revealed, to reconcile a sinful soul to God. "Who hath believed our report; and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" {Isa.53:1} "As though God did beseech you." God is more willing to pardon a sinner, yea the chief of sinners, than any soul is or can be willing to be pardoned, for this disposition of willingness in any sinful soul, is from the LORD. This appears in that God seeks to us to be reconciled; as man seeks it not. "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, behold me,

behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name." {Isa.65:1} And in that God beseeches a lost sinner to be reconciled to God; and when we prodigals turn to God, being turned by God, we do but go, and that softly; but God who is that Father, runs to receive us, Lk.15:18-20, and as running expresses much more willingness, than an easy going, so it is here. God beseeches you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, &c. It appears that all the doubts and fears the soul or Satan can frame, {as if God were unwilling to pardon a lost sinner,} are all groundless and false; for he prays and beseeches sinners to be reconciled, as if he should say, go tell such a soul from me, I will have him to be reconciled to me, I am not angry with him, he need not doubt of my love, which is infinite, without time or measure, I am all-sufficient, I can and I will pass by all his wickedness against me. "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." {Lk.19:10}

"Be ye reconciled," we pray you; that even such sinners as God sends after, and will save, they have many hard thoughts of God, they are so foolish and so deceived by sin, that they are contented to be as they are, and stand in need to be prayed and entreated to be reconciled to God, as though God did beseech you by us. That all those into whom God hath put this word of reconciliation, when it is declared unto us by them, or in his Word, we ought to receive it, and believe it, as if God did immediately speak unto us, for they spoke in his stead. So also it is the duty of the Ambassadors of Christ to declare nothing but the message they receive from Christ, according to the word of Christ. "We pray you, be ye reconciled to God; for he hath made him to be sin for us." The way God takes to reconcile a sinner unto himself is the discovery of his free grace and God's love in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. The discovery of this to the soul, expels ignorance, and slays the soul's enmity against God; and by his love he draws the soul to God in love again; God's way of saving man is only in a way of love; therefore he saith, "behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." {Hos.2:14} His love is free, full, and eternal, "I will love them freely," Hos.14:4, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." {Hos.11:4}

Be reconciled; for he hath made him to be sin for us. It appears that the sense and guilt of sin, doth hinder the soul from being reconciled; sin causes the soul to desire to be at a further distance from God. "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." {Lk.5:8} That before a sinner can be reconciled unto God, he must understand and know the cause, way, and

means of his salvation, {I say not before God loves him,} therefore as it is declared; that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, &c., Rom.3:23, so he declares that Jesus Christ is made sin for us, and that we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus. Rom.3:23-26, 5:10-19. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." {Tit.3:5-7}

"He hath made him," God the Father hath set apart the Lord Jesus to save man. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" {Heb.9:14} There is no other name whereby we may be saved, but by the name of Jesus. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." {Acts 4:12}

"Who knew no sin," Christ knew no sin in himself personally, Lk.1:35, nor inherently, Heb.4:15, nor experimentally. And seeing Christ is so holy a Person and so qualified as he is, Col.2:3, none ought to doubt of the sufficiency, meritorious-ness and effectual-ness of whatsoever he hath undertaken to do; for by once offering the sacrifice of himself, he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified; that is, set apart, Heb.10:10,14, so that the sinful soul ought to cast away all discouragements, and to rest satisfied in this full, perfect and infinite satisfaction, and not suffer their foolish hearts to seek after, or desire any other, for as there is none to be found elsewhere, so there needs none; for be thy sins never so great, or many, this one satisfaction of the Lord Jesus is sufficient. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." {Heb.10:14}

"Made him to be sin," God hath imputed our sins unto Christ, and so laid them upon him, that they are ours no longer, but Christ's, Isa.53:5-6, who hath freed us from them, who will disannul them, and so free himself of them, so that he shall appear without sin. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." {Heb.9:28} The way and means God hath chosen to free a sinner from sin, is only by

Jesus Christ, that he might undergo the penalty of sin, or else no man could be saved, as these Scriptures declare. Jn.1:17, Jn.1:29, Rom.8:2, Eph.2:13-14, Col.1:20, Heb.9:22, Rev.1:5, &c. For sin must be charged upon Christ, or the sinner, and our happiness lies entirely in this, that our sins are not imputed unto us. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." {Rom.4:8} Our sins cost Christ dear, that they might cost us nothing. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." {1 Pet.1:18-21}

"For us," the word "us" and "we" in this verse, must be understood for the "them" in the 19th verse, to whom God doth not impute their trespasses, so that they are blessed. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." {Psa.32:1-2} For these shall not miss of glory, because they have complete redemption by his blood, and total remission of sins. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." {Col.1:14} "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." {Rom.5:10} Therefore by the words "us" and "we" cannot truly be understood every son and daughter of Adam. For so large as the purpose of God is of saving men, {that is, "the purpose of God according to election," Rom.9:11,} so large is the means of this salvation, so large is the declaration to be, so large is the particular application of salvation to be, and so large is the effect of salvation itself; none of these are any larger than the other. If any reply that Christ in the declaration is offered to all, therefore the particular application of salvation is to be to all. I answer, that Christ is never offered to all, nor even to any at all. True it is, that the Gospel is to be preached to every creature, and that all persons whosoever will {that is, made willing in the day of Christ's power exerted on their helpless behalf, Psa.110:3,} are called to come to Christ to drink, &c., but what Scripture saith, that Christ is "offered" to any person, much less to the entire world? God so loved the world, that whosoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. This is a declaration of what persons God will save, {that is, the believing "world" of both

Jew and Gentile alike, "for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," Acts 2:39,} the word of God is a declaration of the will of God; now for to declare a thing, and to offer it, are two entirely separate things, for one may declare to another, the riches that he or another hath, and yet not offer any of them, for it may be that he cannot; and so a man may give that to another, which he never offered him. It's always safest to keep to the language of the Scriptures, {which form of words are sound,} especially in this age, in which men catch up expressions, and by them abuse God, and his truth, and themselves; for if one affirm, that God offers Christ to all; men reply, doth not God mean as he saith, and if God offers Christ, and man hath not a sufficient power to receive him; they are mocked, and God is unjust, &c., and that men have free-will, and such like stuff, so that you may see how one error draws many after it, and it's oft grounded upon an unsound expression.

Christ made sin, and the sinner made the righteousness of God. After what manner Christ became a sinner, after the same manner we are made just; but he became a sinner not by any infusion of our corrupt qualities, but by imputation only; therefore we are just before God, not by infusion of any habitual grace into our corrupt natures, but by imputation of his righteousness alone. God imputes righteousness without works. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." {Rom.4:6-7} If this were well minded, it might answer and remove some corruptions, which are occasioned by apprehending the contrary.

The righteousness of God. Christ's righteousness is the righteousness of God. That righteousness which frees a sinner from the curse of the Law is a perfect righteousness. "But unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." {Heb.1:8} Therefore prize it highly. Man's righteousness is imperfect, and could never justify him before God. "Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications; in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness. And enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." {Psa.143:1-2} All our righteousness is as filthy rags, &c. {Isa.64:6} God reveals to a soul Christ's righteousness, and the soul's interest unto it, Jn.16:14, to comfort the soul, and cause the soul to love Christ; he doth not comfort us in the sight of our own righteousness, before he

declares and comforts the soul in the righteousness of Christ. "O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies." {Dan.9:18} That righteousness which justifies us before God, as it is not ours, so it is not in us; but as it is Christ's righteousness, so it is in him. "Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." {Isa.45:24-25} The cause or basis of our justification, is by a reciprocal translation of our sin unto Christ, and his righteousness unto us, both which is done by God for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Whatsoever Jesus Christ hath done and suffered, was for those whose sins were laid upon him, who are stated in him, Eph.1:4, and are fully pardoned by him. Rev.1:5. By the obedience of one man {viz. Christ} many are made righteous, Rom.5:19, by his stripes we are healed. Isa.53:5. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." {I Jn.1:7}

"The righteousness of God in him." God considers his elect children to be in Christ, before they had a being in themselves, Eph.1:4, and he never looks upon his children out of him, for they are never out of him. They dwell in Christ, Jn.6:56, and thus shall ever live in Christ, Jn.14:19, and be ever found in him, not having their own righteousness, which is of the Law, "but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." {Phil.3:8} Christ and all true believers are so united together, that they are but one; one body, one spirit, bone of his bone. "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." {I Cor.6:17} Oh, what union is like to this union, that is so real, full, and entire; so wonderful, glorious, spiritual, eternal, and infinite! "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." {Jn.17:22-23} If our faith in Christ were as strong as our union with Christ, we should engross and possess all that is in heaven, and nothing in the earth could trouble us.

The state of a believer in Christ, as considered in him, is an estate of perfection. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." {Col.2:9-10} As Christ is, so am I; as I am, so is Christ, "because as he is, so are we in this world." {I Jn.4:17} What is Christ's is mine; what is mine is his;

Christ's righteousness is mine; therefore I am all righteous, I need no more, nor no other righteousness; as I am in Christ, I am as righteous and as acceptable as Christ. God sees no sin in me, because there is none; for, I am all fair, there is no spot in me. Song.4:7. "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." {Eph.5:26-27} "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." {Isa.38:17} "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." {Psa.103:12} "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." {Dan.9:24} "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." {Isa.61:10} All Saints are alike clothed with Christ's righteousness; the meanest, the weakest, as the best, and is as acceptable by it as the best. Oh they are all alike perfect, righteous, and glorious, as they are in Christ! Oh, here is strong consolation for thy fainting heart, to refresh itself withal! Drink, O friends, and make you merry, O well beloved; yea drink, drink abundantly in this fountain that is bottomless, and therefore can never be drawn dry. Song.5:1. In the most perfect Saints, as they are in themselves, there is much sin, I Jn.1:10, and God doth see it; yet God cannot condemn them to wrath for it, no more than God can condemn Christ for it, who shall appear without sin unto salvation. Heb.9:28. They being in him who hath suffered for it; and Justice neither will nor can exact the payment of a debt twice. Now it's absolute justice in God to justify, Rom.3:25; yea, God is as just in pardoning a sinner by the blood of Christ, as he is just in condemning any; and now thou hast a full pardon by justice as well as mercy, therefore drink freely.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us," for that which is spoken in general to all believers, every believer is to apply it to himself in particular; so Paul, "he loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal.2:20. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." {Rev.1:5} The word and promise of God, that it is for me, is that which my soul should fix its eye upon, and by faith forever rely upon, and be a full satisfaction to my soul; knowing that the word and promise of God is the

only ground of my faith, and is security sufficient for my salvation. As sooner as the soul is convinced, that Jesus Christ is made sin for me, and that I am made the righteousness of God in him, all the soul's doubts, fears and objections vanish, and Christ is believed in, and lived upon, with thankfulness and joy. Jesus Christ being made sin for me, is as good for me, yea better for me, than if I had never sinned; as much better as a spiritual body is better than a natural, as much better as the image of the heavenly is better than the image of the earthly; yea, as much better as strength is better than weaknesses, and as heaven is better than earth. I Cor.15:43-55.

"But, saith a discouraged soul, I cannot believe the Lord Jesus was made sin for me." Why not for thee? "Because my sins are greater than others be; for my sins have all the aggravations upon them that can possibly be. They are so numerous!" So were theirs in the second and third Chapter of Jeremiah, yet notwithstanding God exonerated them all. "A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel; for they have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the LORD their God. Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God." {Jer.3:21-25} "But my sins are great and heinous." So were theirs, and so were those of Manasseh, as appears, II Kings 21:4-16, and so was the woman's, Lk.7:47, and so was Paul's, I Tim.1:15, yet God pardoned them all, removed all their transgressions from them, as far as the east is from the west, Psal.103:12, as he hath done to many, who fainted for his salvation, Psa.119:81, yet hoped in his word. "I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope." {Psa.130:5} "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel." {Col.1:5} "But my sins are against the Gospel." So was Paul's, as he persecuted them that professed the Gospel, and made havoc of the Church, entering into every house, haling men and women, and committed them to prison, Acts 8:3, and Christ died for them that slew him. Acts 9:4-5. "But my sins committed are after many mercies received." So was Solomon, who sinned grievously against God after the Lord appeared unto him twice. I Kng.11:9. "But I have sinned against God's entreaties to return." So did they, "and I said after she had done all these things, turn thou unto me. But she returned not." Jer.3:7. "But I have sinned against God's Reproofs." So did they, "thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed." Jer.3:3. "But I have sinned against God's corrections in not being reformed by them." So did they, "in vain have I smitten your

children; they received no correction." Jer.2:30. "But I have committed the same sin repeatedly." So did they, "thou hast played the harlot with many lovers." Jer.3:1. "But I have continued sinning for a long continuance of time." So did they, "we lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us; for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God." Jer.3:25. "But my sins are against knowledge and Conscience." So was David's sin concerning Bathsheba, and putting to death Uriah. And so did Peter sin when he said and swore he knew not Christ, and that he was not with him. Matt.26:69-75. "But I am fallen back from what I have been." So did they, "return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger forever." Jer.3:12. "But I have willingly and resolvedly forsaken God." So did they, saying, "we are Lord's, we will come no more unto thee?" Jer.2:31-32. "But I have willingly chosen sin." So did they; saying, "there is no hope; no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go." Jer.2:25. "But I have seduced others, and caused them to sin." So did they, "therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways." Jer.2:33. "But they hearkened not; and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel," "and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols." II Kgs.21:9-11. And Paul compelled men to blaspheme. Acts 26:11. Manasseh a great sinner obtained mercy, II Chron.33:18-19, and yet a "lesser" sinner perishes in his sin; that all men may know that the Lord will have mercy on whom he will. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." {Rom.9:15} "But I have committed as much sin as I could." So did they, "thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest." Jer.3:5. "But my sins are after many promises, vows and covenants." So were theirs, "thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot." Jer.2:20. "But I have justified myself in all my sins." So did they, "yet thou sayest, because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned." Jer.2:35. "But I despair, and have no hope of mercy." This is worst of all; yet so did they, "but thou saidst, there is no hope." Jer.2:25. "And they said, there is no hope; but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart." Jer.18:12. "He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old. He hath hedged me

about, that I cannot get out; he hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer. He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked." Lam.3:6-9. "My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD," Lam.3:18, said Jeremiah. And Job said, "he hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone; and mine hope hath he removed like a tree." Job 19:10. My days "are spent without hope." Job 7:6. David said in his haste, "I am cut off from before thine eyes." Psa.31:22. Abraham believed against hope. Rom.4:18. You were sometimes afar off, without God, and without hope, Eph.2:12, yet at last they were made nigh by the blood of Christ. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Eph.2:13. Behold, all these were once like unto thee, and the Lord hath had mercy upon them, and so he may have mercy upon thee also, therefore poor soul, be not out of hope, mind what David found, "then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The LORD preserveth the simple; I was brought low, and he helped me." Psa.116:4-6. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb.7:25. Consider what the name of the Lord is. "And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Exod.34:5-7 Oh the unreachable riches of his grace! "And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." Psa.9:10.

Encouragements to hope in the Lord.

And because the greatness of sin is one of the greatest discouragements to a soul under the sense of sin; consider these things which are encouragements of hope unto thee.

1. Encouragement to hope. The multitude or greatness of sin ought not to be a discouragement unto thee, because the fewness or smallness of thy sins are not any ground, or cause of thy confidence in God for pardon; but in the promise of God of pardon, in which promise the truth and faithfulness is.

2. Encouragement to hope. Because the word of God

doth nowhere say, that great sinners shall not be saved, therefore to conceive so is folly, and no less than a delusion of Satan.

3. Encouragement to hope. Because the word of God saith the contrary, that Jesus Christ came to save sinners, yea and the chief sinners, and this is a saying worthy of all acceptation. I Tim.1:15. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa.1:18. The word of God declares many great and sweet promises to great sinners, as Jeremiah 3; Isa.55:7-9, &c. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isa.43:25. There be many examples of great sinners receiving great mercy, as Manasseh, II Chron.33:18-19, Paul, and one who was a sinner with a witness, Lk.7:37,47, and many others, yea the rebellious also. Psal.68:18.

4. Encouragement to hope. Because there is a fountain set open for sin and for uncleanness, Zech.13:1, and Christ is mighty to save, Isa.63:1, who will abundantly pardon, Isa.55:7, and whose compassions fail not. Lam.3:22.

5. Encouragement to hope. Because great sinners that are heavy laden with sin, are called to come to Christ. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." {Matt.11:28} "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." {Jn.7:37} "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." {Isa.55:1} "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." {Rev.22:17}

6. Encouragement to hope. The Saints have made their greatness of sin an encouragement to believe. "For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." {Psa.25:11} How great is his goodness? Much greater than thy sins. The greater our sins are, the greater our faith should be. Lo, herein is great consolation. "Moreover the Law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." {Rom.5:20}

7. Encouragement to hope. Because God doth not sell Christ or Grace, but he gives Christ, and all that is his freely. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." {Isa.55:1} "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And

whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”
{Rev.22:17}

8. Encouragement to hope. Because such as Jesus Christ saves, are unworthy, ungodly, and without works. “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.” {Rom 4:5-7} The most perfect Saint that ever hath been, did stand in need of mercy, and was unworthy. “Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly; how much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?” {Job 4:18-19} And all those whom God hath revealed his Son unto, they see an exceeding transcendent beauty in him; and he is precious unto them. “Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.” {I Pet.2:6-7} And so, all those whom God hath revealed his Son unto loath and abhor themselves, because they see in themselves nothing else but vileness, filthiness, and unworthiness, Ezek.16:63, and it sets out the mercy of God the more, that it is freely given unto the unworthy. “Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” {Job 42:6}

9. Encouragement to hope. It makes most for the glory of God to give great things, and is it not a disparagement for a King to do otherwise? The Lord is a great King, a mighty God, Isa.9:6, and he doth great things past finding out, Job 9:10, and wonders without number. “Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice; for the LORD will do great things.” {Joel 2:21} “For with God nothing shall be impossible.” {Lk.1:37} Measure not the Lord by thyself, “for my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” {Isa.55:8-9} And those who are made wise by God, and instructed in the way of Christ’s righteousness, look not so much to their baseness as unto his greatness.

10. Encouragement to hope. That which moves God to show mercy, is only in himself, nothing in the creature. “And say, thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in

water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live." {Ezek.16:3-6} Not anything that the creature can do can move God to show mercy. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." {Isa.43:25} God shows mercy, because of his own Sovereign Determination to do so, and this alone. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." {Mic.7:18-19}

11. Encouragement to hope. The greater our sins are, and our sensibleness of unworthiness, the more we shall love God when we know that our sins are pardoned. "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged." {Lk.7:41-43}

12. Encouragement to hope. The mercy of God is infinite, it hath no part or form, and therefore it is not capable of any addition or defect; so vast and infinite, should thou need thousands of seas of mercy to pardon thy sins. God hath not the less, notwithstanding he hath given so much. If I had all sins upon me, that can be committed, or but one sinful thought, this consideration makes it all one. Oh, worlds of sin in this ocean vanish and come to nothing. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" {Rom.11:33} The unreachable riches of Christ! {Eph.3:8}

13. Encouragement to hope. The Name of God is infinite also. "Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." {II Co.1:2-3} Yeah, the very nature of the LORD is that he is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. James 5:11. All mercy and pity is from him, and all that is, or hath been, is but a drop to that ocean of pity and mercy which resides in all

infiniteness in him. We are ready to sin, but God is much more ready to forgive; mercy pleases him, as it is his delight. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy." {Mic.7:18} "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee." {Psa.86:5} The LORD is ready to forgive. "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, the LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." {Exo.34:6}

14. Encouragement to hope. The price that is for the sins of such as believe, is infinite also; count all thy sins, and still they are the acts of a finite creature; and is not Christ's Satisfaction above them? He is God, and his righteousness is far greater than thy sins; therefore be they great or small, he is able to disannul them all. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." {I Jn.5:20}

15. Encouragement to hope. The Everlasting Covenant of Grace, is not made with us, nor can it be broken by us, but with Christ. "If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David." {Psa.89:31-35} "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him." {Psa.89:28} So then the Covenant is made with Christ, and that it was not made for our good works, nor can we disannul it by our sins; for it's sure, perpetual and everlasting, Heb.13:20, as it is not founded upon a rotten and sandy foundation, as thy self and duties are. Oh wonder at God's wisdom and love, that it is not made with us, nor is it in our keeping; lo it's founded upon the word and promise of an eternal God, and whatever is in God is God, for God is unchangeable. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." {Mal.3:6} Therefore the Covenant stands sure forever in Christ. "He hath made with me, {says David,} an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire." {II Sam.23:5}

But the discouraged soul still replies; I am persuaded that I have committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, and that is unpardonable. Heb.6:4. Those who have committed this sin,

tread underfoot the Son of God, and count the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and do hate God and Christ. Jn.15:24. In that thou art afraid that thou hast committed this sin, it is certain thou hast not committed it, because such as have so sinned are past fear or feeling, being given up to a reprobate sense. Eph.4:19. I am afraid the day of grace is past to me, and so nothing can do me good. You must not give way to such a thought; who knows but the Lord may return? "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" {Jon.3:9} Is this the way in which thou thinks to enjoy the assurance of his love, to nourish jealousies against his love? Surely this is not the way. Should thou not rather say as David did, "how precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with thee." {Psa.139:17-18} The number of the sands are many, yet God's thoughts of love exceeds them all. "Be not afraid, only believe." {Mk.5:36} Christ receiveth sinners, "then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, this man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." {Lk.15:1-2}

If thou thinks that the day of grace is past, because thy sins are great, &c., this will not prove it; for mind what the LORD saith, "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick." {Isa.65:1-3} If thou desires to return to God, is it not because the LORD hath thus inclined thine heart unto himself, and therefore thy day of grace cannot be past. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." {I Jn.1:9} I do not believe I am elected, &c., so nothing can do me good. This is a secret, and you must not meddle with God's secrets. "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." {Deut.29:29} It is one of Satan's deceits to tell a soul that God hath no mercy for him, when the soul hath obtained mercy, or when it is not far from him. It is certain, these thoughts come from Satan, because they are contrary to God in his word. Gen.3:2-4. It's the nature of unbelief to be inquisitive and curious to find out any pretense,

that it may seem to do well in not harkening to what God saith in his word.

We must not hearken unto Satan, nor yield to him, but resist him; meddle not with election, but fix thy eye upon Christ, as a suitable good for thee, who is able to save thee, and wait upon him in the use of his ordinances, till he shall give thee faith, that by it thou may know thy self to be elected. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." {Acts 13:48} But I have waited upon the Lord in the ways of his appointments, and yet I am no better, but worse, therefore God will never do me good. Are you sure that you have thus waited upon the LORD, dost thou know the number of his ways, and have your ends been all good and right placed, and have you used them in a right manner, measure, time; in sincerity, humility, which I question; and has thine expectation been only from him? "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." {Psa.62:5} Have you set God above his ordinances, and expected his blessing upon them, without which they could do no good? If thou hast not truly waited upon the LORD, with all thine expectation from him, in faith, then say not that thou hast, for what are thy expectations without faith, and without Christ as the source and substance thereof? They are as a shadow without the substance. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." {Heb.11:1} The word they heard profited them not, for want of faith. "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." {Heb.4:2} It is no good reason to say, because God hath not yet answered me, and readily supplied me, therefore he never will consider. "And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him." {Isa.8:17} "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." {Isa.64:4} They "which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." {I Pet.2:10} None shall be ashamed that wait upon the LORD. Isa.49:23. There be many that do satisfy themselves with the mere shells of an outward profession, and their diligent attendance upon Christ in his ordinances, and in all they do; yet it's only of the Lord's mercy that we be not consumed therein, Lam.3:22; yea a mercy to blast all, to show their emptiness, that we might look and long for Christ, to bless these ordinances, and be all in all unto us.

Men believe not that faith is the gift of God, and the

Spirit's work, Phil.1:29, so that they go not to God in his promise for faith, but endeavor to make a faith of their own to carry to God. If thou hast a will that only Christ should save thee, God hath begun his work in thee, and he will finish it, Heb.12:2, and one day thou shall know thyself to be pardoned, and all thy sins shall be subdued. Consider that God may have mercy for thee, though thou knows it not; for men's sins are first forgiven, before they are to believe it, or can be assured of it; for if men should believe, that their sins are forgiven before they be forgiven, they should believe that which is false; neither can any man's believing make that to be which is not so; faith declares to us our pardon, but our believing neither pardons nor procures the pardon of any sin; if it could, what need was there of the death of Christ?

But I have waited a long time, and many have received mercy since, but not I. Even the Lord's servants have waited a long time for God, or at least they thought the time long. David said, "how long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? Forever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?" {Psa.13:1-2} If God hath given thee a heart to wait upon him, thou art blessed. "And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the LORD is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him." {Isa.30:18} Waiting implies perseverance, patience, long-suffering, a holding out, notwithstanding the tediousness of the time deferred, courage in breaking through all difficulties that stand between waiting, and to continue waiting, though all things seem contrary, till we are brought into the enjoyment of that which our soul desires. "And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee." {Psa.39:7}

I am now old in years, and if God had intended to have brought a manifest deliverance to my soul, to assure me and settle me into the grace of Christ, and speak comfortably to my soul, saying that my warfare is accomplished, and all my iniquity is pardoned, Isa.40:1-2, then surely he would have done it before this time, for now death is ready to sweep me away. Yea, though it be thus with thee, yet mercy, if thy portion be in Christ, will come at last, and it will be sweet. "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." {Hab.2:3} The thief was saved upon the Cross, and oh, how near he was unto his end before mercy was revealed unto him! You may not set a time for God, in which he shall show mercy, for he gives what he will, and when he will, and will not be tied to thy time. It's an exceeding great grace for

God to show mercy, though it be at the last, as he did to the thief upon the Cross. God hath all hours in the day to work, the last hour God uses to call some, as well as the third, Matt.20:1-10, for there is nothing too hard for the LORD.

If I were filled with qualifications, as humility of mind, and brokenness of heart, and took delight to hear and pray, as others, I could have hope, but this I cannot. Alas, poor soul, thou art greatly deluded, for these things can no way fit the soul for mercy. Why dost thou seek the living among the dead? Lk.24:5. Why dost thou look at, and rest in, such things as these? For haddest thou these in the greatest measure, they could not procure thy happiness, nor commend thee in the slightest measure towards the LORD. Oh nothing but Christ can do thy soul any good, and truly comfort thee. Consider, what qualifications had they in Ezekiel 16:3-9, of whom God was found? Surely they had none, except sinful ones. What, saith God; I was found of them that sought me not. Isa.65:1-3. Tell me, what qualifications had they who were enemies? Yet Christ died for them. Rom.5:9-10. All that are saved are saved by grace, without any cause or condition in man. II Tim.1:9. Under color of devotion, you overthrow Christ; can your duties, &c., procure Christ, or what use is there of Christ, if you can have what you need without him? You would have power, ability and enlargements before you dare believe in Christ? Oh the greatness of thy pride and folly! Doth not Christ say true, that without me you can do nothing? Jn.15:5.

As in nature none can work before they have life; so none can do anything that is spiritual, before they live spiritually. Christ must be in thee before thou canst believe; the soul must believe before it can find any sanctification, or works at all in itself, yea without any regard to works in any measure whatsoever, for there is nothing to be done by man to be a preparation to his sanctification in Christ. Rom.4:5 & 5:8-10. Thou hungerest and thirstest after a righteousness of thine own, and wouldst establish it, but it must be renounced. I confess, this self-denial is very hard; oh, how hard is it for the soul to be taken off its own bottom of works, and of self-concurrence! Strip them of all that is their own, and you take away their lives; they must and will have something, some humbleness, and brokenness of heart, some tears, some good works, or abilities, or a good heart; something they must have, for they think it cannot be, that they should be accepted, pardoned, and saved, and they to do nothing at all themselves for it; therefore as soon as they begin to spy a flaw in what they do, {for who can say his heart is clean,} Job 25:4; they betake themselves to break their hearts, to make God amends for all, and think if they can

but attain unto such a deep measure of humiliation and sorrow for sin, then they think they have an evidence for heaven; but alas, this is no evidence, save only of great ignorance, in that they see not death in their best duties. The Lord may say to you who work so hard for life, "thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved." Isa.57:10. Thou comforts thyself in thine own sparks, but {sorrow is all the comfort such comfort can produce} you shall lie done in sorrow. Isa.50:11. When we say our good works are not the way to life, men esteemed it a grievous error, yet Christ saith, "I am the way." Jn.14:6. Are thy works Christ or no? If no, then they are not the way, for Christ saith true, and if Jesus Christ is to be unto us all in all, Col.3:11, our best works are to be unto us nothing at all, for our works make us not the better before God, nor to be more beloved of God, but declare us to be what we are made by God. The Papists do good works to be saved, but we abhor it, because it is condemned by God; therefore all those who expect and hope for mercy, because they leave their sins, as they say, and do many good works; consider what I say unto thee, Alas, poor soul, thou art still in the state of nature, in the gall of bitterness, thou art not quite plucked up off of thine own stock of self-works, and self-concurrence with Christ, and therefore art not planted into Christ, for thou art ignorant of the righteousness of God, which is the cause why thou goes about to establish thine own righteousness, and so long as thou dost so, thou canst not submit to the righteousness of God. But did you but know what a righteousness Christ is, thou couldst not but have preferred it before thine own righteousness; yea it would be esteemed by thee but dross and dung to his. Phil.3:8-9. And unless the Lord Jesus open thine eyes, and reveal his righteousness unto thee, thy righteousness {which thou are attempting to join with Christ's for salvation} will of a certain work thy destruction unto all eternity. Publicans and harlots are nearer salvation than thee, when you who work for life are Pharisees, and if you die in this estate, you must certainly perish. "Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him; and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him." {Matt.21:31-32} "And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." {Lk.7:29-30}

I know many will cavil, and say, if Christ must do all, and man nothing, then men need not care what they do, but

live as they list. Answer. As it is our duty, so it is our desire to do whatsoever the word of God requires, but we are not commended to do anything to procure the pardon of our sins, but in reference to service and duty, I count myself to be never the nearer Heaven for my best works, than if I had done nothing else but blaspheme God. But what saith the Scriptures, "now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." {Rom.4:4-5} We are saved, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." {II Tim.1:9} When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Rom.5:10. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." {Isa.43:25} "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." {Ezek.36:26-27} "I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him." {Isa.57:18} "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins; return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." {Isa.44:22} "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine." {Ezek.16:8} All unto whom the mystery of God's love and free grace is revealed, they cry grace, grace, Christ, Christ; Christ is all in all, nothing but Christ, their prayers, tears, duties, devotions, and all of theirs, is nothing to them in respect of acceptation, or justification, or salvation, they are now dead to working, they do no works in the world to attain any of these, all theirs is vanished, and is quite drowned in the infinite Ocean of God's Free Grace. It is so that God might have all the glory, Eph.1:6, and that man might not boast, but obey God freely. "Thus saith the LORD, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the LORD." {Jer.9:23-24}

But I have no work of grace wrought in me. The Spirit shall convince the world of sin, and of righteousness. Jn.16:7-10. God hath begun his work in thee, if he hath convinced thee of sin, and of righteousness. To be convinced of sin implies such a discovery of sin which causes the soul to see herself guilty and utterly lost and undone; by reason of sin, they confess themselves vile, and they abhor themselves. "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." {Job 42:6} They loath themselves for their deeds. "And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed." {Ezek.20:43} Esteeming themselves as beasts. "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." {Psal.73:22} The soul is convinced, so as to have no hope, in anything it can do to help itself out of that miserable state of sin; he is undone in nature, he cannot do anything from whence he may expect salvation, or have any hope of it; for a man cannot expect life and salvation from Christ alone, until the soul be taken off of all other things in respect of life. This vision of God causes the soul to see themselves, and say, "there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." {Dan.10:8} That is, my best work, my righteousness is defiled, and is sin; now sinful self and righteous self are alike {if there be any difference, the last is the worst, now the creature hath nothing to procure Christ, nor no strength to believe in him} the Holy Spirit discovers to the soul, that there is nothing but darkness and death in our best duties. He is so convinced of sin, that he justifies the justice of God, if he perish in his sin. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." {Psal.51:4} "I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me; he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." {Mic.7:9} It is from grace to be taken so off of nature, and he that is so taken off of nature, hath grace, is begotten and born of God. For when the soul is taken off its own bottom, it must have another to rest upon, or else it sinks, therefore when God takes away the soul's false foundation, which was her false hope, God gives the soul a better in himself.

The teaching and drawing of the Father, Joh.6:44, is this, that all men have sinned, and are in an estate of death, and that in Christ there is a ransom, in which is life and all happiness, and that this Jesus and all that he hath done is for him. When the soul hath heard and learned this, there is a power

which accompanies this teaching, which power carries the soul by faith to Christ believing in him; for the teaching of the Father and faith goes together; every one that hath heard and learnt of the Father comes unto Christ. "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." {Jn.6:45} So that to convince the soul of righteousness, is to be convinced of Christ, to reveal Jesus Christ to the soul, that in him only is help, and in his righteousness alone is deliverance. "I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people." {Psal.89:19} "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." {Isa.63:1} So fix and settle the eye of the soul upon Christ's righteousness only, at least putting the soul under the hope of it; for as soon as God hath stripped the soul of all hope in and from itself, he turns the soul to Christ, and puts it under hope, Ezek.16:5-6; when the soul sees nothing but death, God saith, "Live," Ezek.16:6, and when the soul is going down into the pit, God saith, stay, hearken, "I have found a ransom" for thee. Job 33:24. Christ calls, "look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else," Isa.45:22, and the power of the LORD goes along with this call, works faith, and carries the soul to Christ as his own, having possession of him. When this is manifested to the soul, faith acts in the love of God in pardoning his sin, greatly wondering at the greatness of his goodness, or astonished with the glory of his present condition, the heart being swept away in love, though for the measure of it, it is not in all alike.

For the first, to be convinced of sin then is more than a bare notion or consciousness of sins committed, for this may be in one that rests in themselves, and in something else besides Christ, and perish in this condition; for by the letter of the Law and the light of Reason, men may see and say they have sinned, as Saul and Judas did; but those the Spirit convinces of sin, they are convinced to purpose, because it is thoroughly. Jn.16:8. The Spirit discovers to the soul that she hath chosen something else besides Christ, upon which the soul rests, and satisfies herself withal, and expects mercy and comfort from by reason of them, and that they are her best services, and other lying vanities, as groundless hopes, peace, joy, comfort, &c., telling the soul that there is nothing but death and darkness in them, and that if the soul rest in any of them, there is nothing but death and destruction for them; and there is a secret power of God which goes along with this teaching, which turns the soul from

darkness, viz., self, Satan, and all lying vanities, to light, to Christ, where alone life is to be found; the Spirit reveals to the soul a sufficiency of life in Christ, and it needs seek life in nothing else; also the Spirit of God persuades a soul that this life is for him, therefore he is to look to Christ for it, and wait upon him for pardon and life, and that the soul shall not lose her waiting, and so be deceived, but shall certainly have it at last. These things must be wrought in truth, and in a measure in every soul that hath grace, though for the measure of this, it is not in all alike; for in some it is in a small measure, as it was in those who are said to be in carnal frames of mind, and not spiritual, though still babes, their standing and state being secured in Christ, and therefore safe. I Cor.3:1-3. But when this is wrought in any measure, in the same time faith is wrought, and as the measure of this work is wrought in the soul, more or less, in the same measure faith is wrought in the soul, and as it appears to the soul, so accordingly faith appears to the soul; and when the soul sees itself to be lost by reason of sin, and sees all to be in Christ for life, and is taken off from resting upon anything else besides Christ, and to expect all from Christ, resting upon Christ, though this be but in the smallest measure wrought in the soul, now in this instant faith is wrought, Jesus Christ is formed in the soul, and the soul is converted; for this teaching of the Father and Faith are inseparable. Jn.6:45-47.

Objections Answered.

"I cannot believe." It is not in the power of the creature to believe in Christ, therefore look not upon faith as a work of thine own, nor is faith any condition of the Covenant required on thy part; for the Covenant of Grace is not made with man, but with Christ; nor is there any condition in the Covenant of Grace required on man's part, neither is there anything to be done by man to cause him to have an interest in the Covenant of Grace, or to partake of it, for the Covenant of Grace and Life by Christ is every way free and unconditional on man's part, else how doth it differ from a Covenant of works, if there were any thing to be done by us to have interest in it? And if faith were a condition required on our part to partake of the Covenant, or else not, I see not but we are now in as bad a condition as to be under the Covenant of works, it being as hard and impossible for man of himself to believe in Christ, as it is to keep the whole Law, as the Scripture declares. How hard it is to believe, the experience of many can testify; to believe is a fruit of the Spirit, Gal.5:22, and we must be in Christ, before we can bear fruit, Jn.15:4, therefore we must be in Christ, before we can believe;

he that hath the Spirit of Christ hath Christ, we have the Spirit of Christ before we believe, therefore we have Christ before we believe. Rom.8:9-11. Men are ordained unto eternal life before they believe, Acts 13:48, and faith is a grace of the Covenant on God's part to be given to those who are given to Christ; faith is given to some, that by it they may know their interest in Christ, and by it live upon him. Faith is no condition of the Covenant, therefore they mistake who conceive faith to be a condition of the Covenant, either required on man's part to partake of the Covenant of Grace, or given to men, and then required of them as a condition; although the Scripture expresses, that he that believes shall be saved, yet is not faith any condition of salvation; but such expressions are to be considered as a declaration to us what persons shall be saved, viz., such as believe; it is an information to such as know not who shall be saved, and if any desire to know who shall be saved; the answer is, he that believes shall be saved. If faith did give us interest in Christ, when faith did not appear to act, it would appear to us, that we had no interest in Christ, and that we were not justified by him.

"I know not whether I am bidden to believe or no, for some shall not be saved, and if I be one of them, if I should believe I should be saved by Christ, I should believe a lie." The Gospel declares that whosoever believes in Christ shall be saved, therefore those who believe, cannot be any of them that shall perish; and the Word saith, he that believes not, is condemned already, Jn.3:18, and shall not see life. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." {Jn.3:36} What God saith is truth, and truth ought to be believed, and whatsoever is contrary to truth, no man is bound to believe, therefore no unregenerate man is commanded to believe the forgiveness of his sins in any other way than God's word holds forth forgiveness of sins, which is, he that believes shall be saved, and have everlasting life. Men are commanded to believe they shall have benefit by Christ, life and salvation by Christ, if they believe, and no man is commanded to believe he shall be saved by Christ, whether he believes or no; for this is contrary to the Word which saith, "he that believeth not is condemned already." Jn.3:18. No man is to believe that which is not true, yet this hinders not, but all that see an absolute necessity of Christ, shall enjoy him, and they ought not to distrust in him, but to cast away all their doubts and fears, and believe in him, and rest upon him forever, as Simon Peter said to Christ, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Jn.6:68.

"But I have no love to Christ, I am an enemy to Christ, I am not fit for Christ." The reason thou dost not love Christ, is because thou sees not thy sins to be pardoned by Christ, for didst thou know he loves thee, thou wouldst love him, for the love of Christ would constrain thee to love him. II Cor.5:14. "We love him, because he first loved us." {I Jn.4:19} Dost thou apprehend thyself to be an enemy to God? So were all those once that ever did believe. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." {Eph.2:12-13} When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Rom.5:10. Enemies cannot discern Christ, yet God gives Christ to such. Thou canst not fit thyself for Christ, and if thou sees such a necessity of Christ, as without him thou art undone, then thou dost indeed desire Christ, and goest to Christ. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Jn.6:37. Hearken to what Christ saith, and you shall speed, for you have the promise of Christ, which is security sufficient to satisfy thy soul; for Christ is in you, and no man can hunger and thirst after righteousness, viz., Christ, but such as are blessed, Matt.5:6, and the Spirit of God dwells in you, and Christ is in you, and they that are led by the Spirit of God out of themselves to Christ, for light, and life, and strength, are the children of God. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." {Rom 8:14-17}

"Indeed, there are many sweet promises in the Word, but they are all for believers, but I am none." I grant none may apply a promise of life, but only such as believe, yet the promises are for all the elect, thou knows not but thou art one of them, and when God shall please to give thee faith, thou shall know thy interest in them. In the meantime, stay thy self with this, that the Lord Jesus gave himself for enemies, and justifies the ungodly. Rom.4:5. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." {Rom.5:6} Whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. While we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Therefore be not discouraged, God may save thee also. The Lord saith, "I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people;

and they shall say, thou art my God." Hos.2:23. Oh sweet place! Therefore by no means yield to thy fears, nourish no jealousies against God, but resolve in Christ's strength to cleave to his Word, Psal.119:49, and here hold, saying, "my beloved is mine, and I am his." Song 2:16.

"I would gladly believe, but I dare not." Thou should not admit nor give way to any discouragement to hinder thy going to Christ, seeing Christ says to all thirsting souls, "if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Jn.7:37. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." {Rev.22:17} The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear him, and in them that hope in his mercy. Psal.147:11. Christ will not quench the smoking flax. Matt.12:20. From whence is thy fear, sure it is occasioned or much increased by them who bid persons believe, and forbid them again by their saying, take heed what you do, for you may be deceived? It is not so easy a matter to believe, you must first be so sensible of sin, and so humbled for it, &c., before you may believe. Now they conceit, they are not so and so qualified, therefore they dare not believe; also they are scared with the many things hypocrites may do, how far they may go, and so set them short of hypocrites; which must needs discourage them, yet the word of God requires no such teaching, for men to learn before they may believe; for when the soul sees itself lost by reason of sin, and is at a stand, not knowing what to do, the first thing they are to do, is to believe in Jesus Christ. "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." {Acts 16:31} The word requires nothing of them before they may believe, therefore we may not, for none may presume above what is written.

If thou desires to believe, thy will is in part renewed, and thou dost in some measure believe, though weakly, as he did that said, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief." Mark.9:24. God's servants are described by a desire to fear his Name. "The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." {Psa.147:11} "Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee." {Psal.33:22} There can be no desires without faith, for a man cannot desire that which he believes not to be. Heb.11:6. Many give God their hearts, and do not know it, and so are troubled, because they do not know what is meant by the heart, nor where it is seated. I speak not of the heart of flesh, Rom.8:5-7, for there is a carnal mind and a spiritual mind in men; I speak of the heart mystically and spiritually, which is principally seated in the will, so that what it wills or desires, there is the heart, and to that which the will

most wills or desires, to that is the bent of the heart unto. Now if the soul were to have its choice of everything, that one thing that the soul should choose, would any question whether they loved it, and that their hearts were not inclined unto it? For as no soul can be sensible of the want of Christ, until the soul be possessed of him, Rom.8:10-11, so no soul can desire Christ above all things in the world, if they might have their choice, unless Christ have their hearts, and they dearly love him, and believe in him; for Christ is only precious to them that believe, I Pet.2:7, and to none else. So the seat of faith is in the heart, which is in the understanding and will, but more principally in the will, so that if our wills be renewed, our hearts are renewed. Paul saith, "to will is present with me," good I would do; so then "with my mind I serve the Law of God," Rom.7:18-25, wherein it appears that the will is one with the mind, and the heart is one with them, these three are one, and always go together, and are alike spiritual. Christ saith, "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," Matt.6:21; that is, the mind and affections; and by affections is meant the heart, for the heart and affections are one thing.

There be them that believe, and yet are uncertain as to whether or not their faith be of Divine origin, whether or not their faith be wholly and sincerely grounded in Christ; so that it is possible for them to call their faith unbelief, as the blind man did, "Lord help my unbelief," Mk.9:24, which must not be understood of unbelief, for it is not a lawful request to pray that sin may be increased, for unbelief is a sin, and the ground or cause of the souls departing from God. Heb.3:12. Many mistake faith, for some have thought that comfort, joy or ravishments of soul with God, to be faith, and so have concluded, because they had not them, they have no faith. It is not men's believing, but the object of faith, that gives faith its denomination, or name, for there be divers kinds of faith; there is a natural faith, Lk.8:13, and a divine faith, or the faith of God's Elect. Tit.1:1. Faith and its object is not to be separated, because faith and its object is one and the same, it is too strict therefore to give a distinction or definition of faith without its object.

He that believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God shall be saved. All is included in this, for he that believes this, must know Christ to be the Anointed, the Saviour of his people from their sins. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins." {Matt.1:21} So to believe in Christ is to rest upon him, to live or stay upon the Lord, to hope in him as to expect all from him. "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." {Psal.62:5} To believe in Christ is to own and confess him.

"And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." {Matt.16:16} "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." {Rom.10:9-10}

Any man may say, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, yea the devils confess this, "I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God," Lk.4:34, therefore this cannot be the faith of God's Elect, and so not the faith of the Gospel. There are three things to be considered in the nature of faith; first, illumination; secondly, for the soul to trust in Christ for pardon and life; and the third is the application of him. The first, is when a man consents to the Word, that it is true, and this is called faith, and this the devil doth likewise, "thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble." {Jas.2:19} The second, is to believe that Jesus is the Christ; which implies a seeing and knowing all to be in Christ for life and salvation, and so to rest upon him for it; he that thus believes in Christ, is brought by Christ over to Christ, and so centered upon him, that he will never go from him. Jn.6:58. "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him," Psal.62:5, and this no devil ever did. The third, is to believe with an application of Christ as their own in particular; therefore to believe in Christ, is more than an illumination, or a saying so, or reformation; for where faith comes, old things are done away, and they are new creatures, there is a light set up in that soul, now they know all is by Christ, and that there is no way or means of life, but by Christ, and with Christ, and thus rest upon Christ.

Secondly, the Scriptures clearly prove that to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, is the faith of the Gospel, for the Word of God is the ground of faith, and the souls salvation depends upon the truth of what God saith, and faith looks only to what God saith, and rests upon it and sets to its seal that God is true. And that so to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, is the faith of the Gospel, I prove by these Reasons.

1. Because this is the faith which the Apostles preached and witnessed unto, and the faith which is recorded unto us in the Scriptures. "For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ." {Acts 18:28}
2. Because none can say {knowingly} that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Spirit. "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord,

but by the Holy Ghost." {I Cor.12:3} 3. Because upon the profession of this faith, Christ builds his Church. "And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." {Matt.16:16-18} 4. Upon the profession of this faith the Baptism of Christ is dispensed. "And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." {Acts 8:37} 5. They who have this faith dwell in God, and God in them. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." {I Jn.4:15} 6. This faith flesh and blood cannot reveal, but God reveals it to the soul. "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." {Matt.16:16-17} 7. Such are born of God; whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." {I Jn.5:1} 8. This is the faith that overcomes the world. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" {I Jn.5:4-5} 9. Because such as have this faith are pronounced blessed, and shall never die. "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" {Jn.11:25-26} 10. Because he that hath this faith shall be saved. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." {Rom.10:9-10}

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" {Jn.11:25-26} To believe this record, implies an assent that it is truth, with a resting or hoping to have interest in it, to be made one with it, is faith, though it be a lesser degree, than a full and certain assurance of life by him for himself in particular. "Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together; who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the

LORD? And there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." {Isa.45:21-22} Those in Matt.5:3-5, who mourn, and hunger, and thirst after Christ are blessed, and shall be satisfied, though they want the application of Christ; therefore besides the general illumination or natural light of truth which wicked men and devils may have as well as a believer, there is a two-fold act of faith, the first is a direct act to believe Christ is, in whom is life, &c., this is to believe the record which God hath given concerning his Son, and that he came into the world to save sinners. I Tim.1:15. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else," Isa.45:22, and so trust in Christ for life from a hope of mercy, but this hope is perhaps without a certainty; though there is a state of blessedness for all those whose hope is in the name of the Lord. "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." {Matt.16:17} "Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope." {Zech.9:12}

Secondly, the reflect act of faith, which is to believe that Christ came to save them from their sins. Matt.1:21. To know that I believe; he that hath this measure or degree of faith, trusts in Christ from a knowledge of an interest in him, "we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God," Jn.6:69; he that hath this act of faith, hath the former, but there be some which have the first act of faith, but have not attained the second, yet their hearts are turned unto Christ, and fixed upon him, and they long for him, hope in him, and rest upon him alone for life and salvation; these have faith, which causes them to depend on Christ, which none can do but such as are possessed with Christ, though at present they may not know it, yet are they blessed, Matt.5:6, and in his Name they do trust. Matt.12:21. The Apostle saith, "these things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." {1 Jn.5:13} So that these words declare they did but weakly believe, and that they did not know that they were possessed with eternal life, {yet they were,} therefore they had not that particular knowledge, or assurance of the love of God, yet did believe in Christ.

Some conceive they have no grace, because they never had so deep a measure of sorrow for sin as some others have, &c., the word of God declares that those that believed had not one and the same measure of sorrow; the Scripture declares no

sorrow in Lydia receiving the Word, Acts 16:14, but it is said that the Jailor trembled, being in fear. Acts 16:29. The word of God is to be our Rule, and not men's conceits. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." {Isa.8:20}

The greatest measure of sorrow, grief, fear, terror for sin, that ever any had, made them not to be loved of God, nor to obtain mercy from God; nor did sensibleness of sin ever drive the soul to Christ, but ever from Christ; as Peter's sensibleness of his sin, caused him to bid Christ to depart from him, "Lord depart from me, for I am a sinful man," Lk.5:8, therefore a deep sensibleness of sin hinders the soul in believing of Christ, and drives it further from Christ. Thou hast no cause to complain, if God deals more gently with thee, than he doth with some others; it's a great mistake to think that God delights in slavish fear or tears.

What is the greatest sensibleness of sin worth that proceeds not from faith, and flowed not from the apprehension of pardon and love; look not to sensibleness of sin, but to Christ; thy very sensibleness of sin is not free from sin, and it deserves nothing but death, but in Christ is life. If thou wert ever fatherless, which is for the soul to be stripped of all, that none of thy works, nor means, nor men, nor angels, nor nothing besides Jesus Christ can stand thee in any stead, nor satisfy thee, being resolved to wait upon Christ, until he please to manifest his free love in pardoning thy sins; this is the work of God in thee, yea this is a great and sweet work of the Gospel, and such a work as never was in any, but such as shall be saved. If thou renounces all thy own sufficiency, so as thy best duties cannot satisfy thee, certain it is there is a better sufficiency come in place.

"I fear my faith is not the faith of God's Elect, because it is attended with so much doubting." Fears and doubting are no fruits of faith, but of unbelief, and as fear and doubts increase, the stronger is unbelief in the soul; so the soul is ready to judge that where so great unbelief is, there is no faith; yet the Scriptures declare that in those who had true faith, the faith of God's Elect, yet at the same time have had much unbelief also in them, so as they have been filled with doubts and fears; and from hence it was that he in Mk.9:24, called his faith unbelief, because he was sensible of his great unbelief; and was not unbelief strong in Thomas, when he said, he would not believe? Jn.20:24-25. And seeing that a child of God may have true faith, notwithstanding they may also have many fears and doubting, thou knows not but the cause may be so with thee, therefore take heed that you deny not your selves to have faith,

lest you call weak faith, no faith, and light, darkness, and grace, sin; for to do so is very evil. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter," Isa.5:20, those that put faith for unbelief do so; pray to God to strengthen thy faith, as he did, Mk.9:24, and use means to remove such things as strengthen unbelief, and hinder the sight of thy faith; as ignorance is one cause of doubting, also an over sensibleness of infirmities, slighting God's ordinances, neglect of duty, or a formal performance, or nourishing sin more or less, proneness to sin, harkening to Satan, to sense, to carnal reasoning, nourishing fear and unbelief, &c. Also endeavor to do that which is a means to strengthen thy faith, know the perfection of the state of a believer in Christ, in which the weakest and most imperfect believer, is as perfect, as much justified, accepted, and as happy as the best; live upon Christ alone, make choice of and mind the sweet promises for thee to feed and strengthen thy faith, walk with God, pray in faith, ask his Spirit, and thou shall have it; this Spirit will revive, and fill thy soul with joy and peace in believing, and make thee so wise and strong {in his time} that thou shall not cast away thy confidence any more, Heb.10:35; and as God's love {which is perfect, full, free,} is discovered to thy soul in the same measure thy doubts and fears are cast out; for perfect love casts out fear. And although you are to use means, yet means are but means, not causes of increase of grace; it's the operation of the Spirit of God in the soul, which is as God is pleased, therefore look up to God for faith.

"I fear my faith is but presumption." I fear the ground of this is thy not knowing, or not minding what faith is, and what presumption is. What faith is and concerning presumption, this word may be understood in a twofold consideration; first, for such a confidence as is without a ground; or secondly, against a ground.

For the first, he that presumes he hath a confidence of pardon, but it is without any ground, he hath no word of God for his confidence, and it may be he can give no reason at all for his confidence, much less a good reason; that this discouragement may be answered, and removed, consider wherein faith and presumption differs. He that presumes, he hath no ground, no word of God for his confidence; here confidence is fetched from their own conceits, they seek no life in Christ, his word, and promise.

1. But he that truly believes in Christ, his confidence is from the Word, "we through patience and comfort of the scriptures" have hope. Rom.15:4. "I wait for the LORD, my soul

doth wait, and in his word do I hope." {Psal.130:5} "My soul fainteth for thy salvation; but I hope in thy word." {Psal.119:81}

2. He that truly believes in Christ, doth not receive any promise of life, but in and through Christ in the riches of his grace. But he that presumes if he receives a promise he receives it upon his qualifications, without respect to Christ, and he gathers conclusions of life from what they are and can do, their own righteousness was never to them as dross and dung, Phil.3:8, so they depend upon their faith, and not upon Christ by faith; the ground of their confidence is, because they are so good, or not as bad as others, as the proud Pharisee, but he was never fatherless, Hos.14:3, nor did they ever receive the sentence of death in themselves, II Cor.1:9, so they were ever confident, and it was ever very easy for them to believe.

3. He that believes, his hope and trust is only in God, and they hope in his mercy. "Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waiteth for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee." {Psal.33:18-22} And this is the work of God to persuade the heart to rest upon the free mercy of God in Christ. "But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation." {Psal.13:5} "Let Israel hope in the LORD; for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." {Psal.130:7} God is rich in mercy. Eph.2:4. "Then said they unto him, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." {Jn.6:28-29} For the second, so the confidence of one that presumes is contrary to the word of God, the word approves of no such confidence, but protests against them and their confidence, as appears. "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, we are delivered to do all these abominations?" {Jer.7:9-10} So their presumption hardens them, and makes them bold to venture upon sinful practices, as lying, stealing, drunkenness, uncleanness, cheating, and the like, as theirs was.

4. He that truly believes, abhors that which is evil, and cleaves to that which is good. Rom.12:9. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." {I Jn.3:3} The grace of God teaches godliness in the present evil

world. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." {Tit.2:11-12} Christ is precious to them that believe, I Pet.2:7, and they count all things but loses for Christ, and for him they will suffer the loses of all things, as Phil.3:8; yet many there be who say they are confident, &c., and yet they dare not speak for Jesus Christ, his truth, his servants, &c., these are far from suffering the loss of all things for him; so others can hold Arminianism, and free-will, setting themselves and their endeavors above God, and his grace, in affirming that notwithstanding all the grace God affords to any man, yet unless man shall please to will and improve it well, {for as they say he may choose whether he will or no,} it shall never be effectual to him; if it be so, they may thank God for his grace, without which they can do nothing, but much more themselves, for saving themselves; for others had as much grace as they {as they say Judas had} and shall be damned, and they had been damned also, if they had not willed well, &c., and it was in their power and choice, whether they would will well or no; which is so contrary to the Scriptures; "so then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." {Rom.9:16} "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." {II Cor.3:5} Surely all those who have tasted of God's free grace, cannot but admire it, and be thankful for it, and loath with the greatest indignation whatsoever shall entrench upon it, although it were but in the least degree.

"I have no grace, because I grow not in grace, my life is not holy, nor am I like unto others who belong to the Lord." Dost thou know thy age or degree in grace? What, art thou a child, or a young man, or a father? I Jn.2:12-13. There is a great difference between a child and a man in nature, so great is the difference between babes in Christ, I Cor.3:1, and a man in Christ. I Jn.2:13. Also consider if thou canst, whether if thou be a babe in the womb, or born. Heb.5:13. He is a babe, as a child is begotten and alive while it is in the womb, before it is born; so thou may be begotten from above, and alive, before thou canst be born. Christ must first be formed in us, before we can be new born babes. Gal.4:19, I Pet.2:2. And when thou art delivered out of the state of bondage, which is a place of darkness, of fears concerning thy soul, thou art not born and brought forth; and as the womb is a place of bondage, so here; and therefore canst not do that service others do; if thou be but new born, there cannot that be expected from thee, as there is from a man in Christ; as there is a difference between a child

and a man in nature, so there is here; learn to distinguish between the grace itself, and the exercise of it; it's not the possession of grace, but the exercise of it, which attains to a holy conversation, by the operation of the Spirit; and when a soul is delivered from its enemies, as Satan, terrors, wrath, curse, it's born, being delivered we serve. Deliverance is before working; the time of doubting is a barren time; men cannot fight and work at the same time.

Regeneration consists in being begotten to the Lord, to have union with him, and for God to convey his power into the soul, by which it is made conformable to the will of Christ, and lives by faith on the Son of God. Gal.2:20. The first is, where the latter is not, at least in the degrees of it, as believers are of several growths and states; as, first, babes, children; secondly, young men; thirdly, fathers, &c. Can babes work? And yet if they die in that estate, they shall not miss of glory. I Jn.2:12. It is one thing to be justified, and another to be sanctified, so it is one thing to live, another to be born, and to work is distinct from both; there is as much difference between some of the Lord's, as there is betwixt willing and doing; some are termed carnal, others spiritual. I Cor.3:1. Thou may be begotten, but not born, {if in bondage,} and then it is not the season of growing, as another season is. If thou be ignorant, or in temptation, thy understanding is clouded, and thy heart being distempered with fear. "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." {Job 23:8-9} Thus, thou art not fit to judge of thy growth; is a new born babe, I Pet.2:2, fit to judge of its growth? Also consider, it may be, thou art in God's way, and so thou dost not use his means, or not rightly; consider Psalm 1:3, "and he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

"I am much tempted by Satan, that I have no grace." Satan tempts Christ's babes to cast away their confidence, which is forbidden, Heb.10:35, therefore if Satan tell ye, that ye have no faith, thou may reply, if I have it not in the act to my knowledge, I may have it in the grace itself; if he say that he knows, and you know you have no grace at all. Reply, the devil knows not, and if I should think so I may be deceived; as fire raked up in ashes appears not, and gives neither light nor heat, so corruption doth hide and obscure grace; and if I have no grace, why let you me not alone, as ye do others, and as ye did me when I took my fill of sin? Then ye told me I had faith, when I had none, I have found ye a liar, therefore I will not hearken

unto you, and I am the more confident I have grace, because ye tell me I have none. "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." {Jn.8:44} But suppose I have no grace, there is no reason why I should despair, because every one of those that belong to the LORD were once without grace in the estate of nature; "at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel," strangers, &c., having no hope, and "without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ," Eph.2:12-13, "which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." {I Pet.2:10} Many are ordained unto eternal life, which did not actually believe, nor had any grace at all; I nor any do not know, but I may be one of them also, therefore I know no reason to despair, nor will despair do me any good, for it is better to wait upon the Lord in the ordinances of his grace, to trust him with my soul, if mercy come I shall be happy, and shall have cause to praise him. There is nothing too hard for God, Jer.32:17, "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean." Matt.8:2.

"I cannot pray, nor do anything to purpose, therefore I have no grace." Unbelief kills the heart, and hinders thy living upon Christ's strength. It is so with thee, that thou might see a need of Christ, and live upon him, Jn.15:5, who hath promised to be a full supply to his children. If God hath given thee a desire to obey him, say not it is nothing, because God saith it's something, for he gives this, and if this be all thou hast, it is accepted, and he will grant thy desire. "Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." {II Cor.8:11-12} Christ will not quench the smoking flax, Isa.42:3; when we see no fire, we know there is fire by the soak; holy desires cannot be in a soul that hath no grace. "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them." {Psal.145:19} A desire after grace is an act of spiritual life; an act is from a faculty, a faculty is from life and being, a dead man cannot desire, none can desire that which they believe not to be, nor that they do not love; desires if spiritual flow from faith and love, and are a part of what love and faith desire. A will to obey, may be all that a believer can find in himself at some time. "For I know that in me {that is, in my flesh,} dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." {Rom.7:18} Press after obedience to God, yet know our greatest holiness cannot

justify us before God; for by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of your selves, &c., not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph.2:8-9. Even the strongest of the Lords, are but weak creatures, and the highest perfection they can attain unto in this life, is a sight of their own imperfections, and a desire and endeavor to obey, and to live upon Christ by faith. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." {Phil.2:12-13} And was not Paul one of the strongest believers, Rom.8:37-39, and yet what saith he of himself, and his words are the word of God, "I am carnal, sold under sin," Rom.7:14-15, "for that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I," verse 18, "for I know that in me, {that is, in my flesh,} dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." The apostle had no power to do what he would, yet he lived by faith in the Son of God. Gal.2:20.

"I find no willingness to duties, I find no relish in them, so that I often omit them." Unwillingness to duties, argues much corruption, from whence omissions often flow. God may have begun his work in thee, although it be thus with thee, it may arise from divers causes, as from unbelief, doubting of acceptance of person and duty; and it's no wonder, if such have little list to obey; also eying infirmities, and not Christ also with them, and not exercising grace, especially faith; little love to Christ, loving temporal things, deadens the heart, and makes it carnal; weakness of grace, or from God's not affording present strength, sloth and ease that slays the soul, indiscreet by doing duties out of their season, ignorance of the nature of duties, and what God requires in some causes ignorance of the sweetness of spiritual duties. So the soul's sicknesses, which hinders the soul's relish of spiritual things; also weakness of body is a great enemy to action. "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." {Psal.73:26}

"Surely, I am deceived, I have no grace, because I am not able to subdue my passions." This declares rather weakness of grace, than otherwise, and it's certain, it is not from a want of truth of grace, if thou dost that which thou wouldst not, Rom.7:14-25; in ourselves we are imperfect at the best. The strongest is not able to stand alone; also some of the Lord's partake more of natural temperament, which increases naturally, and as that temperament is, we are more or less hasty and passionate. A wicked man may be naturally patient, and a child of God may be sinfully passionate. Thou should not

measure God's love to thee, nor the truth of his grace in thee by thy mortification of sin, for God may for ends best known unto himself, suffer corruption to be too strong for thee, it may be, to abase thee more, as Paul, {Romans 7,} that thou may see what need thou hast of a Lord Jesus to pardon, heal and keep thee; who knows but God may leave thy personal sanctification the more imperfect, that we may mind and behold Jesus Christ, and our righteousness in him, and so live the more in him, and our joy the more in our justification by him? "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." {Rom.4:6-7} It's one thing to have thy sins forgiven, or not imputed, Psal.32:1-2, and another thing to be cleansed from them; live in the apprehension of the love of God, and down goes sin, and all discouragements, so live in discouragements, and sin prevails. Psal.77:2-10. We ought not to fetch our comfort from our subduing of sin, but in Christ, in whom we lack no righteousness. I Cor.1:30. Christ is ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. When we are at the best, we may not live in ourselves, nor by sight, but by faith, and when we are at the worst, we are to live upon Christ by faith, and comfort ourselves in him, and in him only. Many when they want strength or comfort, they seek what they want from their duties, and comfort themselves in their abstainings from sin, but as for Christ, he is not, Psal.10:4, in all their thoughts.

"What I once felt is now decayed." The ground of our faith is God in his Word, and not our sense and sight, which is sensual. We live not by sight and feeling but by faith. II Cor.5:7. Whilst thou maintains fears and jealousies of God's love to thee, it is no wonder it is so with thee. Call to mind the days of old. "I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times." {Psal.77:5} It's certain, if ever God manifested his love unto thee, he is still and ever will be the same unto thee, having loved his own, he loves them unto the end. Jn.13:1. With the LORD there is no variableness or shadow of turning. James 1:17. A child of God may decay in parts, sight, feelings, and exercise of grace for a time, for these are sometimes more and sometimes less, but always as God sees best that we might rest and rely upon nothing but Christ. I see and feel nothing in myself, or all is as nothing to me, save only Jesus Christ, who is all in all to me. We ought to believe what we neither see nor feel; faith is the evidence of things not seen, Heb.11:1, and to live by faith, is to walk after the Spirit; and to live by sight and feeling, is to live after the flesh. Rom.8:1.

"I am discouraged, because nothing is made good to

me, as I do not seem to possess the substance of that which I desire." If thou indeed art under the promise of it, and under the hope of it, thou shall possess it. It may be made good unto thee, without thy possession of it, for we must not ground faith in the possession of what it believes; possession is suitable to sense, and there is neither faith nor hope in what we possess. To have right in it, and to possess it, are two things, "these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Heb.11:13. The possession of things gives no being unto faith, nor is essential unto it, no otherwise than as faith gives being unto it. Abraham believed he should have a son; here was his faith, yet he did not possess his son, his son had no being but in the promise of God, therefore to place enjoyment to be essential to faith, is a very great mistake. "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be." {Rom.4:18}

As a man must first believe God is, before he can go to God, Heb.11:6, so a man must first believe in Christ, to have remission of sins by him, and after receive remission of sins. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." {Acts 10:43} It thou hast received grace to abandon thyself to the LORD in the truth of his Word, as Sarah did, that she should have a son, not only before she had him, but against reason she believed she should have him, thou hast faith. But I am not assured that I shall be saved, therefore I have no faith. Faith and assurance, is not one thing, but are differing and distinct; assurance cannot be without faith, but faith may be without assurance; for assurance is not the proper act of faith; assurance is an effect of faith, and a higher measure than that is, and the greater our feeling of assurance is, the lesser our faith is. Faith in the act is an assenting or cleaving to the truth and faithfulness of God in his promise, not from anything she feels in herself but from something it apprehends in God, in his word. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform." {Rom.4:20-21} The act of faith is sometimes attended with much strife and struggling, for Satan saith to the soul, it's in vain for thee to look to Christ, to believe in Christ; whereas Christ saith, "come unto me, believing that I will comfort thee." Now for the soul to rest upon the fidelity and ability of Christ in his promise, is no small measure of faith; for

assurance is not from the habit of grace, nor from the direct act of faith, but from the reflect act of faith, which is for a man to see and know that he believes; which assurance is from the immediate testimony of the Spirit of God in the conscience of one who is already a believer, causing the soul to know it believes. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." {Rom.8:16}

Now abides faith, I Cor.13:13; therefore faith doth at all times one way or other, sufficiently evidence the truth of our estates, if we did at all times truly discern the testimony or true act of faith; and the reason why we discern it not, is for want of a full measure of faith, to withstand all that is opposite to faith; for some there be, who have faith, yet by reason of their ignorance, unskillfulness and forgetfulness have not that experience of God's dealings with children, both for order and manner; so that when faith doth not so lively act, and when Christ doth not clearly appear in the soul, he begins to doubt whether he be not deceived; and when the Lord appears again, the doubt is dissolved, and the soul is satisfied, and he is armed with experience against such a time again, if he be able to judge, and neglect not to mark well, but where use and exercise is wanting, Heb.5:11-12, there is not so clear a discerning.

"I fear the opposition that is in me, is not between Christ and Satan, or the Spirit against the flesh, but from my corrupt will, and my enlightened conscience." I grant all the combats in men are not right, and many are deceived herein; yet the difference may easily be discerned; understand it thus: 1. The natural conscience {although it be enlightened} acts only in a natural way, at the most it is but moral, as not to lie, swear, steal, and such gross acts. 2. It stirs not, unless it is forced, and only unto that it is forced unto. 3. It sets one faculty against another, as the will and affections against the understanding, but the Spirit of Christ causes an opposition in the same faculty, as in the will, &c. 4. Conscience enlightened without grace, it strikes only at the branches of sin, but not in the root. Whereas in contrast: 1. The Spirit of God makes a free, full, constant, impartial resistance against all sin. 2. And discovers unto the soul her secret corruptions in their colors, and the Spirit overpowers the soul, so as it causes the soul to hate sin, and leave it. 3. The Spirit causes the soul to be gladder when sin is more discovered. 4. The Spirit of God teaches the soul effectually to oppose all sin {even the appearance of evil} equally, proportionally and orderly.

"I am so troubled with hideous temptations, as I believe no child of God is." Christ was tempted, {Matthew 4,} and I know no kind of temptation that God in his Word hath promised

that his child shall not be tempted unto. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it," I Cor.10:13; therefore believe and take comfort in the wisdom and faithfulness of God. If they be burthensome and hateful unto you, and you cry out to God for help against them, they shall not be laid unto thy charge; for as it was with the damsel in Deut.22:25-26, even so is this matter.

"I fear that when persecution comes, I shall not suffer, nor hold out unto the end, but dishonor God, betray his truth, shame and grieve his people." Cast all these cares and fears upon the Lord. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." {Phil.4:6} "For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb.13:5. God will take care for his glory, truth, and servants, his wisdom and power and faithfulness shall order all.

Others are discouraged, because they are not filled with joy and comfort, &c. Faith may be strong, when joy is absent. David had faith when he had no joy. "Restore to me the joy of thy salvation," Psal.51:12; he refused comfort, Psal.77:2, and he wanted it. Such as judge their condition to be good, because they are filled with joy, are mistaken and build upon a wrong foundation, in that they are not founded upon Jesus Christ alone, so as to look to him, and live upon him only. If some persons had joy, they would make it a Christ to them, and live upon it, and so abuse Christ, and themselves, and their joy; and it's a mercy for such to want joy, till they can better use it.

Others are discouraged, because their souls are filled with terrors. Saith one, "Oh, I feel the wrath of God in my soul, I have a hell in me, and so have had for a long time." This is a sad condition, yet thus it may be with one who belongs to the Lord; for thus it was with Heman, who said, "LORD, why castest thou off my soul? Why hidest thou thy face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up; while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off. They came round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together. Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness." {Psal.88:14-18} And Job cried, "he hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths. He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head. He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone; and mine hope hath he removed like a tree. He hath also

kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies." {Job 19:8-11} And David in temptation judging himself according unto the Law, to sense, and feeling, said in haste, "I am cut off from before thine eyes," Psal.31:22, "fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me." {Psal.55:5} And Jeremiah said, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light. Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day. My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath broken my bones. He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail. He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old, &c." {Lam.3:1-19} "The LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." {Nah.1:3} Some conceive that if God loved them, there should be no such tempests in their souls, but should enjoy a sweet calm, instead of wrath and terrors, sweet peace and joy; indeed it is so with many, but it's not so with all that are the Lords, as appears. Job saith to God, "I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself? And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? For now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be." {Job 7:20-21}

Because it was so with Gideon as it was, for he could not be persuaded that God was with him, "and the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, the LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? And where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? But now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." {Jdg.6:12-13} Gideon was mistaken, and so must thou be, if thou judges thyself not to be the Lords, because thou art filled with terrors, &c. Comfort depends not upon any freedom from terrors, but upon the Spirit's revelation of truth, and application of it unto the soul. The greatest peace any saint doth possess, is not to be either a ground or an encouragement for their believing, so also there is no terrors any can possess, ought to be any discouragement in believing, for our happiness is not from anything we feel or apprehend in ourselves, but in that we are known of God, who loves us and comprehends us in himself, and his not imputing our trespasses unto us. Psal.32:1-2. A soul being in such a sad condition, should consider what the Lord saith in Isaiah, and to cast all their fears of hell upon God in a promise, to trust "in the LORD forever; for in the LORD

JEHOVAH is everlasting strength." {Isa.26:4} When thou art in the flames of this fire, thou shall not be burnt, for with God nothing is impossible. Lk.1:37. O troubled soul, the tender mercies of our God hath visited us, and so it may visit thee also, and give light to thee that sits in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide thy feet in the way of peace, "to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." {Lk.1:78-79} "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." {Isa.26:3}

What was that which brought thee so low, but poring so much upon thy sins, until thou wert filled with despair, and thy omissions and commissions against conscience increased thy horror? Endeavor the contrary, and first look to Christ, believe his promise, then may it lead thee to repentance, and know that which is a great cause of mourning, is no cause of despair, therefore cast not away your confidence, Heb.10:35, for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Heb.10:37-38. Therefore say as the prophet said, "rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me; he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." {Mic.7:8-9}

"I am in great misery and want outwardly, by reason of poverty, if God did love me, I should not be so much neglected as I am." Thou should not reason so; what thinks thou of the condition of those who wandered about in sheep-skins, goatskins, in deserts, mountains, dens and caves of the earth? I fear they were more destitute of outward comfort than thee, and suffered more hunger, cold, and nakedness than thee; hast thou not a house, not a bed to lie on, the places where they wandered afforded not these things unto them; art thou indeed destitute, afflicted and forsaken? So were they whom God loved, and esteemed the world not worthy of. Heb.11:37-38. Poverty and want hath attended and kept company with many a dear child of God. Job was made poor; yea the Churches of Jesus Christ have been poor; the Church of Corinth was poor, II Cor.8:14, the Church of Smyrna was poor, Rev.2:9, the Church of Macedonia was in deep poverty, II Cor.8:1-2, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself was poor, II Cor.8:9, and thou must be very poor, and yet God may love thee, as he loves Jesus Christ. Jn.17:26. The poor receive the Gospel, and the profession of the Gospel of Christ, have made the rich poor, in that for Christ they have suffered the loss of all things. Phil.3:8. In thy greatest

want be content to be like Christ in poverty, as well as in glory, Jn.17:24, for the time will quickly come, in which you shall feel no want, nor suffer no hunger, cold or nakedness.

There is no state and condition under the sun that is free from Satan's temptations; those who have more abundance of outward things, he suggests and insinuates unto them, that these things are all they are like to have, and that seeing they have a heaven here of outward contents, they must not expect another hereafter. And to those who have greater gifts and parts, he saith, they are not given to them in love, but only for the benefit of others, and is ready to discourage them. Satan is ready to get an advantage of us, but we are not ignorant of his devises. II Cor.2:11. The Lord instructs his children to recognize the depths of Satan, Rev.2:24, to know his stratagems and to resist him. And as there is no state under the sun free from trouble, so it is a sweet comfort unto all that are the Lords, that there is no state and condition, but as God can, so he will support his in, and under it, and make it sweet and comfortable unto them, yea the best for them; for all things shall work for good, Rom.8:28, to them that love God. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." {I Cor.10:13} "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." {Rom.8:35, 38-39}

"I cannot see God, so surely God hath forsaken me." Sometimes God hides himself from his elect, as the Scripture declares, "verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour." {Isa.45:15} "I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone; my soul failed when he spake; I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer." {Song.5:6} "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." {Job 23:8-9} Our carnal reason, and corrupt heart, and Satan with his suggestions, are so near us, before our eyes, that we cannot see God, and we hearken so much to what they say, that we mind not the voice of the Spirit directing us to Christ.

It is one thing to know, and another thing to know that we know. Christ said, they knew; they said, they knew not; Christ said, "whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" {Jn.14:4-5} So be those that saw and spoke with Christ, and knew not that it was the Lord. "And their eyes were opened, and they knew him." {Lk.24:31} Paul prayed that they might know the hope of their calling. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." {Eph.1:17-18} When God hides his face, we are to wait upon him, and look for him, Isa.8:17, for he will return again; "but Zion said, the LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." The LORD returns with these gracious words, "can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." {Isa.49:14-15} "For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer." {Isa.54:5-8} When God absents himself from his elect, his love and care is the same unto them, as it is when he most manifests himself to them.

Another is discouraged, saying, "I thought I had true faith, but since I fell into a great sin, I am persuaded if I had been the Lords, I should not have been so left of God, as I was to sin so as I did." Say not so, but consider that even some of the children of God, hath he suffered to fall, if not into the same sins, yet as great. David sinned in adultery and murder; how greatly did Solomon sin after he obtained mercy; and Peter denied Christ with an oath, yet his faith was not void or naught, as Christ's prayer was heard, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," Lk.22:32; therefore his faith never failed him. These examples are recorded in Scripture, to set forth the glory of the riches of God's free grace, Eph.2:4, that men may know what God can do, and that great sinners might not despair or faint under their sin, therefore Christ saith, "verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme." Mk.3:28.

"And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." I Jn.2:1. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." I Jn.1:7.

To despair of the mercy of God, because our sins are great, were to limit God in his mercy, which is a greater sin, and an adding sin to sin, therefore for the greatest sin a believer can commit, he ought not to moan without hope; for no sin he can commit, can never put him into a state of condemnation, or under the curse. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." {Rom.8:1} And whilst we live in this world, God heals not our sinful natures wholly, nor takes it away quite; the flesh ever lusts against the spirit, yet God ever esteems his as they are in Christ, and not simply as they are in themselves. Paul saith, I myself keep the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin. "For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." {Rom 7:15-17} I Jn.3:9. Likewise consider Nehemiah 9:16-20, "but they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments, and refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage; but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not. Yea, when they had made them a molten calf, and said, this is thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations; yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness; the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go. Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldst not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst." Indeed, the LORD, "he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." {Psal.103:14}

God is never an enemy to his own elect, though they greatly sin against him. We are not beloved for our own sakes, nor anything in ourselves, but for Christ in whom God is well pleased. "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." {Matt.3:17} Therefore nothing in us, or that we do, can make us to be loved more or less. God may well say of himself, "I am the Lord, I change not." {Mal.3:6} His love is as himself, ever the same; and Christ in whom we are beloved is ever the same, Heb.13:8; therefore a

believer's hope, joy and confidence, is to be ever the same in Christ. So we are commanded to rejoice always in the Lord. Psal.5:11, 32:11. "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee; let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified." {Psal.40:16} "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice." {Phil.4:4} "Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto our Lord; neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength." {Neh.8:10}

Oh there is enough in the Lord Jesus to satisfy thee at all times, he is an unchangeable object of true joy and infinite satisfaction, in him only is all our hope and happiness, whose blood hath paid all the debt of all thy sins. It is Christ that died, who now shall condemn? Surely none! Rom.8:33. Therefore let not thy fall cause thee to question the love of God, seeing thy salvation depends not upon thy repentance or holiness, but from God's free grace in Christ. Rom.9:15-16. "Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices; but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." {Isa.43:24-25} See Ezekiel 16:1-9. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." {1 Jn.2:1}

And for any to turn the grace of God into wantonness, that is, the sweet mercy and consolations of God, to encourage them in their sinning, they are led by the Spirit of the Devil, for he is their father, and his works they do. Jn.8:44. I speak to you that regard iniquity, Psal.66:18, that love sin, and delight in it, and are bold and venturous upon it, and can drink down iniquity like water, Job 15:16, you at present are in the gall of bitterness, and whilst it is so with thee, here is no consolation for you, for you may not be numbered with them who through weakness and temptation, or want of watchfulness, are overtaken, and fall into sin, which they hate, by not shunning the occasions of sin, &c. Surely all that belong to Christ have need to pray, as David did to God, "hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." {Psal.17:5}

Howsoever it be, be not out of hope, although thou didst persecute the truth, as Paul did, and them that professed it, Acts 9:1-2, yet afterwards smote upon his breast, was turned, and preached that faith he once sought to destroy. Gal.1:23. Thou knows not but God may convert thee also. The servant of God having fallen into sin, is to rise by faith; for, shall a man fall,

and not rise? "Moreover thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the LORD; shall they fall, and not arise? Shall he turn away, and not return?" {Jer.8:4} "Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me; he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." {Mic.7:7-9} God subdues the corruption that is in his, not all at once, but by degrees; therefore he saith, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." {Heb.8:12} God hath nothing against those who are in Christ. I Cor.1:30. Thou art in Christ, if indeed the LORD hath begun a good work in thee!

But alas, I feel my heart is hardened. There is much hardness of heart in a child of God, and they feel it, and complain of it, and mourn under it, which is from the new heart in them. To feel hardness is from softness, and the condition of an experienced child of God. "Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory; where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? Are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O LORD, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting. O LORD, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?" {Isa.63:15-17} Their hearts were hardened, yet they were the children of God.

Motives or Encouragements to Believe in the LORD.

Notwithstanding faith is the gift of God, Eph.2:8, Phil.1:29, it flows from the Spirit's Divine Operation in the heart, and therefore our believing is said to be the work of God. Jn.6:28-29. The operation of God, Col.2:12, and the Spirit of faith, whereby our capacity to believe proceeds. II Cor.4:13. The Spirit enlightened our understanding, and bowed our hearts to believe, so that without the Spirit of Christ, we can do nothing. Jn.15:5, Eph.1:19. It is through grace that men believe, Acts 18:27, yet men are to wait upon the LORD in the ways of his ordinances; for when in the preaching of the Word, we bid persons to do so and so, we expect the Holy Spirit of God to put power to the words spoken, to make them effectual to enable the creature to obey; as, "he said unto me, son of man, stand

upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me." {Ezek.2:1-2} "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." {Jn.5:25} Else it were in vain to speak to dead men, I Pet.4:6, for to believe, &c., is a spiritual work, and all men by nature are spiritually dead, Eph.2:1, 5:14, and only they believe whose hearts God opens. "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." {Acts 16:14} None can believe but they to whom it is given, therefore such words as these, "believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shall be saved," Acts 16:30-31, in this sense are to be understood; for it is "not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy," Rom.9:16, "for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil.2:13.

Encouragements to Believe.

1. Because the Gospel is to be preached to every creature; he that believes shall be saved. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." {Acts 2:21} There is no precept or command for any to doubt, for none are exempted or forbidden to believe. Acts 16:30-31. "And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment." {I Jn.3:23} Men are commanded the contrary, and to follow after faith, and to lay hold on eternal life. I Tim.6:11.

2. By believing we come to know our interest in Christ, and of our salvation by him, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Jn.3:16. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." {Jn.3:36}

3. By believing, we honor God, "he that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true," Jn.3:33, therefore none can believe too soon, or too confidently, or too constantly.

4. "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." Isa.7:9. There is no true quietness and settlement of soul, without believing; also thou stands by faith; thou falls into sin by unbelief. "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith." {Rom.11:20} The word

preached {is precious and powerful, yet it} profited them not, because it was not mixed with faith. Heb.4:2.

5. It is faith that rids the soul of all its distempers, doubts, fears, discouragements, Rom.5:1, and we may never separate the Spirit from faith, nor faith from the Spirit.

6. By faith in Christ, thou shalt be kept in perfect peace, it will sweetly, transcendently refresh thy soul, "thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." {Isa.26:3} "Being justified, by faith we have peace with God. Rom.5:1. By faith we apprehend Christ our justification, the fruit of which is joy and peace.

7. By unbelief, we add sin to sin in the highest nature, if we believe not what God saith, our act of unbelief accuses God to speak falsely, "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." {I Jn.5:10} It is impossible for God to lie; "the strength of Israel cannot lie," I Sam.15:29, nor can it be any dishonor to God, nor hurt to thy self, to hope in his mercy, and to believe in him; therefore when thou art tempted to unbelief, set before thee the evil of unbelief.

8. As bad as thou canst be, have been received to mercy. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." I Tim.1:15. "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, {"polluted in thine own blood," verse 6,} behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine." {Ezek.16:8} Christ justifies the ungodly. Rom.4:5. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." {Rom.5:8} Therefore have hope, "fear not; believe only," Lk.8:50, "the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night." {Psal.42:8} "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God." {Psal.42:5} "Be not afraid, only believe." {Mk.5:36}

9. Unbelief straitens thy heart, and stops thy mouth, hinders thy thankfulness and praising of God; thou shalt be dumb, because thou believest not. "And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season." {Lk.1:20}

10. Unless we believe, we can never glorify God. Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." {Rom.4:20}

Question: From whence is it that many of the Lord's children have so many doubts and fears?

Answer: It arises from many several causes; as, from ignorance of the fullness and freeness of the promise, Isa.55:2; or mindlessness and heedlessness of the promise, Heb.2:1-3; and from corruption in the heart, opposing grace, Rom.7:5; and from the bodies distemper with melancholy; or from the conscience {being enlightened} which sides with the Law against itself, Rom.7:24; or from unskillfulness in the word of righteousness, Heb.5:13; and from unbelief, which takes the Law and applies it to itself, which occasions fears, and fear producing doubt; and from loose and careless walking with God; or from the Spirit of the LORD not operating in the soul; the Spirit when it acts, speaks peace, Rom.8:16, and causes faith to act more strongly.

Means to quiet and settle a troubled soul in assurance of the love of God; God gives peace to his children by means. "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means." {II Thes.3:16} "I commune with mine own heart; and my spirit made diligent search," Psal.77:6, to find out what it is that troubles thee. Ask a reason of thy soul, "why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." {Psal.42:11} Examine from whence all thy discouragements come, they come not from God, for his voice is only comfort unto his people, he hath declared himself to be merciful, and gracious, and slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according unto our iniquities, Psa.103:3-14, &c., the Lord's voice is one of comfort to his people. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins." {Isa.40:1-2} "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." {Jer.29:11} Nor come they from Christ, he doth not trouble nor discourage any; for he binds up the brokenhearted; he proclaims peace, liberty, he comforts all that mourn, he gives beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and garments of praise, for the spirit of heaviness, &c. Isa.61:1-3. The LORD is gracious and pitiful, he will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed. Isa.42:3. His voice is full of love and tenderness, all his words are sweet words; as, "let not your hearts be troubled," Jn.14:1; "fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Lk.12:32. "Casting all your care upon him; for he

careth for you." {I Pet.5:7} Christ's voice is "open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled." Song.5:2. Oh, sweet words of Christ to his little flock! Nor come these doubts and fears from the Holy Spirit of God, for he is the greatest and most sweetest Comforter, causing no discouragements, but removing them all, by revealing and applying to the soul the love of God, and carries the soul by faith from all discouragements to God, who is love and peace, where the soul is to rest, Psal.116:7, and to be filled with his sweet peace.

Therefore all our discouragements do proceed from the Devil, who is an enemy to faith; for he takes the word out of men's hearts, lest they should believe, Lk.8:12; and our own skeptical hearts by nature, so disposed to discrediting the truth of the Gospel, and thereby dishonoring Christ, Jn.8:49; "take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God," Heb.3:12; and the lying vanities we have chosen, thereby forsaking our own mercy.

Give no way to any discouragement at all, though it do seem never so just and reasonable, &c. This was David's sin to admit of a parley with that which might tend to discourage him; saying, "will the Lord cast off forever? And will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies," Psal.77:7-9, but as soon as the LORD showed him his infirmity, he had other thoughts of God, saying, "who is so great a God as our God? Thou art the God that doest wonders; thou hast declared thy strength among the people. Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph." {Psal.77:13-15} If God in his greatness were known, and the wonders he doth known, and his footsteps, the way he goes known, men would admire him, and rejoice at that for which they now mourn. "Jesus answered and said unto her, if thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, &," Jn.4:10, "if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, &c." Lk.19:42. When thou art tempted to unbelief, set before thee the evil of this sin in itself, and the effects of it.

Learn to know and distinguish between the voice of Christ, and all other voices, that thou may say, "it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh," Song.5:2, and hearken unto it. Christ's voice is peace to his own, Lk.24:36; "thy sins are forgiven," Lk.7:48; "I will remember them no more." Heb.10:17. Therefore that voice that tends to hinder the peace of the Saints, suits more with Satan, and is not the voice of Christ. "I will hear what God the LORD will speak; for he will

“speak peace unto his people, and to his saints.” {Psal.85:8} Satan also speaks in the soul, saying, “is not this a delusion; is it likely to be from God; hast thou a heart fit for Christ?” And because this last voice is more suitable to reason, the soul is ready to close with it, and to conclude against God, and his own soul, that the voice was not from God, but a delusion of Satan, mistaking Christ’s voice to be the voice of Satan, and Satan’s voice to be the voice of Christ, which is a miserable mistake. Therefore learn to know the several colors, sounds, and voices, which are for God, and which are for Satan, I Cor.14:7-11; or else you will mistake and come unprepared to the battle.

Learn to know and distinguish between the voice of the Gospel, and the voice of the Law; the Law saith, “cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Gal.3:10. When there is any work required to be done upon pain of punishment, or upon promise of eternal life, it is the voice of the Law; for the Law requires a doing of something for life. “Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them.” {Rom.10:5} But the voice of the Gospel is otherwise, that “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us,” Gal.3:13, and “to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness,” Rom.4:5; and that his mercy is above what we can ask or think, Eph.3:20; so that the promise of life, they are free without condition, and the Gospel declares what God works in us, and freely gives unto us. “I will love them freely.” Hos.14:4. If some persons did listen more to the promise, which is the voice of the Gospel, and not unto the voice of the Law, or the voice of corruption, they should enjoy more peace, and less trouble.

Meddle not with the threatenings in the Word, so as to apply them to thy self, because they belong not unto thee, they are no part of thy portion, they have nothing to do with a believer, nor hath he anything to do with them; the threatenings are for them that are under the Law, but we are not under the Law, but under Grace. Rom.6:14. A believer having sinned, through weakness, applies the threatenings against that sin to himself, not considering that Christ hath satisfied for the sins they commit; Christ being made a curse for us. Gal.3:13.

Be sure you judge not your state by false principles; as, to be bad for the want of that, which if thou haddest it, would not prove thy state good, as knowledge, memory, sensibleness of sin, &c., nor judge thy state bad for the having of that which if thou wert freed from, would not prove thy estate good, as passion, temptations, discontentedness, &c. If this Rule were

observed, some should not be so troubled as now they are.

Take heed you be not overwhelmed with sin, therefore eye not so much thy infirmities. Beware of such a minding of sin, and such a complaining of it, either to God, or man, as may discourage, oppress, and trouble thy soul, for this is sinful. David's experience might teach him this, for he saith, "I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed," "I am so troubled that I cannot speak." {Psal.77:3-4} Therefore hearken not to thy failings, corruptions, doubts, fears, for as they are all against God, so they are all against thy soul. There is no grace, no mercy from them, therefore what thou sees and feels, see not, consider not, forget, and what thy sense sees not, see. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. Heb.11:1. Walk by faith, not by sight. II Cor.5:7. Eye Christ only, mind him, meditate upon him, and his rich and free grace, fetch all thy comforts from him, who is made to thee, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. I Cor.1:30. If thou attends only to God in his promise, thou shall find rest, Psal.116:7, for thy soul. O believer, eye not so much thy self, or thy sins, as Christ's full and perfect Satisfaction, which was offered and accepted for all thy sins. Heb.10:14-18. Oh therefore live, and rest thy soul upon thy sweet Lord Jesus Christ alone, and place all thy confidence in him. Dost thou not hear God say to thee, "cast away all thy fears, and come to me, I will settle thee, comfort, quicken, uphold thee, and be better to thee than thy self can be; I will be all in all unto thee?"

Know the happiness and perfection of the state of a believer in Christ, as he is clean from all sin by the blood of Christ. I Jn.1:7. They are removed from us, Psal.103:12, as far as the east is from the west. A believer in Christ is accepted of God in him, as perfect, righteous, and comely, as Christ is; for Christ saith to his, "thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee." There is not any sin a believer can commit, which can be a ground sufficient to question the love of God; nor ought they to cast away their confidence in God, for anything they do, or can befall them, nor ought they to cause any uniqueness of spirit in them. Heb.10:19-25. For now there is none that can lay anything to the charge of God's Elect. Rom.8:1. Oh meditate on this truth, until thy heart be over powered with it, and thou enjoy the sweetness of it, and ever mind it seriously, thy full freedom and sweet liberty thou hast in Christ. "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." {Gal.5:13}

Learn to distinguish between thy Justification and thy personal Sanctification; the first is perfect and complete in

Christ; the latter is in ourselves, and is weak, and imperfect, and uncertain. Let us look off our sins, and look upon God's sweet promise, who saith, "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more," Heb.10:17, so that now we may draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, verse 22-23, for he is faithful that promised. Let not thy comfort depend upon thy personal Sanctification, because from it there can no sure selected constant comfort flow. To seek comfort from Sanctification, and not from their Justification in Christ, is a cause of much trouble in many a weak believer; for Sanctification hath nothing to do with Justification, nor Salvation, as any cause of it. Also Sanctification admits of degrees, but Justification admits of neither rules nor degrees, and is more glorious than Sanctification. Our Justification depends not upon our apprehending of it, nor in our receiving of it, but upon the effectualness and merit of what our sweet Lord Jesus hath done for us. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." {Heb.10:14} So that now we may well have boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus. Heb.10:19. Justification is apprehended by faith. Rom.5:1, Heb.11:1, Jn.8:56. Faith doth evidence to us our justification; for the Scripture saith, all that believe are justified. Acts 13:39. It is possible to have a full assurance of faith, Heb.10:22; therefore faith is an unquestionable evidence; and when faith is hidden and doubtful, Justification is not apprehended; and when faith is hidden and doubtful, Sanctification is not evident but doubtful, and so cannot evidence to us our Justification. The effects of Sanctification cause men to question their Justification, therefore no effect of Sanctification can evidence to the soul its Justification; and that soul that by Faith apprehends his Justification by Christ, not only knows it, but may live upon it, enjoying the sweet fruit of it, peace, joy, strength, without any consideration of the effects of Sanctification in himself. And seeing Christ is made Sanctification to a believer, I Cor.1:30, why may not a believer live upon his own, and say, I have Sanctification in Christ, which is perfect, my actual righteousness doth often fail me, but Christ's righteousness endures forever, Psal.111:3, therefore I will fetch all my comfort from Christ, and my Justification by him; and as we are not to conclude our Justification from any effect of Sanctification, so we are not to conclude that apprehension of Justification to be from God, as shall take men off the means and rules of Sanctification, because it is to the dishonor of God for men not to walk in a way of holiness, according to the word of God. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a

peculiar people, zealous of good works." {Tit.2:14} Prize and preserve the peace of thy conscience.

Be sure you allow your selves in no sin, but in the power and strength of Christ, to hate and abhor with the greatest indignation all sin, and the appearance of evil; it is better to die than to sin; there is that which accompanies every sin, which strikes at a believers peace and comfort, and will damp, straiten and oppress their comfort, joy, and peace in God, unless God doth wonderfully strengthen their faith in him. And such as live by faith, and enjoy sweet peace in him, have found sin to be an enemy, and a let to their faith and comfort, it having often unsettled, and disquieted, and clouded their soul's peace, though indeed it ought not so to do, for we are to remember that sweet place, Heb.10:17, "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." This alone is able to settle a soul, it being full of sweetness and life.

Do not trouble thy self with anything that may befall thee; in case thou wert certain great troubles shall befall thee, be not troubled at any trouble, much less for future trouble, nor think not to encounter with and supply a future trouble, with a present strength; if many and great troubles come, God is all sufficient, and will remove them, or give strength to bear them when they come. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." {I Cor.10:13}

Mind seriously those promises of God that are suitable to thy condition, separate thy self to meditate upon them, "I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings," Psal.77:12; hide them in thy heart. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." {Matt.13:44} There is strength and sweetness in the promise, thou may venture thy soul upon God in his promise, and live upon it, thou knows not but God may reveal his promise to thee, and settle it sweetly and fully upon thy soul by his Almighty Power. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." {Eph.1:17-19} Therefore let not God's promises be strange to thee, but feed upon them, eat

them, "eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Song.5:1. Leave not the promise, until thou be refreshed, revived, raised, ravished with God's rich grace and infinite free love, and thy heart enlarged with thankfulness and obedience unto God again for the exceeding riches of his mercy in Christ. "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." {Eph.2:7} The Lord's redemption is full and plenteous in Christ. "Let Israel hope in the LORD; for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." {Psal.130:7}

Treasure up experiences of God's goodness unto thy soul, but "who among you will give ear to this? Who will hearken and hear for the time to come?" Isa.42:23. Remember the days of old, "I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night; I commune with mine own heart; and my spirit made diligent search." Psal.77:5-6. "Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?" {Psal.89:49} Keep thy heart calm and quiet from all passions, as fear, grief, &c., the still soul can best hear and know Christ's voice, his still voice; but where fear, vexation, and distempers dwell, they are not aware of Christ, nor themselves, and commonly they that fear most have least cause, as they who had the angel of the Lord come upon them, "and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy," Lk.2:9-10, for when the soul is troubled with any passion, it is not at the command of faith; as the disciples, who "while they yet believed not for joy," Lk.24:41, and wonderment, the ferocity of their joy hindering their faith, until the LORD himself, Lk.24:45, opened "their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." Indeed, "let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." {Jn.14:1} Quietness is the stay of the soul to do or receive. Be contented with thy present estate, and fill not thy head, heart, or hand, with any more business than thou must needs. Consider, Heb.13:5, "let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Take heed of the cares of this life. "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." {Lk.21:34} Trouble not thy self with needless supposed fears, if thou dost, thou draws upon thyself real sorrow, and unnecessary discontent; for there be many that are possessed with bitter sorrows from supposed sufferings.

Order thy conversation aright, "whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God." Psal.50:23. Want of wisdom to dispose of, of diligence to dispatch, what necessity requires to be done in the right time and place, hath produced such inconveniences, as hath unavoidably caused trouble, a disquieted and an unsettled spirit. Walk with God in his ways, ordinances, for they are for thy comfort, strength, joy and peace in him; for there is no quiet to those that worship the beast. Rev.14:11. Use God's means, but live not upon ordinances, but upon God in them, for means alone are not sufficient to do us any good.

Do not sleight, nor refuse God's consolations, let them not seem small unto thee. "Are the consolations of God small with thee?" {Job 15:11} O soul, own that comfort God gives thee, if it seem small to thee, its thy own, own it, lest ye live to complain, saying, as David did, "my soul refused to be comforted," Psal.77:2, and to wish ye had that ye despised; be thankful to God for what thou hast received, and hold that fast, and let nothing go that may tend to thy peace; rest satisfied in Christ's righteousness, and add nothing unto it. "My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof. I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." {Psal.71:15-16} "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness," Psal.119:142, "in those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, the LORD our righteousness." Jer.33:16. The perfection of Christ's righteousness is held forth unto us, and doth always lie before us, for us, that we might ever be comforted with it, and rejoice in it, with thankfulness for it, seeing it so perfect, and full of divine consolation.

Oh here is enough to refresh and satisfy all those that belong to Christ for all eternity, so that we have enough, we need no other, nor no more righteousness. Meditate on God's goodness unto thee, let his loving kindness be ever before thy eyes. "We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple. According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth; thy right hand is full of righteousness." {Psal.48:9-10}

Belief in God, faith in Christ, want of faith, or lack in faith, is the cause of much trouble in the soul. "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." {Jn.14:1} Faith in Christ quiets and settles a troubled soul. Thou canst not be too confident in resting upon Christ in his free

grace, therefore come boldly to the throne of grace. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." {Heb.4:14-16} Those who know God, will trust him with their bodies and souls, and that upon his word, "and they that know thy name will put their trust in thee," Psal.9:10, but a fool neither will, nor can do so. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken," Lk.24:25, but those who are made wise by God will trust in the word of the Lord, Isa.26:3-4, and say continually, "I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope." {Psal.130:5} When the Lord pleases to settle a soul in the assurance of his love, he causes the soul to trust in his word, "remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope." {Psal.119:49} God by his word conveys that to the soul, which is suitable to its wants, and by his power and authority settles it upon the soul. Above all, take the shield of faith, Eph.6:16, "fear not, believe only," Lk.8:50, yea, cleave to God in his promise, even then, when thou art in thy greatest fears, and most sensible of thy unworthiness, "trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us." {Psal.62:8} If at all times, then at the worst times also; yea even then believe, and hear nothing against thy believing God in his promise. Abraham believed against hope, Rom.4:18, and so should we do. Oh, believe God intends thy good; Christ came to seek and to save the lost, Lk.19:10, "lost," viz., in the sight and sense of thy own sin and misery, and in thy own sufficiency.

Improve thy doubts, fears, temptations against believing, to encourage thee in believing; for hast thou not by experience found, that it is but in vain to hearken unto any of them? Consider often and well these places, "and the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." {Rom.16:20} "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." {Heb.10:35-37} "Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." {Rev.3:11} "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful

Creator." {I Pet.4:19} "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." {I Pet.5:7} Therefore search the Scriptures; and search some more. Reading helps men's judgments, memories, and affections; confirms our faith, and fits us to answer the temptations of Satan. Renounce all lying vanities, hearken unto none of them.

First, hearken not to the voice of thy heart, it is a lying vanity, it will deceive thee. "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." {Prov.3:5} Secondly, hearken not to Satan. Thirdly, hearken not to sense; Thomas said, he would not believe, unless he might see and thrust his hand into his side, Jn.20:24-25, but this sensual practice is to be abhorred by us; for this is to consult with flesh and blood, which cannot discern spiritual things, I Cor.2:14, and is condemned by God, Gal.1:16, so some persons will see such a holy frame of spirit in themselves, and feel such a sin subdued, &c., before they will believe, yet faith looks not to such things as these, but only to God in his word; therefore we must not live by sight, but by faith, II Cor.5:7, and blessed are they that have not seen or felt, yet have believed. "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." {Jn.20:28-29} Fourthly, hearken not to carnal reason, if it be hearkened unto, thou canst not believe, nor submit to God, nor be settled; for doth not reason say, that a virgin cannot bring forth a child, and a woman of ninety years is past conceiving a child, therefore reason saith it cannot be, and so contradicted God himself? Also can reason believe, that by faith the walls of Jericho fell down, and that the saints stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire by faith, yet faith prevailed and conquered all. Heb.11:30-34. Or is it likely or possible to reason for a man to walk upon the Sea as Peter did? Matt.14:29. And did not Christ's command seem vain to Peter's reason, that he should cast in his net into the Sea, seeing he had cast it in so often, and fished all night, and caught nothing? Lk.5:4-10. Can reason conceive how the dead, who are eaten with beasts, or fishes, or turned into dust, can be raised to life? Or that the sea can be divided, the sun go backward, or the rocks yield water in abundance; surely there cannot be any reason given for them. And seeing sense and corrupt reason is so contrary to God in his word, why should we hearken unto them, when they say the soul hath no grace, because sense sees none, and that God will not pardon their sins, because there is no reason to reason why he should, nor no way to reason which way it can be, yet it may be, for with God all things are possible.

Matt.19:26. "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." {Jon.2:8} Therefore, live not upon duties; nor upon good report; nor upon groundless hopes; nor upon peace; comfort; joy; raptures; ravishments; though they all be true or false, live upon God alone, and upon nothing else besides God in Christ; for if thou dost live upon anything else, thy foundation is unsound, and so it will deceive thee; and whatsoever their sparks may be, they must and shall lie down in sorrow. Isa.50:11. "Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God." {Isa.50:10}

Let not thy comfort depend upon God's actions or dispensations to the inward or outward man, if thou dost, thou canst not be settled, for they are oft changeable and contrary one to another; one day thou may have peace, joy, strength; another day, none of these; today God may show himself to thee, and in a moment of time he may hide himself; today rich and enjoy many friends with health, tomorrow sick, and poor, and friends all gone, &c. God's acting in us, and upon us, is not always as he is unto his; as God is in himself unchangeable, ever the same, so he is to his elect ever the same, however he may seem to be. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the LORD do all these things. Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it." {Isa.45:7-8} Thus, "wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob," Isa.8:17, and look for him. Make a good construction of all that God doth do to thee, his actions in us, or upon us, is the accomplishing of his will, for his glory, and the good of his chosen; that which I think worst for me, may be best for me, however it be, God is good, and good to me. "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," Rev.19:6, for "our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased," Psal.115:3; yea, all things "whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." {Acts 4:28} This I see and say, and enjoy in all the Lord's ways unto his people. "It is the LORD; let him do what seemeth him good." {I Sam.3:18}

Pray to God, that he may give unto thee the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, that ye may know what is the hope of your calling. Eph.1:17-19. "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation," Psal.35:3, "I beseech thee show me thy glory," Exod.33:18, "cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved," Psal.80:3, "and now, O LORD God, the word

that thou hast spoken," "establish it forever, and do as thou hast said." {II Sam.7:25}

Avoid sadness of spirit, and rejoice evermore. I Thes.5:16. Sadness of spirit hinders us in thankfulness to God, also it breeds uncomfortableness and unsettledness in us; an uncheerful spirit is unfit for duty, for what we go about uncheerfully, we are soon weary in it, if not of it. When our spirits are calm, united and cheerful, then we act more comfortably; and such a frame of spirit is fittest to praise God; sadness of spirit fits us to yield to discouragements; if we be sad, we enjoy not the comfort of anything; cheerfulness is as it were the life of our spirits, cheerfulness enlarges our spirits, and fits us to receive happiness, and to express it. Frequent and wisely improve those whom God hath settled, who are able to direct thee, and inform thee in the knowledge of the grace that is revealed, in which is fullness of joy. "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." {I Jn.1:4}

Mind and remember that which makes for your peace and joy; for if ye forget your resting place, Jer.50:6, it is no wonder if ye be troubled. "Ye have forgotten the exhortation that speaketh unto you as unto children," Heb.12:5, that we have no present actual comfort further than we have remembrance. Know, no means of themselves are sufficient to quiet and settle thy soul, it's the work of the Spirit to answer all discouragements, it is God alone that creates the fruit of the lips, "peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him." {Isa.57:19} It's God which established us in Christ. These things I write unto you, "that your faith and hope may be in God." {I Pet.1:21} "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all." {II Thes.3:16}

Use of Exhortation to all that Believe.

1. To admire the greatness and sweetness of God's love in his free grace to thee, it is a mercy to hear of it, how much more to have interest in it, and to enjoy it, being possessed of it.

2. Take thy own portion and treasures provided for thee in Christ, Col.2:3, and ever live in the eternal love of God in Christ to thee, this object is sweet, full, durable, sufficient to satisfy thee at all times; rest satisfied in Christ.

3. Dedicate thy self, and all thou hast freely to him, who gave himself fully and freely for thee, who suffered, yea died so freely for thee. Oh, how should this love engage our hearts to walk with God, to be holy as he is holy, &c., yea do all, and suffer for him; for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just

shall walk in them. "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? Prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them." {Hos.14:9}

4. Declare to others God's goodness unto thy soul, use means that others may enjoy the same mercy with thee. Be ye merciful, as he is merciful, forgive and give unto the souls and bodies of others freely; for so thou hast received.

5. Be content with thy estate, inward or outward, though many crosses and miseries attend thee; for if God be enough {as he is} thou hast enough; oh let not many, nor great troubles, inward or outward, dismay thee, I Cor.10:13, for though they may seem long, yet they cannot last long, for "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." {Rom.16:20} "Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." {Rev.22:20}

6. As Christ is all thy happiness, so let him be all thy comfort, and the supply of all thy wants, expect all you need and can desire, yea that God can give, that is for thy good, it is certain thou shall have all thou needs, Psal.34:10; seeing he hath freely given us his Son, how shall he not with him give us all things freely? Rom.8:32.

7. Watch and pray, lest ye fall into temptation, and abuse this favor, and turn this grace into wantonness. "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak." {Mk.14:38}

8. Stand fast in this liberty of Christ, in which he hath made you free. Gal.5:1.

9. Rejoice always, evermore, and let thy joy be full in God thy portion, "they shall rejoice in their portion," Isa.61:7; in Christ their portion, and in all those spiritual blessings they will see themselves blessed with in him.

10. Be wonderfully thankful to God for all his exceeding grace and mercy unto thee, in that he hath given thee beauty for ashes, and everlasting joy shall be to thee. "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified." {Isa.61:1-3}

Use of Comfort and Consolation to all that Believe

Oh dear, yea most dear and precious souls, who can express your happiness and glory? For the Lord have done great things for us, whereof we are glad. {Psal.126:3} Oh, now the great work of your Redemption is finished to your hands by him whose works are all perfect. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." {Heb.10:14} So that there is nothing of this work left for thee to do. Now thou mayest come unto the throne of grace boldly, for now all is paid; it is God that justifies, who shall condemn? Surely none! Rom.8:38-39. It's not sin, nor Satan, nor anything else shall hinder thy interest in Christ, or enjoyment of him, for thy union with the Lord Jesus shall never be dissolved; Christ lives forever, Heb.7:25, and seeing Christ lives, "ye shall live also," Jn.14:19; therefore thou art not only happy now, but thou shall be so forever, thou shall receive the end of thy faith, the salvation of thy soul. I Pet.1:9. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." {Jn.5:24} Christ is enough to comfort us in the sight of all our sins, and to make us happy in all our miseries. There is a day a coming, which will make amends for all; in the meantime, make mention of the loving kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all the Lord hath bestowed on us, &c., according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses, Psal.51:1, for "who is wise, and he shall understand these things? Prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein." {Hos.14:9}

THE PERFECTION AND HAPPINESS OF A BELIEVER IN CHRIST.

***Some brief Observations or Meditations on some part of
the Sixteenth Psalm, which Psalm is a Prophecy of Christ,
as appears, Acts 2:25 - 36.***

"Preserve me, O God; for in thee do I put my trust. O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord; my goodness extendeth not to thee; But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god; their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips. The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." {Psalm 16:1-11}

In this Psalm appears the wonderful goodness of God in Christ, to all the sons and daughters of Christ, and the exceeding great and happy estate of all that are in him.

Verse 1. "Preserve me, O God," there is no preservation in anything, but God. Christ in the days of his flesh put up strong cries and supplications to his Father.

"For in thee do I put my trust," there is no trust to be put in anything but in God.

"I put my trust," Christ as he was Man had faith, and it was in God.

"Thou art my Lord," Christ honours the Father in acknowledging him only; yet Christ and he are one.

Verse 2. "My goodness extendeth not to thee, but to the Saints that are in the earth." "My goodness," Christ's goodness was from himself, therefore his own. Jesus Christ, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," Col.2:3, is full of goodness. Therefore all that Christ hath done is wonderful, excellent, and meritorious; in this is our happiness and comfort.

"Extendeth not to thee," viz., God. God is perfect and infinite, therefore he is not capable of any addition of goodness. Oh admire his perfection!

Verse 3. "But to the Saints," &c., those who are Saints, had no goodness of their own, "their righteousness is of me,

saith the Lord," Isa.54:17, Christ's goodness was for the Saints, they stood in need of it.

"Extendeth," it reaches the Saints, they shall enjoy the fruit of it; there is no place of the earth that is out of the reach of Christ. This goodness of Christ was not for every person in the world, but to the Saints that are in the earth.

"Saints," Christ's goodness made them Saints; Christ found them no Saints, but wicked sinners. Oh, Saint admire the riches of Christ, and his love to thee; the Saints goodness is in Christ. O soul rest satisfied in Christ's goodness, which is thine, rejoice in it, and admire at it, be thankful for it, walk suitably unto it, and improve this goodness against all thy doubts and fears, &c.

"To the excellent," the Saints are excellent to Christ, yea, all of them are alike excellent, beautiful, glorious, unspeakable, infinite, excellent, with the excellent beauty of Christ. "And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty; for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD." {Ezek.16:14} They are more excellent than the whole creation of heaven and earth. Christ calls them excellent, and he esteems them so, by virtue of his own perfection accredited to their account. Eph.5:27. Oh Saint esteem thy self as Christ doth to be excellent in his Excellency; for thy beauty it is perfect through my comeliness I have put upon thee, saith the Lord God. Ezek.16:14. "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." {Isa.61:10} O glorious saint, the world knows not thy worth, therefore it esteems thee not, yet sleight not thy self, because Christ hath made thee excellent.

"In whom is all my delight;" Jesus Christ is fully pleased and contented with his.

"All my delight," an infinite delight Christ takes in his.

"All," one Saint is esteemed by Christ to be of more worth, than the whole creation of heaven and earth, those things have none of his delight, the Saints have it all, the quintessence of all fullness.

"All," infinite is the love and contentment that Christ takes and gives to them. O precious Saint, delight thy self in God, rest satisfied with him, in his love, and the delight he takes in thee.

Verse 4. "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god; their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips." As for the wicked, it is

not so with them, they are not in so happy a condition, they shall find the contrary from Christ, he will not once name their names to God, nor offer their offerings to his Father.

"Their offerings of blood," their costly services shall be rejected, they shall find no entertainment, no acceptance from Christ, they shall have no peace, nor comfort, no cessation of sorrow, their sorrows shall never have an end; their sorrows shall increase and be multiplied, therefore they are in a miserable condition.

Verse 5. "Mine inheritance and lot," Christ's lot and inheritance is his people. "For the LORD'S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." {Deut.32:9}

"Mine," Christ lays claim to his people, to have an interest in them, Christ is not ashamed to own them to be his. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." {Heb.2:11} The Saints are not their own, but Christ's. I Cor.3:23, 6:19-20. Seeing the Saints are Christ's, they are to do all for him, to serve him, to be at his disposing only, and not at their own.

"Inheritance of my cup," Christ's people are his by purchase, "let this cup pass from me;" they cost a great price, even "the precious blood of Christ." I Pet.1:19. He that paid so much for his, and will not lose them, nor leave them. "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." {Heb.13:5-6}

"The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance," the Saints have God for their portion. "The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him." {Lam.3:24} "Thou art my portion, O LORD." {Psal.119:57} The portion of a child of God is infinite, because God is infinite. The LORD esteems nothing too much for his, in that he declares himself, and all that is his to be theirs. The Saints are infinitely happy in having such a portion. Jer.10:16. "Happy is that people, that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD." {Psal.144:15} A Saints portion can never be spent, nor lost, "God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Psal.73:26. None are so rich as a Saint; the poorest Saint shall never want, "the Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." {Psal.23:1} "There is no want to them that fear him...they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing." {Psal.34:9-10} Oh, rich and happy Saint, admire free grace, which doth abound to thee; be content with thy portion, and well thou may, for more thou canst not have; rejoice in thy portion, for it will be a full supply to thee, "they shall rejoice in their portion."

{Isa.61:7} Be thankful for thy portion, for it was freely given thee. "I will love them freely." {Hos.14:4} Esteem not anything too much for him, who esteems nothing too much for thee. Be content if outwardly poor, because richer thou canst not be, in that thou art an heir of glory; magnify thy portion, and live upon it richly.

"Thou maintains my lot," God hath undertaken to preserve the Saints, and he doth it; Christ's inheritance can never be lost, because it is maintained by God. The Saints safety and perseverance depends not upon themselves, nor anything below God, but upon God, who maintains and upholds them. Therefore all Christ's sheep are sure to persevere, for it is impossible they should fall finally, or miss of glory, because they are maintained by the LORD himself.

1. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." {Jn.10:28-29}

2. For they are in the love of God. Jn.17:26, I Jn.3:1, 16. "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us." {I Jn.4:16} They shall unavoidably and irresistibly be brought unto Christ. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." {Jn.6:37}

3. God hath promised to preserve them. "For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." {Heb.13:5}

4. The LORD is faithful. "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." {I Cor.1:9} "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." {I Thes.5:23-24} The LORD is immutable. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." {Mal.3:6}

5. And only wise, Rom.16:27, he knows how to preserve them.

6. He hath power enough to preserve them. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." {I Pet.1:5}

7. Because they are in Christ, Eph.1:4, who shall ever live; "because I live, ye shall live also." {Jn.14:19}

8. Because they are so united to God, that God and they are but one, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Jn.17:23. Oh sweet and happy union that is so entire, real, full, and eternal!

9. Because God dwells in them, and they in him.

"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." {I Jn.4:13} Therefore they are secure and safe enough, being out of the reach of all the devils in earth or hell.

Verse 6. "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea I have a goodly heritage," Christ's lot and inheritance is his Saints, who are delightful and precious unto him. "For the LORD'S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." {Deut.32:9}

"I have a goodly heritage," for Christ is wonderfully taken with the Saints comeliness, it is a main part of the excellency of Christ's inheritance, that it cannot be taken from him, nor spent, nor lost.

"Goodly heritage," Christ hath a high esteem of his elect, "thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." {Song.4:7} They are without spot or wrinkle. Eph.5:27. "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." {Rev.19:8} Oh happy Saint, have thee a high esteem of Christ, he is satisfied in thee, and be thou satisfied in him, rejoice in nothing else but him, Psal.33:21, and sing praises to him alone.

THE SAINT'S COMMUNION WITH GOD BY FAITH.

***The life of Faith in Effectual Calling, Justification,
Sanctification, Infirmities, in Graces, in Means,
in Time Past, in Prosperity and Adversity,
in Glorification, and to Die by Faith.***

Wherein the life of Faith consists. It is in the communion the soul hath with God in Christ, and the soul's enjoying of Christ in his promises, both spiritual and temporal.

Faith in Effectual Calling.

It is the soul's cleaving and depending upon Christ in His promise for pardon and life. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." {I Thes.5:24} "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." {Phil.1:6} "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in

Christ Jesus before the world began." {II Tim.1:9} "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus." {I Pet.5:10}

Life of Faith in Justification.

The Lord having spoken peace to the soul, that Jesus Christ hath fully satisfied for all his sins, so as they are all done away, and shall be remembered no more, Isa.53:5-6, Jer.31:34, &c., and that as the soul is happy, so it enjoys the comfort of it, and is filled with joy and peace in believing, and now the soul lives a life of comfort, cheerfulness and holiness, I Pet.2:24, Rom.5:1, so that no sin, nor Satan, {and if corruption increase, and God hides himself, or seems an enemy,} not anything can cause this soul to let go the Lord, and cast away its confidence, "though he slay me," saith Job, "yet will I trust in him." {Job 13:15} Rom.8:38-39, Isa.54:7-8. Some hold the act of faith is that which God accepts to Justification, but this is a mistake, because it makes Christ inferior to faith, and in ascribing such an honor to faith, they dishonor Christ, for although they do not exclude Christ wholly, yet in the act of Justification, it gives all to faith. They say, as the act of Adam's sin condemned him, so our act of faith justifies us. Adam's sin was enough to condemn him and us, but our faith cannot save others, nor ourselves. They reply, that we are justified by faith.

Answer: Christ is called faith. "Before faith came," Gal.3:23, which must be understood of Christ. We are justified before God in his sight only by Christ. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." {Rom.3:24} "My righteous servant {Christ} shall justify many." {Isa.53:11} We are not justified before God by faith which is in us, but by Christ, by his blood; justified by his blood alone. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." {Rom.5:9} That which saves us is the blood of Christ; Jesus Christ hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood. Rev.1:5. Also we are said to be justified by faith, because it is the instrument whereby we apprehend and apply Christ our Righteousness; by faith we know our selves to be justified. Rom.5:1. Though faith be a grace of God, yet as it is an act, it is a work, and to be justified by it, is to be justified by a work of our own; for with the heart {man} believes. Rom.10:9-10. That which justifies us, must be perfect, and so it is no act of ours; for all our righteousness are as filthy rags, &c., Isa.64:6, not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph.2:9.

But these object, that before we had faith, it seems, we were not in Christ, or in him and not justified; for we were in him before the world was, Ephes.1:4, and that at one time God should be angry with us, {as he is with all unjustified persons who are out of Christ, Heb.12:29, for the LORD hates all the workers of iniquity, Psal.5:5,} and that our believing should make him to be at peace with us; but this is to make God changeable like man, which is contrary to the Word; for with him is no variableness. {Jam.1:17} "I am the Lord, I change not." {Mal.3:6} Nothing can be charged upon God's elect, Rom.8:33, therefore they are justified, the LORD reconciling them unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, II Cor.5:19; yea, before faith, and apart from faith. Those who have no sin upon them are justified, but Christ hath taken away all the sins of the Elect, Jn.1:29, Rom.3:24, I Pet.2:24, Rom.5:17-19, "and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins," Matt.1:21, and this was accomplished when he laid down his life for the sheep, Jn.10:15, not when they believe. And to say, we are not justified before God until we believe, is to say Jesus Christ hath not justified us, which is contrary to the Scriptures, which saith that Christ "hath made us accepted in the beloved," and that "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Eph.1:7-8. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." {Rom.5:9} Jesus Christ hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. {Rev.1:5} "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom.5:10. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," Heb.10:14, a full satisfaction has been made, and in this God is well pleased before we believe. "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." {Matt.3:17} "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." {Isa.53:11}

Also to say that we are not justified before God, or in His sight, until we believe, is to say that we must add our work to Christ, to make up our justification before God, and if it be so, then we in part save ourselves; and if we do join with Christ in this work, why may we not join with him in the glory of it? For that may be esteemed one of the greatest parts of our justification, without which we cannot be justified. But this derogates from Christ, and all such tenets we are to hate with execration. For, saith Christ, "I have trodden the winepress

alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." {Isa.63:3} We rather say, "if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." {II Tim.2:13}

What the Lord Jesus Christ hath done for us, is perfect, and is by God imputed to us, so as it is really ours, though it be inherent in another, and by believing it, we know it to be ours. Rom.4:24.

First, not any shall be saved by Christ, but those who were predestinated in him, according to God's eternal purpose, Eph.1:4-5, 3:11, and that there was not any foreseen faith or works in any kind why he chose these rather than others; the will of God was the cause one was chosen and not another; all was according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise and glory of his grace. Eph.1:5-6. "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise," &c., Rom.3:9, it was from His great love "wherewith He loved us." Eph.2:4. This love of God was the cause of God's sending Christ, Jn.3:16, and the chief cause of man's election and salvation. I Jn.4:10, Eph.1:4, Jn.17:23. And that it is impossible for this great love to decrease or increase, because it is infinite, Isa.45:17, Psal.103:17, God being perfect and infinite, Isa.40:28, knowing and understanding all things that ever were, are, or shall be at once; his purpose being infinite and everlasting, in and of himself. So one pure act of Grace, therefore when we were chosen in Christ, we were justified and complete in Christ, God looking upon the Elect to be in Christ before the world was, Eph.1:4, and so the LORD ever looks upon the Elect; inasmuch that they ever appear to Him perfect and righteous as Christ; for they are one, and are in Him. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." {I Cor.1:30} You are in Christ Jesus, and ever shall be in him, being justified freely by his grace in his sight. Rom.3:24. God properly was never wroth with Christ, nor the elect, {as subsisting in Christ,} and therefore Christ could not suffer God's wrath, Heb.2:9; so that in respect of their justification, God sees no sin in any of the Elect, even before their calling and after. And as it is God's will, so it should be ours, to set His glory above our salvation, "that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." {Eph.2:7}

Secondly, in time the Elect did break a holy and just Law, and so lay under the curse and wrath thereof, which was death. Rom.3:23. Christ in our nature, and for our persons suffered death, Heb.2:9, {the penalty,} to free all the Elect, so

that they are now actually justified by the Justice of God, "that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom.3:26. If God should have justified us, without this propitiation, after he had made this Law, and we breaking it, he could not have been just, but having received this propitiation at the hands of a Surety, Heb.7:22, he could not be just, if he did not justify all the Elect. "Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together; who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the LORD? And there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me." {Isa.45:21} "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation." {Zech.9:9}

Thirdly, the soul by faith doth apprehend and apply Christ, and what he hath done, to be for him, by which it knows itself to be justified in the sight of God, and in the Word, and in his own conscience. Whence flows joy and peace in believing, Rom.5:1, because all that believe are justified, Acts 13:39, "and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," Acts 13:48, so that by believing, I know that I am ordained to eternal life, because God's word saith so, and that we are justified in his sight without the deeds of the Law, Rom.3:20,28, viz., by faith we apprehend ourselves to be freely and fully justified by Christ, without any works of our own, Gal.2:16, without any addition of inherent goodness in us, &c.

Fourthly, by our works in our outward subjection to Christ, to his word, we declare to men {as far as they can judge} that we by grace, are in possession of "the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness." Tit.1:1. Thou, O Lord, knows the hearts of all men; but faith without works is dead to men, and buried also, Jas.2:18, 20, for if there be no works, they can see nothing of it; "show me thy faith by thy works;" we see then how by works a man is justified in the sight of men. Jas.2:24.

In the first place we are justified in respect of the knowledge and purpose of God in his sight. Secondly, we are actually and virtually justified in Justice by the blood of Christ, which paid the debt; now the full price, the full debt being paid, is it justice in law by God or man, to require it again? Surely no! Thirdly, by faith we are justified in our Consciences, by the Holy Spirit's manifestation and application of Christ's righteousness unto us. And lastly, we are justified before men, or unto men, by such good works which bear testimony to our union to Christ.

Objection: If indeed it be so, that men are loved of God, &c., before they repent and believe, then men may live as they

list, &c.

Answer: We are to own and confess the truth, and not what men of corrupt minds, and base spirits, will say, and will do; the Apostle saith, "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," I Jn.2:1, but what if one say, it seems the Apostle encourages men to sin, to tell them there is an Advocate, who is always heard. And the Apostle saith, "where sin hath abounded, grace did abound much more." Rom.5:20. By the Apostle's answer, {for it appears some did say, they might continue in sin that grace might abound,} "what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein," Rom.6:1-2; but this is an old cavil and slander cast upon those that teach the truth, as the Apostle saith it was then in his days, "we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, let us do evil, that good may come, whose damnation is just." Rom.3:8. Their exception is against the truth of God, and therefore we leave them to God to answer and satisfy them; and though all the Elect are freed from the curse of the Law, yet we establish the Law, Rom.3:31, as we receive the Law from the hand of Jesus Christ to be a rule for us to walk by; and herein is our Father glorified, that we bring forth much fruit, Jn.15:8; and the Saints enjoy sweet privileges by walking close with God, I Pet.4:14, for "whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God." {Psal.50:23} God sheds his love into the hearts of his children {in his time and measure} which love so constrains them that they cannot choose but love God again for his great love, Rom.5:5, II Cor.5:14, which love as it is apprehended by them, so it constrains them to obey him; and there is no faith true, but that which works by love, Gal.5:6, and to all that love God, his commandments are not grievous, Jn.14:15, I Jn.5:1,3, and God hath chosen us that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Eph.1:4. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." {Eph.2:10} But this doctrine hath ever been slandered and opposed by Papists, Arminians, and such as they are; but let those that can see, judge whose lives are most according to the Word, they that hold with it or against it.

The Life of Faith in Sanctification.

This consists in two branches. The first, is the souls cleaving to God in Christ our Sanctification, which is for my pardon, and

peace, and assurance of glory. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." {I Cor.1:30} The second, is the soul's cleaving to Christ in his promises, to transform my nature, cleanse and renew my heart and life, and to work all our works for us, and be a quickening Spirit in us. I Cor.15:45. "He will subdue our iniquities." {Mic.7:19} "And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." {Deut.30:6} "For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." {Rom.6:14} "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." {Ezek.36:26-27} This was Christ's prayer, "sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth," and, "for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Jn.17:17-19. There is much unevenness in us, it should be a great grief unto us, that we cannot honor God no more in our conversation, and that our spirits are so much estranged from him as they are, and unto holy and divine things, which should be familiar, and more delightful unto us. All that belong to the LORD have received great love from him, which should greatly engage their hearts, to walk as becomes saints, in a holy course and conversation, according to the Word of God, every day, and all the day long to enjoy God, and obey him according to his word.

The Life of Faith in Infirmities.

Now, regarding our infirmities, it should be noted that an infirmity is such a weakness, as when the heart is upright, yet by reason of some impediment it cannot do the good it would, and doth the evil it would not. Infirmities are the imperfections of good actions. There is an infirmity which arises from some impediment which a man would fain remove but cannot. There is an infirmity that arises for want of growth in grace. A sin of infirmity is always with grief and sorrow, and where there is no grief for it, it is no infirmity. It is a sin of infirmity in him who desires to be informed of it, and to be reprov'd for it, and to know how to leave it, when he is ashamed of it, and will not plead for it, but complain to God against it, and is grieved and humbled for it, and uses means against it. There is no child of God that is wholly free from infirmities, therefore every believer

is to live by faith in all their infirmities.

This consists in two things. First, it is the soul cleaving to God in Christ that he will be to us according unto his promise, a God of love and mercy unto us forever, notwithstanding all our omissions and commissions, excesses and defects. Secondly, and that he will supply all our wants for soul or body, as if we had never sinned, according to his Covenant with Jesus Christ, and us in him, that it shall stand fast forever with him. Psal.89:28-35.

For the first, "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," I Jn.2:1, "who forgiveth all thine iniquities," Psal.103:3, and those whom he loves, he loves unto the end, for "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Jn.13:1. "I am the Lord, I change not." Mal.3:6. "Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, and today, and forever." Heb.13:8. "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." {Isa.55:3} Which is confirmed by two immutable things, Oath and Covenant, &c., that we might have strong Consolation, Heb.6:17-18, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant. Heb.13:20. "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake 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 rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David." {Psal.89:28-35} "But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments, and refused to obey...but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not. Yea, when they had made them a molten calf, and said, this is thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations; yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness; the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go. Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldst not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst." {Neh.9:16-20} In our greatest falls, when the soul is subject to doubt of pardon, consider that our God will abundantly pardon, &c., Isa. 55:7, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy

transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins," Isa.43:25, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." {Isa.63:1} "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." {Isa.43:25} "Let Israel hope in the LORD; for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." {Psal.130:7} "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins; return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." {Isa.44:22} "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." {Psal.103:14} "If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." {Psal.130:3-4} "But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children." {Psal.103:17} "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee." {Psal.86:5} "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." {Psal.103:10-12} "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." {Isa.53:5}

God hath in wisdom and love left sin in his, to keep us humble in the sense of sin, and that we may know what we are, and our strength, that we might plead the Spirit to work efficaciously, in separating us from all evil, and granting faith, faith for pardon, wisdom, watchfulness, self-denial, &c., which we could not do, if we had no sin, and that we might long to be in heaven, where we shall enjoy a full freedom from all sin; and that we might love and praise Christ more, seeing we stand in such need of him to pardon and heal us, and that we might daily depend upon Christ against sin, and live upon the fullness of Christ, which we should have no need in this kind, if we did not sin, and that we might not scorn nor insult over any, and that God's power may appear in preserving a little grace in a soul so full of sin; and also the power of his grace in subduing so many and so strong sins, and that we might admire that rich grace, that can love such as we are, and pardon our so many and great sins.

The use of this is, if it be so, first, expect not full freedom of sin here, as some dream; secondly, do not sin that grace may abound, God forbid, Rom.6:1-8, but in obedience to God, and love to him, use all means against it; all thy days strive against it in the strength of Christ, the love of Christ will teach thee, and

cause thee to do so. Thirdly, be not over-pressed and sunk under sin, but live by faith in all infirmities; say as Paul, "I glory in my infirmities," not as they are sins, but because by them God's power and goodness is the more seen, in pardoning, cleansing, healing and fortifying the heart and mind of the believer against sin. "And he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." {II Cor.12:9} "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." {Rom.5:20-21}

What if I should say that all those who belong to the LORD are the more happy they were sinners, else how could they have been capable of mercy, and heaven, and union with Christ, &c., if there were not evil, it would not be known what is good; justice and mercy had not been known, therefore how could God be known? The Lord's infinite wisdom in drawing good out of evil, nor his infinite love in sending Christ to die, could not have been known, and man could not come to that full happiness in Christ, if there had not been sin. Sin should not hinder our faith; it is hard to believe the pardon of seventy seven sins in a day, Matt.18:22, yet faith is able to believe it, and also to keep a penitent sinner from being excessively perplexed in his spirits with any sin or trouble, so as to hinder the soul from rejoicing in God all the day long; faith looks to Jesus Christ, his blood, intercession and obedience, who hath paid all our debts, I Jn.2:1, for now we are not under the Law, but under Grace. Rom.6:15. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." {Jn.1:17} So that the weakest believer may say in the midst of all, my imperfections have as much of the love of God, and union with Christ, acceptance, reconciliation, full and perfect righteousness in Christ, to cover all my defects, as the best saint ever had, and my state shall be as happy as any of theirs, and were it not for Christ, all their holiness could not help them, and they might cry they are unprofitable in all, and had also perished in their sins. Can a man be profitable to God? Surely not! "Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous, or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?" {Job 22:2-3} What shall hinder me of having as much happiness and glory in heaven, as the best Saint? Oh, who can express the sweetness that is in this doctrine of free grace to a humbled soul, and it is

wonderful sweet, and it is a strong tie to God in all holiness. I know men of base spirits, unbelievers will catch at what I say, but if they do, who can help it? The children must have bread, and if such dogs will snatch it, to their peril be it; as for you who love sin, so as you are not willing to part with your sins, that you desire to make Leagues and Covenants with sinners, hell, and death, and the devil, you take encouragement to sin, because God is rich in grace, &c. Oh consider, if you have hearts, you are those who turn the grace of God into wantonness, you are still in your sins, you are the dogs, touch it not, it is not for you. Christ saith, Matt.15:26, it is not meet to cast the children's bread to dogs. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." {Matt.7:6}

A child of God is described by a desire to fear the Name of the LORD, Neh.1:11, and a heart that "crieth out for the living God." {Psal.84:2} "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" {Psal.42:1-2} "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee." {Isa.26:8} "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." {Matt.5:6} 1. Those that live the life of faith in Christ, though oft in infirmity and weakness, eye Christ's sanctification, and enjoy comfort therein. 2. There is a beautiful harmony between that soul, and the commandments of the Lord. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." {Jn.15:10} "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth." {I Sam.3:10} 3. A child of God is not offended at Christ, or at anything he requires, "blessed is he that is not offended in me," Matt.11:6, "for this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." I Jn.5:3. 4. Such a one looks at the word of God for his rule, and his desire is entirely to be governed and controlled thereby; he will trust God, and rely upon his word. "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times." {Psal.119:20} 5. He eyes Christ's strength in his promise for help, and by faith makes it his own. "Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed." {Isa.45:24} 6. He will with courage encounter against whatever opposes God, and contend earnestly for the faith once given to the Saints. Jude 3. 7. He is sensible of good and evil, and lays to heart his own sins, and is troubled and

mournful on account of sin in general, and sin in others. Acts 20:31. "And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." {I Kng.19:10} "My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words." {Psal.119:139} 8. No sin he commits doth so discourage him, and sink him, but he can joy and rejoice in Christ; his joy and sorrow is not legal, but evangelical and spiritual, and therefore {such sorrow and joy} may be in one saint both at one and the same time.

The second branch of this life of faith in infirmities, it is to live upon Christ in his promise, to help us against all our infirmities, upon such places as these; for if thou be in deadness of heart, consider, "behold my servant shall sing for joy of heart," Isa.65:14, "in thy name shall they rejoice all the day." Psal.89:16. In dumbness, consider that "the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water." {Isa.35:6-7} This is that "river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." {Psal.46:4} In forgetfulness, the Spirit shall bring all things into your remembrance, "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." {Jn.14:26}

When thou art in fear of want, consider that there is no want to them that fear him; therefore "taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the LORD, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing." {Psal.34:8-10} "Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." {Psal.37:3} "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." {Matt.6:33} "Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even

Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? Or, what shall we drink? Or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." {Matt.6:25-32} "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." {Phil.4:6} "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." {Heb.13:5} In thy ignorance, consider that we have such a High Priest "as can have compassion on the ignorant," Heb.5:2, if we lack wisdom let us "ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given." {Jam.1:5} Having fallen into passion, to keep thee from sinking under it, consider what the Apostles said, "we are also men of like passions with you," Acts 14:15; and so "Elias was a man subject to the like passions as we are," &c., Jam.5:17; and so of all other infirmities, "who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases," &c., if we did live in Christ by faith more, our infirmities would not be so devastating to our spirits. For a supply of all wants, "my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." {Phil.4:19} Christ is able, and will supply all our wants.

The Life of Faith for Graces, and in the Exercise of them.

To believe, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD." {Zeph.3:12} "Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." {Jn.6:29} "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." {Jn.17:3} To increase in faith, "we are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly." {I Thes.1:3} "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." {II Pet.3:18} To live by faith, "the just {or justified,} shall live by faith." {Rom.1:17} To continue in the faith, "if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard." {Col.1:23} "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready

to be revealed in the last time." {I Pet.1:5} In exercise of faith, "thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." {Isa.26:3} "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." {Jn.7:38} "As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried; he is a buckler to all those that trust in him." {Psal.18:30} "He that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about." {Psal.32:10}

To know God, "I will make known my words unto you," Prov.1:23, "but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the LORD; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." {Jer.31:33-34} To love God, "and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." {Deut.6:5} "And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." {Deut.30:6} "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." {I Jn.4:16} In loving God, "he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him...if a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." {Jn.14:21-23} To seek God, "that they should seek the Lord," Acts 17:27, for "blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD." {Prov.8:34-35} "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." {Isa.55:6} In seeking God, "blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." {Psal.119:2} "And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." {Psal.9:10} "Your heart shall live that seek God," Psal.69:32, for "the meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the LORD that seek him." {Psal.22:26} "They that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing." {Psal.34:10}

To fear God, "and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and

of their children after them; and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." {Jer.32:39-40} "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days." {Hos.3:5} In fearing God, "the LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." {Psal.147:11} "What man is he that feareth the LORD? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose." {Psal.25:12} "O fear the LORD, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him." {Psal.34:9} "He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great." {Psal.115:13}

To hope in God, in hoping in God, "the LORD taketh pleasure in those that hope in his mercy," Psal.147:11, "we are saved by hope," Rom.8:24, "happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God," Psal.146:5, "be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD." {Psal.31:24} To wait on God, "wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the LORD," Psal.27:14, "thou shalt know that I am the LORD; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me," Isa.49:23, "and therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the LORD is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him," Isa.30:18, "as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," I Cor.2:9, "for him that waiteth for him." {Isa.64:4}

To delight and rejoice in God, "blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted," Psal.89:15-16, "thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel," Isa.41:16, "but there the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." {Psal.33:21} To praise God, "the living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day," Isa.38:19, "whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God," Psal.50:23, "because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live; I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips." {Psal.63:3-5}

To enjoy peace with God, "or let him take hold of my

strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." {Isa.27:5} To love the Saints, "and this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment," I Jn.3:23, "let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God," I Jn.4:7, "a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." {Jn.13:34-35} To love enemies, "but I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven," Matt.5:44-45, "love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest; for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." {Lk.6:35} To judge ourselves, "then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations," Ezek.36:31, "that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth anymore because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD," Ezek.16:63, "for if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." {I Cor.11:31} To mourn for sinning against God, "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn," Zech.12:10, "ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy," Jn.16:20, for "blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." {Matt.5:4} In poverty of spirit, "to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word," Isa.66:2, "for thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones," Isa.57:15, for "blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." {Matt.5:3} In desires after Christ, &c., "ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price," Isa.55:1, "if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink," Jn.7:37, "I am Alpha and

Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely," Rev.21:6, "blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled," Matt.5:6, "a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench," Isa.42:3, "delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." {Psal.37:4-5}

To be meek, seek meekness, "the meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way," Psal.25:9, "for the LORD taketh pleasure in his people; he will beautify the meek with salvation," Psal.149:4, "the Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." {Isa.61:1} To be sincere, "behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom," Psal.51:6, "but the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him; for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart," I Sam.16:7, "but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people," Jer.31:33, "who hath put wisdom in the inward parts; or who hath given understanding to the heart," Job 38:36, "blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." {Matt.5:8} To confess our sins, "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," I Jn.1:9, "wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." {Psal.51:2-6} To forgive others, "if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses," Mk.11:26, "for if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses," Matt.6:14-15, "and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

{Eph.4:32} To be a peace-maker, "blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God," Matt.5:9, "if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." {Rom.12:18} To devise good, "do they not err that devise evil; but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good," Prov.14:22, "but the LORD said to David my father, forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou didst well in that it was in thine heart," II Chron.6:8, "but the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand." {Isa.32:8}

To self-denial, "then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." {Matt.16:24} To watch, "therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober," I Thes.5:6, "behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame," Rev.16:15, "be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." {I Pet.5:8} To be patient, "be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord," Jas.5:7, "and so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise," Heb.6:15, "the LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD." {Lam.3:25-26} To be contented, "let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." {Heb.13:5} To resist the Devil, "neither give place to the devil," Eph.4:27, "submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." {Jas.4:7} To resist sin, "for sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace," Rom.6:14, "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." {Tit.2:14} Not to be afraid of the world, "these things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," Jn.16:33, "ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." {I Jn.4:4} To subdue the flesh, "for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." {Rom.8:13} To be merciful, "blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy," Matt.5:7, "he hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." {Mic.6:8} To give to the poor,

"is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward," Isa.58:7-8, "cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days." Ecc.11:1. See that you abound in this grace also. "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor." {Prov.22:9} He that gives to the poor shall not lack. To give cheerfully, "but this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." {II Cor.9:6-7} To give bountifully, for he that sows bountifully, shall reap bountifully, and "the liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself," Prov.11:25, "and whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones {because he belongs to Christ} a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." {Matt.10:42}

The Life of Faith in the Use of Ordinances.

It is the soul's cleaving to God in Christ for a blessing upon his Ordinances, or the means he hath appointed, that we may receive strength from them, and profit by them. "The way of the LORD is strength to the upright," Prov.10:29, "thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go." {Isa.48:17} Faith believes God will bless his own ordinances, seeing he hath appointed them all to this end, therefore all must needs be effectual. So it is the duty of a believer to use all constantly, closely, wisely; despise not them, because they seem weak and silly to flesh and blood; know by their use {under God} a holy life is preserved, and observe how thou thrives by them. Use all, if by any means thy wants may be supplied; and honor not any of them, as to exclude or sleight another. Some there be that are guilty herein, as men only praise that which themselves like. But oh, you sons and daughters of God, love you and use you all God's ordinances, for they are all for his glory, and thy good; let not any of them be a stranger to thee, the neglect of one may hinder the fruit of another; the command is to all that belong to Christ

to use all, and if we be weak in the use of means, what should we be if we used them not at all? Let not the difficulties of any dismay thee, consider seriously the sovereignty of God in all his commands, and what obedience to God means, and what God requires, for matter, manner, measure, time, and end.

To pray; consider such places as these. "Pray without ceasing," I Thes.5:17, "and I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications," Zech.12:10, "ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him," Matt.7:7-11, "and all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," Matt.21:22, "and it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." {Isa.65:24}

To read the word, "till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine," I Tim.4:13, "blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein," Rev.1:3, "blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it," Lk.11:28, whose "delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." {Psal.1:2}

To meditate, "this book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein," Josh.1:8, "meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them," I Tim.4:15, "my meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the LORD," Psal.104:34, "let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my Redeemer." {Psal.19:14}

To holy conference, "they that feared the LORD spake often one to another," Mal.3:16, "the mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment," Psal.37:30, "come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," Psal.66:16, "my mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof. I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." {Psal.71:15-16}

To hear Christ and his Ministers, "incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David," Isa.55:3, "blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors," Prov.8:34, "to know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity." {Prov.1:2-3}

To be baptized, "and as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him," Acts 8:36-38, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." {Mk.16:16}

For Saints to receive the Lords Supper, "for I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." {I Cor.11:23-26}

To be prepared for duties, "LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear," Psal.10:17, "that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." {I Tim.6:18-19}

To obey God, "and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them," Ezek.36:27, "that thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days," Deut.30:20, "for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might

redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." {Tit.2:11-14}

To be fruitful in season, "blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit," Jer.17:7-8, "his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." {Psal.1:2-3}

For ability to obey God, "the righteous also shall hold on his way," Job 17:9, and he shall be stronger and stronger; they go from "strength to strength every one of them," Psal.84:7, "surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength," Isa.45:24, "I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only," Psal.71:16, "he giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint," Isa.40:29-31, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," Phil.4:13, "the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God." {Psa.68:35}

In all temptations, "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it," I Cor.10:13, "finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." {Eph.6:10-13}

To know the truth, "if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself," Jn.7:17, "when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth," Jn.16:13, "now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that

we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual," I Cor.2:12-13, "what man is he that feareth the LORD; him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose." {Psal.25:12}

For direction in all our ways, "I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways," Isa.45:13, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye," Psal.32:8, "for this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." {Psal.48:14}

To reprove others, "thou shall not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shall in any wise rebuke him, and not suffer sin upon him," Lev.19:17, "and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them," Eph.5:11, "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." {II Tim.4:2}

To correct thy children, "correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul," Prov.29:17, "foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." {Prov.22:15}

For husbands to love their wives, "husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it," Eph.5:25, "let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself," Eph.5:33, "likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." {I Pet.3:7}

For wives to obey their husbands, "therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything," Eph.5:24, "and the wife see that she reverence her husband." {Eph.5:33}

For children to obey their parents, "children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." {Eph.6:1-3}

For servants to obey their Masters, "servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men." {Eph.6:5-7}

To obey God's commands, "in keeping them there is

great reward," Psal.19:11, "blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city," Rev.22:14, "blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity; they walk in his ways. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments." {Psal.119:1-7}

To leave false worship, "be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty," II Cor.6:14-18, "but I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." {I Cor.10:20-21} "Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD." {II Chron.19:2}

To dwell in Zion, and to enjoy the privileges thereof; to be fruitful there, "and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads," Isa.35:10, "those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing," Psal.92:13-14, "and their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people; all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed," Isa.61:9, "they go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." {Psal.84:7}

That God is present there, the LORD dwells in the midst of his assembled people, "for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,"

Matt.18:20, walking "in the midst of the seven golden Candlesticks," Rev.2:1, "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ." {1 Cor.5:4}

For the acceptation of their services there, "but unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come; and thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks; and there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee. {Deut.12:5-7}

For his blessing there, "for the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread," Psal.132:13-15, "they shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures," Psal.36:8, "how amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God...blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee." {Psal.84:1-4}

For protection there, "the LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock." {Psal.27:1-5}

For Saints to agree in the truth, "and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them," Jer.32:38-39, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same

judgment." {I Cor.1:9-10}

To have joy and gladness there, "for the LORD shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." {Isa.51:3}

In reproaches for Christ, "blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." {Lk.6:22-23}

In persecution for Christ, "yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," II Tim.3:12, "for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." {I Pet.3:12-15}

In losses for Christ, "there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." {Mk.10:29-30}

In imprisonment for Christ, "fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." {Rev.2:10}

In death for Christ, "he that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it," Matt.10:39, "in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," Phil.1:20-21, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." {II Tim.4:7-8}

For the calling of the Jews, "arise, shine; for thy light is

come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." {Isa.60:1-6}

For the destruction of Antichrist, and all the enemies of the sons of Zion, "so Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, when thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words; then shalt thou say, O LORD, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate forever. And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates; and thou shalt say, thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her; and they shall be weary. Thus far are the words of Jeremiah," Jer.51:60-64, "standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come," Rev.18:10, "for the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," II Thes.2:7-12, "and the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." {Rev.19:20}

The Life of Faith Concerning Protection from Dangers, and for a Supply of all Wants.

For protection, "for he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways," Psal.91:11, "the LORD shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore," Psal.121:7-8, "I will preserve thee." Isa.49:8. Christ prayed, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Jn.17:15.

To be delivered from the wicked, "and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for all men have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil," II Thes.3:2-3, "faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." I Thes.5:24.

To be delivered from the harlot, whoso pleases God, shall escape from her, "I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness; and I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands; whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her." Ecc.7:25-26.

To be delivered from unreasonable creatures, "and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for all men have not faith," II Thes.3:2, "notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." II Tim.4:17.

If in war, the LORD shall "redeem thee from the power of the sword," Job 5:20, "though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident." Psal.27:3.

If in famine, in famine he shall redeem thee from death, Job 5:20, "behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine." Psal.33:18-19.

To find pity in captivity, "he made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives," Psal.106:46, "for we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem." Ezr.9:9.

If in water or fire, "when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Isa.43:2.

If in sickness, "the LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness," Psal.41:3, "who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases," Psal.103:3, "and ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee." Exo.23:25.

To be preserved from all evil, "he shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee," Job 5:19, "but the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil, II Thes.3:3, "the LORD shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul." Psal.121:7.

For clothing, "therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment...if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Matt.6:25-30.

For food in famine, "trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed," Psal.37:3, "O fear the LORD, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing." Psal.34:9-10.

For dwelling, "he shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Isa.33:16.

To be hid in a time of danger, "and the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof," Eze.9:4, "the LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." Zep.3:17.

God will remember his, "I have formed thee; thou art my servant; O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me," Isa.44:21, "can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." Isa.49:15-16.

For success of our labour, "and he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper," Psal.1:3, "for thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands; happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee," Psal.128:2, "and they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them." Isa.65:21-23.

If thou be falsely accused, consider to, "commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." Psal.37:5-6.

For a good name, consider that, "the memory of the just is blessed; but the name of the wicked shall rot," Prov.10:7, "at that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD." Zep.3:20.

For children, "thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house; thy children like olive plants round about thy table." Psal.128:3.

For sleep, "it is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so he giveth his beloved sleep," Psal.127:2, "thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet," Prov.3:24, "also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid," Job 11:19, "they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid." Zeph.3:13.

For a supply of all we need, "be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus," Phil.4:6-7, "but my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil.4:19.

If in prosperities, consider, "build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished," Jer.29:5-7, "and they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards; yea, they shall

dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them; and they shall know that I am the LORD their God." Ezek.28:26. These things you may have, and use them while they last, and while God sees good we shall not meet with any change, but change or no change, God will never change, but be to us ever the same. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Heb.13:5-6.

The Life of Faith in Adversities.

Which is for the soul to submit to God, and to be contented to be in a hard or low condition, if God so order it, and to be fitted to say, as Jesus Christ did, "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Jn.18:11. See also, Phil.4:11-13. And as Jesus Christ had not any trouble, nor not an hour sooner than God predestinated, Jn.8:20, so ought we to believe, that all trouble of what kind so ever, shall not, nor cannot come unto us, until the Lord see fit to send it, and that as Christ did pass through all, so certainly we shall, and that quickly, Jn.7:30, 16:33, in every affliction and cross that comes upon thee, believe and say, it may be the Lord will do me good by this cross, Rom.8:28, it is appointed of my Father for my good, I stand in need of it; "if need be you are in heaviness for a season," I Pet.1:6, and while it continues with me, the Lord will be both light, peace, and strength unto me, until the time come {which cannot be long} that afflictions, crosses, and troubles, shall be no more, when I shall rest from all labour, pain and sorrow. That God will be with his children in trouble, "because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him," Psal.91:14-15, "the LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee," Psal.9:9-10, "but the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD; he is their strength in the time of trouble." Psal.37:39. That the trouble shall not be above our strength, "for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee...I will correct thee in measure," Jer.30:11, "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to

be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." I Cor.10:13. To gain by afflictions; God afflicts us for our profit, "that we might be partakers of his holiness." Heb.12:10. For deliverance out of trouble, &c., "many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the LORD delivereth him out of them all," Psal.34:19, "but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." II Tim.3:11-12. For speedy deliverance, "I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." Isa.46:13.

Every Day to Live the Life of Faith Concerning the Time Past.

Which is to consider and call to remembrance, and to see God in his dealings to us, ours, and others, both for soul and body. "I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night; I commune with mine own heart; and my spirit made diligent search." Psal.77:5-6. This is to enjoy time past, as present. David made this a part of his meditation; and oh, how sweet is it to muse of God's mercies unto us from our birth; that I should be born of such as feared God, and so enjoy better instruction than others, or else that I should be born of haters of God, and instead of good education had bad, and was brought up in complete ignorance and open profaneness, and how I have been tempted to desperate sins, and blinded to my desperate state of self-destruction; and how strangely God brought us to better places unexpected or undeserved, and how near {and often} we have been to be cut off by death, by sickness, casualties, desperate practices by others, and even by ourselves, and how great bondage we have been in by sin, being filled with despair, terror, and wrath, without hope of ever being pardoned, Eph.2:12-13, and yet for God to fill my soul with joy and peace in believing, Rom.5:1, and in how great bondage I was unto sin, not able to restrain myself, and out of hope of ever having strength against such strong lusts, and yet God hath subdued them. {"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ," Eph.2:12-13, "having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the

ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Eph.4:18.} Oh great change, and also how we were convinced of our state of death we are in by nature, and by what means. But if we had been born in India, or Turkey, or Rome, we should either have never heard of a Jesus, or seen no light, or to no purpose. Also, how God hath preserved us in Babylon, and brought us out of it, {if thou be so delivered,} and preserved us from the errors of the wicked, such as the rotten tenets of Pelagianism and Arminianism, as if man with his free will may choose whether he will be saved or not, and so under pretense of enlarging God's grace, robs him of all, to grace himself in his own endeavors, and sets the crown upon his own head. So some deny God's Law and Word to be a Rule to them to walk by, and so are lawless; {and where there is no Law, there can be no transgression,} and now these are the last times, in which iniquity and abominable errors do abound; {and shall more abound; that which God hath said shall be, must be, no man nor men can hinder it,} some deny Election and Original Sin, &c., the Lord in mercy open their eyes. I was once wrapped up and sunk in Arminianism, and had so continued, but the Lord in mercy pulled me out. Oh, how sweet should that love be to us, which keeps us from these errors, or brings us out of them; and the Lord will in his time be full Redemption to all his elect.

Also consider how we have been freed from many sorrows and sicknesses, which others endure, having little or no rest day or night; and what means we enjoy for our souls, which others want, {and it may be never heard of,} and the LORD oft blessing these means unto our souls. Also in what straits we have been in, and how the Lord hath helped us in them, and delivered us from them; and how God hath provided, and doth provide for us, means of living, friends and comforts, strangely and unexpected, and how strangely God hath given us good wives or husbands, or so orders it that bad ones send us to God, or weans us from the world, &c. These mercies with a thousand more to us and ours, requires our meditation, to strengthen our faith, and to endear our hearts to God exceedingly, and to be more enlarged in thankfulness, and to suck sweetness in the remembrance of such experiences. Mercies forgot, are as nothing to us, and we cannot be thankful to God for them, though they were never so many or great. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD." Psal.107:43. "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things; prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them." Hos.14:9.

Every Day to Live the Life of Faith in Glorification.

Which is to behold the rest, peace, glory and happiness, &c., in heaven which is provided for us, and also to believe that God will give us after this life all these things with himself, which he hath promised us in his word. "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Acts 26:18. "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." I Pet.1:4. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt.25:34.

For the resurrection of my body, "and this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Jn.6:40.

To have a spiritual body, "it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." I Cor.15:44. Our bodies shall be more glorious than the Sun in the firmament, because that is but a natural body.

To have a powerful body, "it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power." I Cor.15:43.

To have a glorified body, and like Christ's, "it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory," I Cor.15:43, "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil.3:21.

To have fullness of knowledge, "and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God," Eph.3:19, "for now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." I Cor.13:12.

To have fullness of joy and pleasures, "in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psal.16:11. Joy inward, pure, spiritual, full in heaven; we shall have no misery, no hunger, cold, nakedness, pain, grief, weariness, but pure rest in Christ, and with Christ, II Thes.1:7, without labour. In this Rest, tranquility; in this tranquility, contentment; in this contentment, joy; in this joy, variety; in this variety, security; in this security, eternity.

To have life, "if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him," II Tim.2:11, "your life is hid with Christ in God,"

Col.3:3, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col.3:4.

To have everlasting life, "and in the world to come life everlasting," Lk.18:30, "and shall inherit everlasting life." Matt.19:29. Then shall I never die, nor end, being for continuance eternal.

To enjoy the presence of God with Saints and Angels, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory," Col.3:4, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." Jn.17:24.

To see the Lord as he is, "beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is," I Jn.3:2, then we shall see him face to face. I Cor.13:12.

To behold his glory, "that they may behold my glory." Jn.17:24. Sight is higher than presence.

To be transformed into glory, we are "changed into the same image from glory to glory," II Cor.3:18, this shall be more full in glory, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col.3:4.

To have full communion with God, we shall be filled with the fullness of God. Eph.3:19. Union is higher than sight, communion is higher than union, as it flows from it, full communion is more; we shall have as much as we shall desire, we shall be filled with it, we shall enjoy the quintessence of all sweetness, fullness, goodness in God, and shall be raised, inflamed, and ravished with him, and be wholly taken up with admiring and praising him, without any intermission or weariness; this is our greatest good and blessedness, and the end of our being.

To be forever with the Lord, "so shall we be ever with the Lord." I Thes.4:17. Eternal communion with God. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." I Cor.2:9.

It transcends the utmost expectation of the most enlarged heart, "wherefore comfort one another with these words." I Thes.4:18.

Faith believes the promises of glory, and so lives comfortably in expectation of fruition, when faith shall end in vision, our eternal joys draws on apace; in the meantime, lay hold on eternal life, let faith believe it, and hope expect it, and patience wait for it, to make this life tolerable; be patient, endure all, it will not be long ere glory come and continue

forever, "for which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." II Cor.4:16. He that lives by faith in glorification, lives a sweet comfortable life in Christ his righteousness, and is fruitful, sincere, and content.

To Die by Faith.

Which is to resign up our souls to God, believing death shall be a passage to glory, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory," Col.3:4, "these all died in faith," Heb.11:13, desiring "a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city," Heb.11:13-16, "the righteous hath hope in his death," Prov.14:32, "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them," Rev.14:13, "as for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Psal.17:15. Why should I fear that I would not escape? What hurt will it be to me to enter into glory? I cannot have my happiness, unless I go unto it. "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." II Cor.5:8.

THE SAINT'S DAILY DUTY AND DESIRE

The several Branches of the Saints daily duty and desire to walk with God every day.

1. When I awake, to think on GOD, and to be thankful to him for rest, and sleep, and preservation, from sin, Satan, and dangers, satisfying my soul with the Lord, craving his strength to walk with him all the day long, reverently and seriously to mind him and obey him. "When I awake I am still with thee, Psal.139:18, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Psal.17:15. "Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." Acts 11:23. "That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days." Deut.30:20. Commune with your heart upon your bed, and be still, Psal.4:4, it is good to season, strengthen, and perfume our spirits {if time will permit} with some sweet thoughts of God, as that Jesus Christ is the

same yesterday, and today, and forever, Heb.13:8, he is not changed. {"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal.3:6.} Here is strong consolation in this sweet meditation, "my meditation of him shall be sweet," Psal.104:34, "it is good for me to draw near to God," Psal.73:28, to make him the object and end of all my actions. O that my understanding had a more full, clear, and glorious sight of him, and a more perfect, inward, eternal, and full communion with him, for then should my will and affections be more satisfied and more inflamed with unwearied desires, high and restless aspirations after fresh additions of intercourses and communion with him. The sight of God to a Saint is glorious, and the knowledge and often meditation of him will raise and enlarge the soul. Every child of God hath in him an earnest desire to have communion with him, to enjoy his blessed presence, and to see his glory. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" Psal.42:1-2. "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, to see thy power and thy glory." Psal.63:1-2. Nor will a seldom communion satisfy them, it must be frequent and full; it is a contempt of God to be willing to live without him, and so much he enjoys God as he seriously minds him, and so much as we desire God, we follow after God, for desire is the soul's following of God; and as God draws we follow. "Draw me, we will run after thee." Song.1:4. "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." Exo.33:18. Unless the Lord fix and fasten the heart upon himself, it will be fixed on things below, and wander after vanities, and fill both head and heart with them; he that knows what it is to enjoy God, is sensible of the want of him, and thinks he can never have enough of him, his soul will faint for him, because nothing less than God can content him. Psalm.119:81-82, Psalm.13:1, Exod.33:13-18. So the soul lives where it loves, and where it loves it lives, and there is nothing more active and stronger than love; for love is as strong as death, the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. {"Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." Song.8:6-7.

2. A desire to live by faith in Christ. Every day to live by faith, {in all estates and conditions,} the communion the soul

hath with God is by faith, in justification, in sanctification, in infirmities, in graces, in means using, in duties, and for a supply of all wants, every day to live the life of faith in Christ. "For to me to live is Christ." Phil.1:21. "Christ, who is our life." Col.3:4. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal.2:20. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." I Jn.5:12.

3. Watch heart. That every day I watch my heart, to keep it continually still, clean, spiritual, content, and that I observe cautiously the first and secret motions of my heart, lest I be unawares caught and ensnared in sin, and that I do not receive anything without it be warranted in the word of God. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Prov.4:23. "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life." Deut.4:9. Thy heart is deceitful, take heed of it, and consider. Jer.17:9, Heb.3:12, Lk.6:45. If we cease to watch our hearts, they quickly become vain. Consider how it was with David, II Sam.12:9, and Peter, Matt.26:72, our experience might teach us, that our hearts are worse than we took them to be, when we are crossed or tempted, we show what metal we are made of; the best have cause enough to look to themselves; if one sinful thought be admitted concerning the sweetness and pleasure of sin, the will is ready enough to accept the motion, consent, forecast the accomplishment, the affections add heat and strength, the heart travels with iniquity, and in time by opportunities sin is brought forth, and delight and custom wraps a man up in sin, that he cannot get out; such carelessness may cost dear, though the Elect shall "obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." II Tim.2:10. "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." Psal.17:5. "Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live; and let me not be ashamed of my hope. Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe; and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually." Psal.119:116-117. "My soul followeth hard after thee; thy right hand upholdeth me." Psal.63:8.

4. Watch thoughts. Every day to watch that my thoughts may be holy and pure, and seasonable, to rank, order, and confine them within an holy compass, that I may gaze and meditate on God, his immeasurable goodness, greatness, beauties, glory, and to bring under and destroy every wicked and vain thought and desire, &c. It is no burden to fix our minds and thoughts on things above, where our life, and joy, and

treasure is. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matt.6:21. The more wisdom leads us on high, the more is our joy, and the more we avoid the snares below, and the more we enjoy God in the invisible workings, intentions, desires, elevations of heart, with thoughts of sweetest raptures, in which is peace, joy, triumph, searching into the mysteries of grace, in which is light, is truth in its clearness, pureness, fullness, in gazing upon the most glorious object, admiring God in his infinite attributes, to contemplate on God's boundless mercy in Christ. Such as are exercised herein, enjoy great sweetness and delight, they see and say, as David, "how precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God," &c., Psal.139:17, "many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." Psal.40:5. Such thoughts raise the heart, and make it spiritual, joyful, and thankful, willing and serious in all duties, and holy services.

5. Hearken unto conscience. Every day to watch and hearken to the noise of conscience, that I may praise the peace of it, endeavor to inform it, and to do nothing that shall offend it, "and herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men," Acts 24:16, "for our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward," II Cor.1:12, "holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience," I Tim.3:9, "and herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience voided of offence towards God, and towards man," Acts 24:16, "holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience," I Tim.3:9, "let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Heb.10:22.

6. Watch affections. Every day to watch that my affections be set right, and that they move not without or contrary to my judgment, and that they be set upon right objects, and that they soar not too high, nor descend too low, but according as the object deserves; meanly affecting mean things, and not affecting corrupt reason, as passion, &c., that my delight be not set immoderately upon any earthly things, though never so excellent, desirable or amiable, and so to enjoy them, as expecting every day or hour to lose them. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Col.3:1-2. Affections

are the pulses of the soul, and show the state of it; the affections are the motions of the will, and the will is the principal seat of grace; grace hath its birth in the understanding, but her seat is more principally in the will actually and formally, therefore the will is much to be observed in its tempers, inclinations, motions, which are the affections of the soul. All affections may be comprehended in love and hatred; the first comprehends desire, delight, joy, hope, these are the acts of love, and these are chiefly to be given to God, we must make him our trust, love, joy, delight, and our all in all, esteem and affect all things else under him and for him; he is all-sufficient, therefore we may well content ourselves with him, and to love him dearly; only then are the affections set right, when with God we are sick of love. "I am sick of love." Song.2:5. Forsake not God, who is a living fountain, Psal.36:9, for broken Cisterns, Jer.2:13, for love is the sweetest affection; and therefore it's a pity that it should be spent and lost upon vanities. And when we set our affections strongly on things below, it's a mercy for God to take them from us, to teach us and cause us to take more delight in God himself, and those true, unspeakable, and everlasting delights, prepared for the Saints with himself. Surely we have cause to lament, that we are so ready to set our affections on things below, that they are so strong and unruly, and so hardly subdued, that it is not an easy thing to master our wills and appetites, they so rage and dote so vehemently after vanities. "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity." Eccl.1:2. "LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee; verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah. Surely every man walketh in a vain shew; surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee." Psal.39:4-7.

7. Watch time. That every day I watch and endeavor to redeem time, because it is precious, to improve it, to know truth, to enjoy and obey God, and to serve others in love, "redeeming the time because the days are evil." Eph.5:16. Also our time is short, it is but as a thought, a shadow, a dream, a span long; it is our duty and wisdom to preserve and redeem time for every purpose and action. Paul improves his time, "therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears," Acts 20:31, yet we lose many hours needlessly, in sleeping, in trifling, in idle visits, &c., in which time good might have been done to many. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with

thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Ecc.9:10.

8. Watch senses. Every day to watch the windows of my soul, my senses, as ears, eyes, from unlawful objects, and lawful, when I perceive they would suck evil from them, and shutting my eyes and ears, if need be. He shall dwell on high, &c., "that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly... and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil," &c. Isa.33:15-16. Thus we are commanded, to take heed, watch, and pray, Mk.13:35, so take heed what you hear. It was David's desire to God, "turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way." Psal.119:37. Job saw a necessity to make a Covenant with his eyes. "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid." Job 31:1. For Satan is ready to convey much evil insensibly through these flood-gates of sin; bad discourse inflames lust; David's roving eye caused him to fall foully, and procured him much vexation and grief; who could have thought an idle glance could occasion so much mischief? Expect no better fruit in suffering your hearts to run after your eyes; fancy will take fire before we be aware; but a fool will take no warning, he will have his eyes in every corner of the earth. Prov.17:24. "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way." Psal.119:37. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." I Jn.2:16-17.

9. In outward things. Every day to watch to make some good use, and draw instruction from the creatures and passages of God's providence, so to mind heavenly things by natural. So did Christ upon mentioning of bread. Mat. 16:5-11. These things below make themselves wings, and fly away; but fly thee, by them, from them, before them.

10. Watch in lawful things. Every day to watch narrowly with care and heedfulness in the use and enjoyment of things lawful, viz., meat, drink, sleep, apparel, marriage, visitations, and recreations, &c. Our nature is prone to excess herein, and we oft sin more, and are in greater danger, by lawful things, than by unlawful, because we fear grosser evils more than we do the secret ensnarement that attend lawful things, so that many are deceived, and ensnared, and insensibly drawn into many excesses, before we be aware, to the dishonor of God, and grief of ourselves, and others. The fool's mind was all for his ease and his belly, meat and drink. "And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." Lk.12:19. "And take heed

to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Lk.21:34. "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." I Thes.5:6-8.

11. Watch in things indifferent. Every day to watch that I use not indifferent things securely and carelessly, but to have regard to other's weaknesses, endeavoring that my actions be such as I may defend with a good conscience. All things are pure, but it is not lawful to do things with offence, "it is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." Rom.14:21-22. These words do prove that we ought to forbear the doing of that which is in itself lawful {if it can be omitted without sin} in case another is not persuaded of the lawfulness of it, and so is offended at it. I grant he takes offence when none is given, for if I do that which is lawful, I give no offence; therefore in being offended it is his fault and weakness, yet if I know he is offended with it, and yet shall do it, and he therewith is grieved, &c., I in so doing sin against God and him; though otherwise I might do it, yet in this case it is condemned in the Word, and it cannot be defended with a good conscience.

12. Watch against sin. Every day to take heed and watch against every sin, and that I defend no sin in myself, nor lessen it under no pretense of corruption, temptation, or for the sweetness or smallness of it; nor inwardly favor it, but to resolve against all sin, with the occasions of it, and the appearance of it, to be jealous against it, and fearful of falling by it, and ever to show some hatred of it. Look we to sin at the first motion of it, consider we the root of it, and the end of it, and presently look up to God for strength against it; believe and pray against it, and avoid all the occasions of it. "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." Prov.4:15. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." I Thes.5:22. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever." Matt.6:13. First, we should be afraid to sin, because we are commanded to do otherwise by God; secondly, lest by it we dishonor God, his truth, and servants; thirdly, lest by it we encourage others to sin; fourthly, and fill our souls with sorrow, because we have sin against so great, and gracious, and loving Father. A

sensibleness of sin, and a heart easily touched with remorse for it, may stand with the assurance of pardon of it, and when any hath by reason of frailty sinned, though it seems to be in the least measure, abhor it with the greatest detestation, and cover it not with any excuses or pretenses whatsoever. "Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD." II Chron.34:27.

13. Every day watch the tongue. To watch that my speech be not vain, and idle, and frothy, but powdered with salt; to take heed of speaking against others, especially such as are the Lords; that I disgrace none, nor insult over any, remembering my own weakness, and that I wrest not men's actions and words, but take them in the best sense, so far as I can, with a good conscience, and without prejudice of the truth. Idle words are forbidden, "let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man," Col.4:6, "neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks." Eph.5:4. "My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long." Psal.71:24. "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Matt.12:35-36. If you love to find fault, lay on there where you see most, which will be yourself, if you have been given eyes to see. Consider, hast thou no unbelief, pride, secret hypocrisies, atheism and thoughts of blasphemy, self-love, self-seeking, self-confidence, unprofitableness, hardness of heart, blindness of mind, ignorance, unruly passion, false security, lukewarm-ness, abusing lawful things, unthankfulness for mercies, want of mourning for the sins of others, want of courage for the truth, deadness, dullness, heaviness, weariness, undevotion, distractions, and indisposedness of heart in holy duties. Hast thou no forgetfulness, inconstancy, &c., do you walk comfortably in thy Christian course? Art thou never cast down, &c.? The secret evils in us, might put us in remembrance of ourselves, and silence us from insulting and disgracing others for their weaknesses.

14. Observe the frame of my spirit. Every day to observe the passages of my spirit before God in my actions and duties, and expect strength from Christ in the use of means to act, and whether I be suitably and inwardly affected with a sensibleness

of what I want of God, or from God, or thankful and humble, eying my defects, and with what faith and fervency I seek God, and observing how God answers my prayers, and wait upon him for an answer of them.

15. Watch to do others good. Every day to desire and endeavor to do my duty, according to my relation and station, to give a good example, religious instruction, loving admonition, seasonable reproofs, &c., using means to do all the good I can to the souls and bodies of others, with an earnest intention, with all care and dear affection. {"One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ, and he brought him to Jesus." Jn.1:40-42. "But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Heb.13:16.} If a husband, if thou art a father, or a master, or a wife, or a child, or a servant, be a friend to friends, and to enemies do good; be thou an example, I Tim.4:12, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. "That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." I Tim.6:18-19.

16. Watch to prevent evil. Every day that I stand upon my watch, every moment to prevent evil, and to prepare and receive good, having an eye to observe, and a heart bent to resist all Satan's assaults, either from the world or flesh, alone or with others, knowing Satan watches to do me a mischief; and to consider that my Father's eye is upon me, who hath commanded us to keep his precepts diligently. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity; they walk in his ways. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments." Psal.119:1-6. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matt.26:41. Watching keeps the soul awake, it is to have grace in a readiness for action.

17. Watch against every occasion of sin. Every day that I decline watchfully all occasions of falling from my first love, fervency, heavenly mindedness, as dead company, formalness in religious duties, coldness, or neglecting the ordinances, praise of men, profit, outward pomp, mirth, pleasure, ease, outward contentment, that I exceed not, nor sink not under any of them,

but set light by others favors and frowns. Seek not yourself out of yourself, in the conceits of other men, for he that is little in his own eyes, will not be troubled if he seem so to others; he that is troubled because the words of others answer not his desires, he shall never live quietly, and he that prizes the praises of others, he enjoys neither God nor himself.

18. To sympathize with others. Every day to take notice and sympathize with the sorrows and sufferings of those that belong to Christ, and to be content to stand or fall into any sorrow or sufferings with the Church of Christ; to part with estate, friends, liberty, life, &c. "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ." Phil.1:20-21. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." Rom.14:7-8.

19. To meditate. Every day to meditate upon God in his goodness unto me, and mind what God hath prepared for me in heaven, and how I may be preserved from sin, self, &c., and order my conversation aright. Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide. Gen.24:63. "My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the LORD." Psal.104:34. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein." Jos.1:8. "O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day." Psal.119:97. Meditation is wonderfully sweet and profitable, by it we wind up our minds from things below, Col.3:2-3, and enjoy God, and live a heavenly life, even whilst thou art in the earth, refreshing thyself with the great variety of those invisible comforts in heaven, the interest, joy, rest, that thou shall find at last, &c. We might meditate of the miseries, frailty, and shortness of the time we have to live here, and how we may prevent sin, bear the cross, deny ourselves, live by faith, be contented in want, grow in grace, escape temptations, keep a good conscience, and what is my duty to God and man, and wherein I come short; what mercies I enjoy, and how I live by faith in everything, how I profit by afflictions, or am thankful to God for his sweet mercies to my soul or body, and a thousand profitable things, in which the soul may find sweetness. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Col.3:1. By faith and meditation, keep thy heart above, to view thy everlasting portion, filling thyself

with joy, enjoying the joys of heaven, which I shall certainly and quickly enjoy, unutterable, unconceivable, and infinite, bottomless, boundless and endless. Oh, the ocean of the joys of heaven, the greatness of sweetness in so great confluence of all joys, pleasures and delights, which shall be forever, and never have an end! "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." I Cor.2:9-10.

20. Watch to deny self. That I daily deny my self, wit, wisdom, carnal reason, learning, favor of men, applause, passion, ease, liberty, and all things for God. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." I Jn.2:15-17. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matt.16:24-26. It is good thus to cross ourselves, if we could deny ourselves, everything would be easy for us to do; for all things are so sure under us, as we are above ourselves; in the same measure we are spiritual, or live by faith, so much we deny ourselves, such as cannot deny themselves, are not able to endure the troubles and indignities of this world, but will shrink and fall off in the day of battle. Lk.14:28-31.

21. To be humble. That in all my actions, I be humble, and meek, sincere, serious, fervent and cheerful. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt.11:29. Without faith and sincerity all is nothing worth! "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Eph.6:24. Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Rom.12:11. Cheerfulness, "rejoice evermore," I Thes.5:16, a cheerful and a willing spirit is most suitable and acceptable; we oft look not so much what is done, as from what affection it is done; an uncheerful spirit is soon weary, for if we be overwhelmed with sorrow, fear, &c., and if we be filled with lightness, vanities, we are unfit for any service of God.

22. Watchfulness in attending upon Christ in his

Ordinances of Grace. That I use such means to enjoy and increase in holy resolutions, desires, purposes, &c., to enjoy Christ, and the things of God for God. "With my whole heart have I sought thee; O let me not wander from thy commandments." Psal.119:10. If resolution be wanting, if thou be forgetful, slothful, thou art like to be a poor Christian. Oh the strong and restless desires, and the fervency thereof, of a heart after God, of a heart touched with his love, and one that has partaken of his sweetness! "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" Psal.42:1-2. "God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." Psal.63:1-2.

23. Watch to joy in God. That every day I rejoice in God, my union with him, and interest in him, and privileges, and happiness by him, &c., and in the exercises of his graces, and his word, and saints, as the temptations, chiefest joy, and greatest advantage. I was in his love before the world was, love was the cause he shed his blood for me, it is his love that preserves me, and crowned with it I shall be to all eternity. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts." Jer.15:16.

24. That I scorn none. That I sleight none, nor check any with their deformity of body, dullness, or weakness of wit, or memory, meanness of outward estate, birth, or smallness of gifts, parts, &c., and to pity those who are still in their sins. Consider, who made the difference between him and thee. "For who maketh thee to differ from another; and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" I Cor.4:7. "But by the grace of God I am what I am." I Cor.15:10. "For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him." Isa.28:26. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9. The Free Grace and Love of God only makes the difference, and if God should convert him, he may soon become better than thee or me.

25. To know the vanities of the creature. Every day to consider the vanities of these outward things, and the hurt we receive by them, how we exceed in our affections unto them, notwithstanding they are not ours, and may in a less time than

an hour be taken all from us, or us from them, and that we are often distracted and unsettled by them, to the end I may with more content want them, and be weaned from them in my enjoyment of them, and so to use the liberties of this life soberly, so as to be bettered by them. All things below are full of transitoriness, mortality and change; vanities of vanities, &c., all is vanities. Eccl.1:2. These things are under the Sun, {but above is constancy, and eternity of all excellencies, perfections, and pleasures,} and we have no certainty of anything below. "And he said unto them, take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Lk.12:15. "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Lk.21:34. Experience makes it appear, the more men possess of outward things, the less many use and enjoy, the more we love them, the more we are crossed with them, and the more they have, the more they are in want, because of their insufficiency, uncertainty, and perishing nature. Religion oft pays for men's getting riches, and oft suffers most by them.

26. Watch in solitariness. That every day I be well employed, especially in my retiredness, and solitary seasons, to prevent needless fears, thoughts of the pleasures of sin, past, present, or to come, lest such thoughts cause sin upon supposition. Experience may teach some, that Satan's temptations have come more frequent and stronger, when alone, and that they have then sinned more freely in their imaginations; oh cursed contemplation, that pollutes soul and body with sensual filth, and renewed guilt, Tit.3:3; nor is it good for a weak believer to affect solitariness, Satan is more bold when thou art most solitary, and his temptations then take a deeper impression.

27. Watch to speak for truth, &c., every day, as occasion is offered, "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," Jude 3, own it, maintain it, and those that are unjustly accused, and count it a glory to be reproached and disgraced for Christ and his truth. I Pet.4:14. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." I Tim.6:12.

28. Watch to do duties. Every day to catch at all opportunities of receiving and doing good, shunning evil, and with constancy nourishing all good and holy desires, and consider what times we live in, and what they afford, and how I may be most useful and fruitful, that I may finish my course

with joy. Our sloth, and our corrupt self, love, ease, carelessness, inconstancy and unsettledness hinders us more than we are aware of, of going to our Beloved.

29. Watch against covetousness. Every day to take heed, and beware of covetousness and earthly mindedness. Consider, "be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Phil.4:6. "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days." Jas.5:1-3. "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven." Prov.23:5. To avoid covetousness, meditate on such places as these. Covetousness deceives and hurts all; if we had riches, we cannot keep them, they shall soon be taken from us, or us from them. Let such as think they cannot be happy without outward riches, consider if earth be better than heaven, where there is none of this thick clay to load themselves withal. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread; and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Isa.55:2.

30. To look for trouble. Every day to expect trouble and crosses, and look upon all that befalls me, as wisely and lovingly appointed and ordered by God for my good in his wisdom, love, and mercy, that so I may be thankful for them, and not fret, knowing nothing can befall me without the will of God, and that it is sent in love, and is best for me, and that God will supply with his all-sufficiency whatsoever I shall need; and that I desire not freedom from trouble, but a free spirit, and an enlarged heart to God in it; and to express in every form trouble and concern, much wisdom, patience, humility, comfort, willingness, contentedness, thankfulness, and faith in God, and that I endeavor to comfort others in their trouble. We should not look to be exempted from troubles, the whole course of a saint in this life is a life of trouble and suffering, yea, more than other men. {"For there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment, &c." Psal.73:4-6.} All our crosses, &c., are Christ's servants, as they are under Christ, and they come and go at his command, and they are sent to do them good, and are called back when they

have done what they come for; therefore be not impatient at them, fret not. {"I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it." Psal.39:9. "It is the LORD; let him do what seemeth him good." I Sam.3:18.} A saint should be so fixed upon Christ, that nothing below should move him, so as to disquiet him; for to say they cannot endure and bear such a cross of trouble, is an expression as is unfit and unsuitable for a child of God. {"Not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil.4:11-13.} Our spirit should be above, and rule and over-rule things below, and not be ruled by them; a Saint should be under nothing beneath itself; if we should rejoice in trials, &c., inward, outward temptations, desertions, conflicts, outward troubles, and death itself, {is to make us capable of a fuller enjoyment and communion with God, &c.,} how much more should we be content and patient? "Lord, I will bear anything, because my sins are forgiven me," is the voice of one whose conscience is so set at liberty, and can with ease undergo a great burden. Bees gather honey of bitter flowers as well as sweet, and cannot we do so from bitter conditions? Outward bondage is not much to an enlarged and free spirit; what can do much hurt, when all is well within? All is light and easy to him that can deny himself. What God takes away one way, he can give it in another, which will be better; however it be, yet God is good and good to me, who will ever remain so to be, and be the same to me. We have his promise, that we shall not want anything that is good for us, Psal.34:10; therefore when I think I want, I will not believe I want, and that I have what I want, when I do not see it; when I see not outward things, I see God can give, and I may have the comfort of them without them, esteem God above all, and set him against all; what God may of conveyed before by means, he can instill immediately from himself, for the Lord's immediate comforts are the strongest. And when all forsook Paul, II Tim.4:16, yet God stood by him; and so it was with Christ. Jn.16:32. {"Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." Psal.69:20.} Saints that are poor, and under abasement, may be richer in faith, Jam.2:5, and have more experience of God's faithfulness, care, and love, and see more of their own hearts; be more humble, more spiritual, and live more upon God, and more weaned from the world, than those saints who are richer; the meanest are as

happy, and as free from cares as the richest, and their sleep is as sweet; therefore take we heed of sin, and then let come what can. Sin not, to avoid trouble, for that is the way to bring greater trouble upon thee, for sin defiles, distracts, ensnares, and straitens a soul; where the spirit is enlarged, it is not much troubled at outward bondage, if it be lightsome, outward darkness will not be burdensome; if the spirit be sound, it can bear troubles, sicknesses; nothing can be very ill, when all is well within, what can be grievous to him, whose eye is fixed in heaven, and knows it to be his own? {"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb.11:10.} We should not look so much at trouble, or freedom from it, as to God for profit by it, comfort in it, strength to bear it; oh let no trouble thee, for when God seems to leave thee, he is near to help thee; when he hides himself, he sees and will provide help for thee. "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh; as it is said to this day, in the mount of the LORD it shall be seen," Gen.22:14, it shall be seen; that is, God, in the greatest difficulties, when all human assistance is vain, will make a suitable provision for the deliverance of those who trust in Him. "The LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God." Gen.17:1. "For all things are yours, whether...the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." I Cor.3:21-23. "O fear the LORD, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing." Psal.34:9-10. The same faithfulness will make it good; therefore I shall not want whatever can come, should each saint say.

31. Watch to show mercy. Every day as occasion is offered, to show mercy and pity to others in their misery, to supply their necessities, freely and willingly, according to my ability; and that I be more industrious, and more moderate in expenses, to supply others wants, especially the saints, if it be within my abilities, with an open heart, hand, house, joyfully and compassionately to supply the necessity of the saints. Consider to "give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away," Matt.5:42, "therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." Matt.7:12. They that have no money must sell something to give, "sell that you have, and give alms," &c., Lk.12:33, "as we have opportunity, let us do well to all men, especially to the household of faith." Gal.6:10. Surely we should desire and endeavor to ease as many men's burdens as we can, it is our

duty to be helpful, and helpfulness includes mercy and tender compassion, love, goodness, and such like virtues. In lending, and suretyship, men must not be rash, or hard-hearted. It is a duty to lend to such who make conscience, and are careful and industrious to pay at the time. I am sorry when I hear how many have suffered in this kind, for it is a sin to lend to such as have no care and conscience to pay; men had need to have good experience of men's faithfulness and carefulness, before they trust them with much; the experience of many have taught them this; notional knowledge in this is best.

32. That I grieve not the Holy Spirit. Every day to watch that I quench not, nor grieve the Holy Spirit. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph.4:30. We quench and grieve the Spirit, when we neglect the motions thereof, and sleight the comforts of the Spirit, and seek comfort from the flesh, and feed upon lusts; when we spend our thoughts to content the outward man, and use spiritual things for carnal ends, or father the work of the flesh upon the Spirit, or sleight God's way, allowance of any sin in myself, or others, to plot or contrive sin, or cavil against any truth, or do duties in my own strength, omit duty, or slightly perform it, to neglect or sleight the graces of the Spirit in any, or despise a saint for his infirmities, and the like.

33. To take notice of God's mercies. Every day to take notice of God's mercies to us, and others, and to acknowledge God's goodness for them. "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." I Thes.5:18.

34. To be thankful. "Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever." Psal.145:2.

35. To grow in grace. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever." II Pet.3:18.

36. Present condition is best. Every day to believe my present state and condition of soul and body to be best for me. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom.8:28.

37. To cast my care upon God. Every day to cast all my care upon God. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Phil.4:6.

38. To look for death. "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Job 14:14.

39. To know myself. Every day to observe my profiting in Religion, "but unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go

forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Mal.4:2.

40. To take notice of our failings. Every day to take notice of my sins, omissions, and commissions, to be humbled by them, and more watchful for the future against them, and to live the life of faith in all infirmities, as if I had never sinned, living all the day long in the sweet enjoyment of the love of God, and so to lie down in the apprehension and sweet enjoyment of it. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you." Phil.4:8-9.

Some Considerations against Sin, which are Necessary to Prevent Sin.

1. Consider, it's God's command that we avoid sin, and subdue it. The command of God ought to be wonderfully effectual and powerful in us, and over us, and did we know the majesty and authority of the command of an Infinite and Eternal God, we neither could nor would do that he forbids to be done.

2. Know, that it is the work of God to subdue the least sin, we cannot do it of ourselves, therefore Christ saith, "without me you can do nothing," Jn.15:5, yet we are to use the means he appoints against sin, and to strive against it in his strength, and always resist sin and Satan.

3. Consider sin in the nature of it, and in the root and fruit of it; the want of a true sight of sin, is a cause why men love sin, and sleep so securely in it.

4. Consider, sin is the price of blood. Matt.27:6.

5. Consider, there is nothing in sin why we should desire it, there is no true sweetness in sin, no true contentment and satisfaction there; the fruit sin bears is miserable destruction at the best, it is but wounds, sorrow, bitterness, shame, &c. I appeal to your experience, what fruit have you ever found come of sinning? Did it not fill you with horror, or rob you of peace, or disable you for the service of God, &c. "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed; for the end of those things is death." Rom.6:21. "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." Rom.7:5. "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but

he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal.6:8. Sin fights against your souls, I Pet.2:11, it disgraces the truth, grieves the saints, and by it we do what we can to destroy others, harden their hearts, and hinder them of receiving the truth, encourage men in sin, and open their mouths against God, and his truth and servants.

6. Be sure you avoid the occasions of sin, as evil company, places and provocations of sin, idleness, carnal joy, excess in apparel; shut your eyes, stop your ears, take heed to thy tongue, take heed of excess in eating and drinking, and pampering the body. Some have so pampered their bodies, that they could not rule them, their want herein hath caused them to want no sorrow, and such as avoid not the occasions of sin, let them not look to be preserved from sin. "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." Eph.5:15. "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts." Psal.119:63. "Depart from me, ye evildoers; for I will keep the commandments of my God." Psal.119:115. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Prov.13:20.

7. Ask advice of fit persons, and crave the prayers of such as are the Lords, that thou may withstand sin, and Satan, and get others to watch over you, that you order your steps by his Word. Receive reproof willingly, and profitably, and thankfully. "Order my steps in thy word; and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." Psal.119:133.

8. Endeavor to know Satan's stratagems, be not ignorant of his enterprises, he doubles his assaults when he is resisted, that so he might persuade men, the more he is resisted, the more they shall fall into sin, as if it were in vain to resist him, but resist and give no place to the Devil. Eph.4:27. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Jas.4:7. If you yield to Satan now, it will be the harder to deny him the next time. "Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Eph.6:11-16.

9. Consider your relation and station, art thou a partaker of the promises of Christ, Eph.3:6, an heir of Christ, a

fellow-Citizen of the saints, and of the household of God. Eph.2:19? Oh then do not so dishonor Christ, to take a member of Christ and make it a member of Satan, to serve sin, this is a great wrong to Christ, a great dishonour to his Person. "Ye do dishonour me." Jn.8:49. "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light." Eph.5:8. And seeing we are the sons and daughters of God, Gal.4:6, kings and priests to God, Rev.5:10, it is wonderful unsuitable for such to sin, for that were to serve Satan, and do his drudgery. "But ye have not so learned Christ." Eph.4:20. "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Eph.4:17-18. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit.2:14. "And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." II Cor.6:15-18. We were chosen to be holy, Eph.1:4, therefore I may not sin.

10. Consider the eye of God is ever upon you. "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings." Prov.5:21. "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." II Chron.16:9. "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." I Pet.3:12.

11. Let the love of Christ constrain you to hate and oppose every evil way.

12. Nourish the motions of the Spirit, quench not the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, Gal.5:16; nourish zeal and hatred against every sin.

13. Examine your selves and ways daily. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Prov.4:23. "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life." Deut.4:9.

14. Consider the shortness of time we have here to live, our time is short, also the pleasures of sin are but for a season. "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." Heb.11:25-26.

15. Know your interest in Christ, and profit by affliction, both which destroys sin.

16. Hearken unto the noise of conscience, if conscience saith, do it not, hearken unto it, do it not, lest conscience be silent, and you hardened. "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." I Tim.1:19. "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Prov.29:1.

17. When the pleasure of sin is presented unto thee, present to thy thoughts the sting sin will leave behind it, with the many evils that attend it; also present to thy self, a greater and better pleasure and sweetness, which is thine, and that thou, if thou be the Lord's, shall enjoy forever with him. Oh, mind home, and what is there, even pleasures for evermore; set your affections on things above, where your crown of glory is, and where Christ your treasure is. Such as think on the supposed pleasure and sweetness of sin are deceived and ensnared by it; but, child of God, give no ear to the lying noise of sin and Satan, they have fair pretenses for a fool, as that you may be saved notwithstanding, or resist it the next time, but oh the deceitfulness of sin. "And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite." Prov.23:2.

18. Pray to God earnestly and constantly for strength against sin, with thankfulness for any preservation from sin; watch and pray at the first approach of sin, change thy object and fall to prayer. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Phil.4:6.

19. Believe that God will give thee strength to subdue all thy iniquities; in his time thou shall overcome them, be not discouraged; if thou be sometime too weak, give not over, continue resisting, in due time thou shall prevail, believe your prayers shall be answered, and that as there is strength enough in Christ to subdue sin, and that you shall enjoy it; we are never overcome by sin, but by reason of the weakness of faith; therefore above all, take the shield of faith. Eph.6:16. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to

stand, stand." Eph.6:13-14.

20. Apply suitable promises against sin. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom.6:11. The LORD hath said that sin shall not reign over you, for "sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom.6:14. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom.5:21. "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Mic.7:19. Do as Matt.17:21, "howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." The Lord will preserve you from every evil work, and preserve you till he bring you to glory.

END

The Necessity, Excellency and Benefit of Prayer.

The Lord our God hath commended Prayer to be a help to us in all our necessities, and that we might love it, and improve it to his glory and our good, saying, "ask and it shall be given you," Matt.7:7, "and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Psas.50:15. Prayer hath great promises annexed unto it, Jam.5:14-18, Matt.7:7-11, it procures wisdom, Jam.1:5, &c. The Spirit of grace is given to such as pray, Lk.11:13, prayer quickens the graces of God in us, and is a remedy against all evils, Psal.107:6, prayer is a means to fit us for those good things our souls desire, Jonah 2:1 with verse 10, prayer hath healed the sick, and raised the dead, unloosed chains, and unlocked prisons, and delivered the saints of old, Acts 12:5, 7, 11, and even of late hath placed persecutors in their places. It hath set free the Lambs, and shut up the Wolves; we may truly say, the Lord hath slain Og, the king of Bashan, "so the LORD our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people; and we smote him until none was left to him remaining," Deut.3:3, for his mercy endures forever. And Prayer caused the Sun to go back, yea to stand still, Josh.10:12; by prayer we bear great burdens, and are made better by them; we understand of the prayer in faith, that by it Jacob prevailed with God. Gen.32:28. God delights to hear his pray, for "the prayer of the upright is his delight," Prov.15:8; by prayer we draw near to God, and have

communion with him, and in a sort are familiar with God, and know his mind; prayer engaged God's power and truth. Prayer is the most universal help, it is good for all, and at all times, in all things, and is most easy and ready to the Lords, in all places, in all times. Would you do well to your brethren, friends, enemies, frequent and improve this spiritual and heavenly duty.

Concerning the Duty of Prayer.

To prayer, three things are necessary, a spiritual disposition before; a spiritual behavior in; and a spiritual carriage thereafter. The first includes preparation to this duty. That preparation is a duty God requires, for consider. 1. God commands it. God saith, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified," Lev.10:3, "prepare to meet thy God, O Israel," Amos 4:12, "prepare your hearts unto the LORD," I Sam.7:3, "prepared unto every good work." II Tim.2:21. 2. The Saints have practiced it, Jehoshaphat prepared his heart to seek God, "nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God," II Chron.19:3; Ezra prepared his heart. Ezra 7:10. "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise." Psas.57:7. Objection: This is God's work. Answer: True, "LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear," Psal.10:17, "thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them," Ezek.36:37; yet, so oft in accordance with his own prescribed means, which are in perfect alignment with his glory. 3. There are promises annexed to preparation. "If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him," Job 11:13, "acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee. Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart," Job 22:21-22, "nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God." II Chron.19:3. "If thou prepare thy heart," &c., see Job 11:13, for see what is promised verses 15-19. It is an evil not to prepare thine heart, so king Rehoboam "strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and reigned...and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD." II Chron.12:13-14.

What Preparation is in General?

Preparation, it is a holy consideration of God, with whom we have to do, and how unfit we are to have so near communion with him, that our spirits may be composed, and our whole man rightly disposed, craving his strength to enable us to a right performing of this holy duty.

In particular. 1. For the person to be accepted, must be a son. Rom.8:15. Also, all that pray, ought to put away all wrath, strife, envy, &c., for God esteems so highly of peace, that he will have his service stay till it be accomplished, Mk.11:25, Matt.5:24, therefore we should take heed, that there be no such distempers found in us by him who knows our hearts, for it will choke conscience, and weaken our boldness with God, "if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me," Psal.66:18; for such as love their sins, God loathes their prayers, as the prayer of the wicked is abomination to God, Prov.28:9, the LORD looks at the heart. Christ saith, "when thou prays, forgive," for such as forgive not others, pray without life.

2. Prize prayer, have it in that esteem which God puts upon it, for God hath honored prayer, so that everyone that uses it is the better for it; for every one that asks receives. Matt.7:8.

3. Set times apart for to pray, and separate thyself to some place where thou may be alone, and out of the hearing of others, if thou canst, that so thou may freely pour out thy soul to God without hypocrisy; for a man's desire he will separate himself, Prov.18:1, Christ chose a time before day, early in the morning, and one of the places he chose was a solitary place, Mk.1:35, sometimes a mountain, and a garden, and when that cannot be had, he saith, "when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly," Matt.6:6, thus, we should so pray and worship God, as men set free from all other things. So we need avoid all occasions of hypocrisy; hypocrites stand in corners of the streets, because they love to be seen of men.

4. Before thou prays, spend a little time, some thoughts concerning what God is, and that may raise thy heart, and encourage thee to draw near to God. Consider what be thy chief wants, lets, temptations, corruptions, also to consider the suitable promises of a supply fits the soul to pray; also to consider what mercies we have received above others, and what cause we have to be thankful to God.

5. Prayer requires our ends to be holy, and right placed,

as to enjoy God, and for grace to obey him; and last and least of all, for such things as chiefly concern ourselves, as peace, &c. If the end be naught, or good, and not right placed, we ask amiss. Jas.4:3.

6. Deny thy self and come empty headed, hearted, handed, of all that is thy own, that God and his grace may be all in all; emptiness raises our hearts in prayer.

7. Mind thy own inabilities to do anything that is spiritual, and look up to Christ by faith for strength, eying his promise; we are no more able to pray or do any spiritual work of ourselves, than to remove a mountain at once.

8. Consider God in his Attributes, that he is great, gracious, merciful, slow to anger, &c., and that he is so to thee, and that he is near thee, yea present with thee; all in God is ready to help his; his ocean of grace cannot be exhausted, spent; his fountain doth nothing decay, though multitudes draw from it.

9. When thou comes to God, think thou canst not have too high thoughts of God, nor too low ones of thy self, "dust and ashes," Gen.18:27, a worm, corruption, so Job, "man, that is a worm; and the son of man, which is a worm." Job 25:6. {The original is degradingly expressive, "how much less *enosh*, miserable man, who is a worm; and the son of Adam, who is *toleah*, a maggot."} Thou canst not set God high enough, or thyself low enough; if we could see our own filth, we should stink worse than the filthiest carrion in our own nostrils.

10. Come to God with a heart that is large and cheerful, by faith in assurance of person and prayer accepted, hate suspicions and jealousies of God, "O thou that hearest prayer," Psal.65:2; ask cheerfully, for such as go not cheerfully to God, know not what a God they go to; say to thy soul, "come, O soul, rejoice, be cheerful, for thou art a going to thy God."

11. Be abased under thy pride, formality, coldness, dullness, deadness, and break through all impediments to go to God in prayer.

12. Empty thy self of all distractions, cares, and clogs of spirit, that thou may be free when thou comes to God, hold thy heart close to God, in love, zeal, meekness, &c.

13. Observe fit times and seasons to go to God in, yet prefer that season wherein God and thy own heart sends thee to prayer before a set time, embrace it gladly and quickly, so sweet a motion of the Spirit, put it not by till another time, "yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life," Psal.42:8, "and in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary

place, and there prayed." Mk.1:35.

14. Be sensible of the wants of others, especially for such as belong to Christ, that you may pray with a feeling of their necessities.

15. Pray for grace to stir thee up to pray, and fit thee with suitable matter, suitable to the occasion, either for the Church, thy self, or others, and to enliven us in all; abhor form and fashion, pray not in print, they are deadly enemies to spirituality; pray from an inward feeling and sensibleness of thy wants; book-prayers is such a crutch, as it makes them that use it quite lame; we are not so much to regard a set order of words, as a well ordered heart; weak expressions in uprightness of heart, the Lord likes well, but if there be nothing but well framed sentences, God abhors them.

16. Above all come to God in faith, for "how then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" Rom.10:14. "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb.11:6, "therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mk.11:24. This is the most spiritual grace to come to God with above all others, for no other save this can fasten upon a promise, as thou canst not see God without faith; whatsoever thou needs, believe that promise, "every one that asks receives." Matt.7:8. Christ's incense perfumes the prayers of the saints, "and another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand," Rev.8:3-4; so, may our prayers be set before the LORD "as incense," Psal.141:2. Faith gives force and life to prayer; it troubles not Satan to make a thousand prayers full of tears, if they be without faith; according to our faith, so is our prayer. Faint faith, faint prayers; prayer without faith is but beating the air; according to thy faith, be it unto thee. Consider that "all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," Matt.21:22, "Jesus said unto him, if thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Mk.9:23. "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering," Jam.1:6; that is, in a certain assurance to be heard, and that his request shall be granted.

17. Read and meditate before prayer, if time will permit, for the better preparing our hearts thereunto. The graces of the Spirit, uprightness, pureness, thankfulness, integrity, soundness of heart, and the like, these will enable, enliven and

fit thee to pray. These well observed, and God blessing them, will fill thee with heavenly affection, and rid thee of thy own inventions, manner, and ends, &c. Oh, all you sons and daughters of the Most High, in this fullness go forth to meet your God with joy and full assurance of a supply of what you need.

Concerning a Right Manner, and Spiritual Behavior in the Duty of Prayer.

1. Fix thy mind and faith upon God in the Person of Christ, who is God with us, and near us, else he cannot be comprehended by us; eye the flesh of our Advocate, united to the Deity, and hold the eye of thy faith upon it, {all the while thou art in prayer,} which gives life and strength to prayer, else thy prayer is but a moral devotion, a mere shadow; by the flesh of Christ so united, we have union with God, and access to God, which else we could not; and the more our faith lays hold upon this flesh of Christ so united to the Divinity, and we also by it, the more the ordinance imparts God's goodness unto the soul, for whatsoever virtue there is in anything, it's conveyed by application, and touching of it; that whereby we touch God is our faith, which never touches him, but it draws virtue from him; but that in which our happiness consists, is our union with the Divinity, by Christ's perfect Humanity, which is full, and admits not of any degrees. 2. Pray in knowledge, and not in ignorance. 3. Watch and pray against Satan's discouragements; against sloth, ease, and vanity of mind; that if it were possible, no vain thought might come in all the while. 4. Pray as thy present state, condition, and frame of spirit requires. 5. Strive for the best affections thou canst in prayer, and those ravishing, which may carry thee furthest from thy self, and nearest to communion with God, and look to the bottom upon which thy affections stand, as faith, and inward grace, and eying a promise; serve God with all thy might, courage, and strength, with frequency and fervency, for time, zeal, and intention; long prayers oft dead others affection; it's good to pray briefly, and often, as Christ. Matt.26:39. Consider what others can bear, mind the time, occasion, and season; in long prayers, we must take heed of custom, superstition, and ambition, and in short, of profaneness and carelessness; whether long or short, you must pray with affection, as joy, desires and grief. 6. When thou prays to one in the Deity, mind all Three, and sever them not, the object of our worship must be the union of the Human Nature of Christ in the Trinity. 7. Give God all thy heart, and see that thy heart and tongue go together all the while, and observe when, and in what

the heart draws back, &c. 8. If thou canst, observe God's order; first, express God's greatness, next his goodness, and his goodness to thee, his large love, and thy ill requiring him; be thankful for former mercies. "And said unto them, ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it. For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order." I Chron.15:12-13. Seek and ask spiritual blessings before earthly, &c., if time will permit, confess thy sins freely to God, with inward grief, and in faith beg the spirit of grace and of supplications, Zech.12:10, and let all mourning flow from faith of thy person accepted in Christ, and sins forgiven, or else all thy mourning and tears are worth nothing, and no better than the howling of a dog, but that mourning which flows from faith of pardon, is a sweet grace, and an acceptable sacrifice to God. In thanksgiving, it is fit we should be as much and as large in it, as in requests, be as ready to be thankful for mercies thou hast received, as to ask new ones, spiritual, temporal, &c., be thankful for all, to thee, thine, and others, and thou shall not be barren; for either matter or manner; we ought to be more ready to be thankful, than to crave what we want; we should prefer God before ourselves. In supplication, ask the Spirit of prayer, to pray in the Holy Spirit, and in understanding, &c., and ask all graces, and temporal things in faith, and a blessing upon all, and be content to be at God's disposal in all, and wait God's time, know if God hears thee not in that kind thou desires, he intends that which is better for thee instead thereof; God hath not absolutely promised thee measures of grace, and temporal things in particular, and so sometimes denies them in love to his, because not fit for them, therefore ask with submission. Add fervency and importunities, as one loath to be sent away empty, and let thy earnestness be according to the degrees of goodness of things prayed for, or of thy necessity of them. The life of prayer consists in the heat of earnest and fervent desires, Rom.15:30, Psal.143:6, 63:1; of a cold prayer, expect not more than a cold answer; if a righteous man's prayer be not fervent, it will not prevail, Jam.5:16; Oh Lord, give me what I come for, cease not knocking till ye speed; what we need we have in God, and this that we possess in Christ is ours, which turn fears into hopes, complaints into prayers, and thy lamentations into supplications, and Christ will turn thy darkness into light, and thy deadness into life, thy bondage into liberty, and thy weakness into strength. Covet the best measure of grace, and rest in that measure God thinks best for thee; pray often, Acts

6:4, and be thankful to God in prayer for what thou obtains from God by prayer, and in prayer use that gesture that most befits the duty, and most befits thee for the duty; weigh it well, consider the weakness of thy body, yet abhor irreverence in prayer, both in soul and body.

Concerning a Spiritual Carriage after Prayer.

1. As soon as this privilege of prayer is ended, especially if enlarged and before others, eye some one or more of thy defects {in prayer} to keep thy soul humble, and also eye what was of God in this duty, to the end thou may be thankful, and not dejected and overcome in viewing thy weakness and distemper; view all the parts of thy prayer, how it was performed {if thou canst} both for matter, manner, heart and affection, and consider what feelings, desires, comforts God gave thee in prayer; take heed thou dost not over-like thy prayers, nor think that God dislikes them, because thou sees not what thou should in thy prayers. 2. Renounce all that is our own in prayer; feelings, hopes, affections, zeal; as they are the ordinance of God, so I praise them, but as they are acts of mine, they stink in my nostrils, yet the Lord's fire shall heat me, his power perfected in my infirmity, "most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." II Cor.12:9. 3. Watch that Satan wound thee not with thy prayers; if thou be in any measure sensible of sin, thy defects in duty, Satan is ready to tell thee, if thou had the Spirit of God, then should thou have the Spirit of prayer, and if thou had it, it should be otherwise with thee than it is, but if the soul consent to what he saith to be true, ye both agree to wound thy faith and confidence in God, not only for an answer of thy prayer, but of thy person's acceptance. Nay, rather charge all upon thy corruption and want of preparation, and exercise of grace, and be the more careful and watchful for time to come, and learn to distinguish between a nullity and a defect; and in a word, if thou art sensible of thy sin in praying, and art sorry for it, thy imperfection is passed by, and thou dost not pray in fashion. The Spirit of God discovers deadness, indisposition, and unbelief, and the like in prayer, flesh and blood cannot discover these, and the Spirit of God only makes the conscience tender and pliable. 4. Let the frame of thy spirit be always thankful and cheerful after prayer, whether thou be enlarged or straitened, inwardly or outwardly, alone or with others; for when thou art at the best, thou stands in need of a Jesus, look upward then by faith upon thy Advocate, and when thy defects are most, and

thou art at the worst, will not the same Jesus save thee? Yea surely, and if thou grounds thy comfort upon a right bottom rightly, thy comfort and the cause of it is the same; because Christ is the same, Heb.13:8, and if Christ be thine, shall not he disannul all thy sins as well as one, seeing he is able and willing? But this is the children's bread, this pearl is not to be cast to swine. 5. If in prayer thy heart has been opened and enlarged, thy faith strengthened, and thy conscience eased, &c., count it a sweet mercy, be thankful to God for all blessings in Christ; for want of taking notice of God's goodness, and thankfulness for it, it is just instead of light to possess darkness, and for feeling to find deadness, &c. 6. Press after {what thou hast prayed for} in the use of means, Prov.2:3-5, there is the prayer, endeavor, and blessing; as he that makes prayer the end of his prayer, rests in his prayer, and prays to no purpose; so he that doth not in good earnest pursue with zeal and conscience the grace and good things he prays for loses his prayer. The Saints pray to put their prayers in practice, and we tempt God to ask that we use not means to attain; our endeavors must second our prayers. Prov.20:4. It is for hypocrites to pray and return to their lusts with more freedom, as if they intended to have liberty to sin. Such prayers are odious to God; take we heed that what we build up with prayer, we pull not down by our practice, by remissness, slightness, frothiness of spirit, it had been well if this knowledge had not been experimental, but a word is sufficient to the wise. 7. Expect and wait patiently for a full answer of thy prayers in God's time and way. Psal.40:1, Rev.3:10. "And the LORD answered me, and said, write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Hab.2:2-3. We should be loath to lose any part of the answer of our prayers, and that we may wait, we must first be sure we have a promise that we shall speed, that we may feed our minds with the meditation of it; this is necessary, for the time of fulfilling may be long, lest we faint. Psal.147:11. Have patience and tarry; that comes hardly, is oft most prized, but lightly come, lightly go; God knows the fittest season to do us good, take not a delay for a denial, many things God hath promised, he hath not set down the time or year, but when it's best for us, let God alone for the time, and ye shall see what God will do. Watch we what event our prayers have, and observe God's dealings with ourselves and others, both with his, and his enemies; and be thankful for any answer of prayers. The Saints are often afflicted, that they may often pray, and that often praying, they

might pull down many benefits from the Lord, and return many praises unto him; we sin against God, and hurt ourselves for want of thankfulness.

For Hearing the Word.

1. Labor to be informed of the excellency and preciousness of the mercy to hear the Word, and that no treasure of this world is like it for goodness, beauty, and truth; there is nothing like the Word, it informs, convinces, comforts; what comfort is like to this, if the heart be not lost in profits, pleasures, froth and ease? 2. Prize the Word, I Pet.2:3, above all things we prize precious things, and for such as love their lusts, let them consider, "for every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself; and I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD." Ezek.14:7-8. 3. Hear not for novelty, &c., but let your ends be good in obedience to God, to know and practice. 4. Deny thy self, thy own wisdom, see the Lord in all, be a fool that thou may be wise; set God above all, and say, "speak Lord, I Sam.3:10, for thy servant heareth." 5. Come in faith, believing that God can speak in particular to thee, whether weak or strong, and supply all thy wants, Mic.2:7, to the end, that the LORD will teach thee to profit, and lead thee "by the way that thou shouldest go," Isa.48:17; eye the promise, "if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God," Jn.7:17; hear and your souls shall live, Isa.55:3, believe the promises, meditate on them, plead them, apply them as thy own portion, and rest satisfied and contented with them, they that have the promise are sure enough. 6. Come with a resolution to learn and a heart resolved to practice what God saith; say as David, "teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart," Psal.119:33-34, "teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth; unite my heart to fear thy name," Psas.86:11, and covet earnestly the best gifts. I Cor.12:31. 7. Come empty in the sense of want, for the LORD filleth the hungry, but the full are sent empty away, Lk.1:51-53, Prov.27:7; empty thyself of distractions, and worldly thoughts and affections, Exod.3:5;

empty thyself of the prejudice of man, gifts, or means; be humble, the humble he will teach. Psal.25:9. 8. Pray to God to prepare thy heart, and to open thy eyes, Psal.119:18, to show thee his truth, and bless it to thy good; pray that he that speaks may not seek himself, and so rob God, and that he may speak as he ought to speak.

In Hearing, take Heed to your Eyes, Ears, and Hearts.

1. Consider thou art in the presence of God. "I have set the LORD always before me." Psal.16:8. 2. Attend diligently, "hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness," Isa.55:2; watch that nothing come between thee and the hearing of Christ in his word; sleep not, wander not, gaze not, "and the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake." Acts 8:6. 3. Hear for thy self, and mind especially that which most concerns thee. 4. Hear with understanding and judgment, Matt.13:13, 15:10; put a difference between truth and error, "the simple believes every word," Prov.14:15; "wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is," Eph.5:17, "beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world," I Jn.4:1; take heed what ye hear, Mk.4:24, and whom ye hear, and how ye hear. 5. If thou canst, observe the method and scope of the speaker to help memory. 6. Hear with thy heart and affection, as one that longeth for it. 7. Mix the word with faith; believe, obey, and believe it's true, and thine in Christ, I Pet.2:3, "if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." 8. Hear it as the word of God, or else it can do thee no good, "for this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe," I Thes.2:13; apprehend and digest well God's sovereignty in a command, and what the tie of obedience of the creature to God means; consider the insolence of the creatures that dare reject the Word of the Lord. Come buy and eat, Isa.55:1, buy gold, &c., Rev.3:18, forsake all, Matt.19:27; for "if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God," Prov.2:4-5; hearken and eat, Isa.55:2; in eating is required appetite, chewing, taste, relish, pleasure and delight, Neh.9:25; let the word sink down deep in

thine heart, Lk.9:44; hide it in your hearts. Psal.119:11.

After Hearing.

1. If God hath manifested himself any way in his Word, be thankful; oh that the Lord should reveal himself to me, and not unto the world, "Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" Jn.14:22. Consider, "for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them," Matt.13:15-17, "he sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD." Psal.147:19-20. 2. Hold fast that thou hast, lose it not in the air of the world, let nothing rob thee of it, let memory call upon conscience, and conscience upon thee. "Hold fast the form of sound words." II Tim.1:13. 3. Examine and prove what ye have heard, "prove all things; hold fast that which is good," I Thes.5:21, "these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11. 4. What good so ever thou receives, give glory to God, not to man, for he is but as an instrument in the hand of God; he that plants and waters is nothing, but God it is that gives the increase, I Cor.3:7; it is not in the graces of men, nor learning, "now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13. So then God doth all. 5. Muse and meditate on what thou hast heard, "think on these things," Phil.4:8, "but Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." Lk.2:19. Meditation helps memory and affection, and works an inward feeling of it, if God bless it, but if we meditate not on it, it doth us no good. 6. Apply what thou hast heard to thy occasions, which are many. 7. Practice what thou hast heard, this is the end of hearing. "And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that

ye may learn them, and keep, and do them." Deut.5:1. "And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it." Matt.7:26-27. We have no benefit by it, if we practice it not, "but whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." Jam.1:25. God looks for fruit, if we enjoy the privileges of being hearers of the Gospel of his Grace. Isa.5:2, Matt.21:34, Lk.13:7. Where much is given, much is required. Lk.12:48. "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." Jn.8:47. Practice presently, "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments," Psal.119:60, Abraham went presently, Gen.22:3, that which we put off till hereafter is seldom done. Consider, "yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man." Prov.24:33-34. Many motions through delay have come to nothing; they were not to stay, but to step in presently as soon as the Angel stirred the water. Jn.5:4. 8. Omit not opportunities, for thou knows not whether God will bless this or that. "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." Eccl.11:4-6.

Concerning Reading.

1. To read with profit requires diligence, wisdom, preparation, meditation, conference, faith, practice and prayer. 2. Wisdom is necessary for the choice of matter, order, time; for the matter, it must be suitable to our necessities and capacities; for order, first that which concerns the foundation, and after the building; also order is a help to memory and understanding, and for want of order, some read much, but profit little; also wisdom must difference the fittest time to read in respect of other business, God hath made everything beautiful in its time. Eccl.3:11. 3. Preparation requires, first humility, and a sensibleness of our

own insufficiency, to teach ourselves, and prayer to God to teach us, and to give us sound judgment and good affections. Secondly, faith in Christ, for him to open the book that is sealed, and the heart also believing he will bless his means unto us. "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, weep not, behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." Rev.5:1-5. Thirdly, a heart prepared to learn, for "wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?" Prov.17:16. Such as received the word "in an honest and good heart, having heard the word," and kept it, bring forth fruit with patience. Lk.8:15.

After we have Read, Meditate.

Meditation makes that which we have read to be our own, blessed is he that meditates and delights in the Law day and night, Psal.1:2, and unless by meditation the judgment be refined and settled, and work it upon our affections, and lay up what we read in our minds, all our reading and hearing will come to nothing. Conference with others, who are able to direct us, is necessary to inform us in what we understand not. The Word must be mixed with faith, else it profits us nothing. Heb.4:2. The end of reading is to practice, and the best way to know is practice, "if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." Jn.7:17. Without prayer we cannot expect a blessing in the reading of God's Word. David prayed and praised God, "blessed art thou, O LORD; teach me thy statutes." Psas.119:12.

He that Profits by Hearing and Reading.

He must have his mind turned to Christ, and fixed upon him in his Word. Psal.119:15. "Harken unto me every one of you, and understand." Mk.7:14. He must believe, and he shall know. He must not be wise in his own eyes, "the meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way." Psal.25:9. Pray continually. I Thes.5:17. Search the Scriptures. Jn.5:39. His end

must be good. I Cor.10:31. He must love the Word. Psalm 119. He must resolve to obey. Jn.14:23.

Of Meditation.

Meditation is a serious reviving of those truths we have heard, or the administrations of God towards us or others, of that which we know, we further debate upon it, that both mind and heart being seasoned with the savor thereof {in applying it to ourselves, that we may have some use of it in our practice} and be furthered thereby to duty. In which the memory is exercised to remember some things past, also the understanding gathering some other things, as namely in finding out the causes, fruits, properties, as when a man meditates on the Word, remembers and muses upon it, so going from point to point, applying generally some things unto himself, and wisely examining how the case stands between the Lord and himself, in those things whereby he hath his heart thereby stirred up to put some things in practice. The work wrought in the affections, is that they are framed, either to love or hatred, joy or sorrow, love or fear, according to the diversity of the thing, with the reasonable part, hath seriously considered of.

Of the Excellency of Meditation.

Meditation, as blessed of the Lord, and incited by the Spirit, is a pondering in the heart, a considering, a weighing with our selves; by meditation we retain truths, and are enriched by them, and it makes them sweet unto us; by it we ascend up to heaven; it's the life of all means, the way to knowledge, the mother of wisdom, it refines the judgment, and cuts off errors within and without, it increases love, it makes the mercy of God fresh unto us, it is the life of hearing, reading, conference, praying, &c., by it all means are made profitable unto us, it reveals truth to us, and acquaints us with ourselves, it makes all to become our own, it removes lets, and settles truths upon our spirit, it breeds good affections, and quickens them, and makes us profitable to others, and makes things easy and sweet unto us, and fires the soul with love, it helps the memory, and stirs up affection, and fills us with experiences, and enables us to apply it to our own use, and benefit of others. Judge then how useful this privilege is, and what a treasure we forgo when we neglect it.

Before Meditation.

1. Read and confer with reverence and diligence. Reading the Word fits us to meditate on it. 2. Be sure thou hast fit texts or occasions of matter before laid, suitable to thy wants, and spirits, provide matter suitable, of all sorts, precepts, promises, &c., be not barren of fit matter to meditate on, fit for thy necessity and capacity. 3. Choose a fit time, the morning is the fittest time for religious duties, Jn.8:2, and noon, and evening, day and night, Psal.1:3; we ought to frequent this duty, for the morning, Psal.119:147, Mk.1:35, for the night, Psal.119:148; in the morning our memories are the quickest and strongest, and ourselves the readiest to conceive things, our natural powers being revived, have the greatest liberty; at night we are more dull and heavy. Idolaters will rise early in the morning to worship an idol; and oh, that we were so wise to prevent the morning light. Psal.119:147. Mary came early to the sepulchre, Mk.16:2, the Holy Spirit came upon them in the morning, Acts 2:15, it was the third hour of the day. 4. Separate thy self to this work; for a man's desire he will separate himself. Prov.18:1. 5. Choose a fit place, as for prayer, so for meditation, where thou may not be disturbed by anything. 6. Love the Word of God, and meditation will follow. Psalm 119. What we love, we think on, love draws our affections, according to the love we have to anything, so accordingly is our pleasure, study, and delight in it. 7. Believe God will bless it unto thee. 8. Pray to God to bless it unto thee.

In Meditation.

1. Look up to God and mourn for thy estrangement of spirit from holy things, which should be familiar, and bend thy self {after separation of thy thoughts from frothy things} to consider seriously of the truths set before thee, and look up to God for strength to resist a hard wandering dead defiled heart, which makes thee weary of the work of God. 2. Let the Word of God be the object of thy meditation, and from generals proceed to particulars. 3. Meditate but of one thing at once, and at one time, and observe order; travel with our memories; judgment, and our affections, before we come to make use of it in our hearts; after our memories, let thy judgment consider what weight the thing is of, and how it concerns God's glory, ourselves, or others, and whether we have it at all, or in such a measure as we need, and may have; how we came by it, what are the lets of getting and enjoying it, and how they may be

removed, what means are to be used to attain it, both for manner, measure, end, time; and having so done, rest not in overflights, but stir up and provoke our affections accordingly, and so work it upon our hearts. Take an instance, when we come to make use of that which we meditate of in our hearts and affections, be it unto some special promise, how happy were I if I could enjoy it, what things here below are like unto it; then proceed to remove all the objections and temptations against it, lay all in the promise, and hold the promise until thou canst suck sweetness out of it, till faith and comfort issue in thy soul; if any should do all this, unless God add his blessing, and with his Almighty Power bless means to us, all is nothing, yet we must use the means. 4. If in meditation, thy mind rove and wander after other matters, as soon as thou perceives it, sigh deeply to God, and fall to prayer to be established, from whence Satan and our corruptions would draw us, and having desired the Lord to deliver thee from a vain, light, and frothy spirit, &c., fall to meditation again.

After Meditation.

1. We must ever be mindful to be humble and thankful. 2. The more thou meets with the Lord in this way, let it more encourage thee to frequent it, and make it a great part of thy communion with God, and be as joyful when God hath blessed it unto thee, as any can be when they find a mine of gold, or great spoil.

Directions for the Understanding of the Sense of the Letter of the Scriptures.

1. When the word {one God} is expressed, the Father, and the Holy Spirit is included. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Jn.17:3.

2. All the attributes or works of God are proper to any of the three without exception of any of them, so Christ is said to create the worlds. "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Heb.1:2.

3. Repentance in God, notes no change in God, {who is immutable,} but in the thing or action.

4. The word of God notes all comprehensive Authority.

5. The Scriptures must never be understood against Christ, but always for Christ.

6. Whatsoever is truly and soundly collected from Scripture, is to be believed and rested upon, as well as that which is expressly written; yet no Ordinance of Christ, nor the administration of it, but it is plainly expressed in Scripture, and depends not upon consequences, much less means.

7. It is usual in Scripture to attribute that efficacy and force to the instrument, which belongs exclusively to the Author. I Tim.4:16, Deut.5:22. That good means may be respected, and bad slighted.

8. In a parable, the mind, scope, and intention of the Spirit of God is to be marked above all, for it must be expounded and no further strained than things agree with the principal drift. Strain no parable.

9. We may not interpret Scripture by allegories, unless we be able to prove the allegorical sense by some other place of Scripture.

10. In interpreting Scripture, we must take the sense from the word, and not bring one to it.

11. Comparison of places together, darker with plainer, is the way to understand it. "So they read in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." Neh.8:8.

12. There can be but one only proper true sense of one place of Scripture, which we are chiefly to search after, and rest in; we may not make every Scripture speak everything.

13. The literal sense of Scripture which arises from the words duly understood, is the only true and proper sense.

14. Scriptures must be understood according to the largest extent of the words, except there be some restraint of them by the matter, phrase, and scope of them, {as the word grace, I Pet.1:13,} or by some other place of Scripture it appears they must be restrained.

15. They must be expounded simply, according to the letter, except necessity compel to depart from a literal sense to a figurative.

16. We must not take a figurative speech properly, nor a proper speech figuratively, Matt.26:26-27, "this is my body," is a figurative speech; it is a great servitude to take signs for things, of which words be but signs.

17. Where there is a sentence in Scripture, which hath a tropical or borrowed word, we may not think the whole place figurative, as Matt.26:28.

18. That which is said to one, must be understood to be said to all in the like case and condition, as appears by comparing Josh.1:5 with Heb.13:5, for of the like things there is the like reason and judgment to be given, let the

circumstances be considered wisely.

19. A particular example will afford a general instruction, when the equity of the thing done is universal, and the cause common, otherwise not.

20. The Scripture puts upon dead things the person of such as speak, by a fiction of a person; thus, the firmament speaks, &c., Psal.19:1-2, Rom.1:19-20, Psal.98:7-8, by this manner of speech we are moved to affect the things spoken, and more easily brought to understand them.

21. By bodily things the Scripture leads and lifts us up to Divine things, thus a hand applied to God, signifies his working power; so an eye, his knowledge; a heart, his will; his foot, his presence or government; wings, his care or protection; a mouth, his word or commandment; a finger, his might, and a soul put for the essence of God.

22. The Scripture ascribes the names of things unto the similitudes and representations, as I Sam.28:14-15.

23. That exposition that causes an absurdity to follow, is a false exposition.

24. The word heart, is commonly put for the soul of man.

25. There is such a necessary and mutual relation between faith, and Christ the object, that where one of these is expressed alone, the other is included; for Christ only is the matter of our justification and righteousness.

26. The Scripture divers times expresses the antecedent by the consequent, Rom.9:33 with Isa.28:16, for not making haste in Isaiah, Paul saith, "shall not be ashamed," shame and confusion being an effect which followeth haste.

27. The Scripture sometimes uses one word twice in one sentence, with a different signification, Jn.4:35, "harvest" is taken first for earthly, and in the latter place for spiritual harvest. So the word "water" in Jn.4:13-14, first, elementary; secondly, spiritually, viz., the graces of the Spirit.

28. The word of commanding is often put for wishing, as, "let thy kingdom come," "thy Name be hallowed;" that is, Oh that thy Name were hallowed; "let him kiss me," Song.1:2, for "oh that he would kiss me."

29. Crying in Scripture doth often betoken a strong noise outwardly, but inwardly compunction and fervency of spirit and affection. Rom.8:15, Heb.5:7.

30. Things proper to the body are often ascribed unto the soul, as hunger and thirst, to declare the earnest desire of the soul; because the soul is unknown unto us, the Scripture very oft speaks of invisible things by visible, and shadow spiritual by corporal.

31. A hyperbole is sometimes in Scripture, as this kind of speech expresses more than can be signified, by the proper acceptance of that speech it increases the truth, as Gen.13:16 and 15:5. The meaning is no more than that his posterity shall be very great, as Gen.17:4; so Jn.21:25.

32. It is usual in Scripture to put {all} for many, I Tim.2:1, Matt.3:5, "all Jerusalem," and Matt.4:23, "all diseases," &c.; so on the other side, many is put for all, as Rom.5:18; and whether all or many is meant, may be known by observing the harmony of Scripture truth, context and matter handled.

33. Nothing is at times taken for little, Jn.18:20; also small and none for few, Acts 27:33, and always for often.

34. The negative particle "not" is often put comparatively and respectively, not absolutely and simply, as Hos.6:6, "not sacrifice," viz., rather than, or not sacrifice in respect of mercy, see Jer.32:33; so "not" is sometimes put for seldom. Lk.2:37.

35. The word "ever" or "everlasting" do not properly signify eternity, in every place where it is used, but often great continuance.

36. In Scripture the word "until" doth not always exclude the time following, but signifies an infinite time, or until, viz., eternity, Matt.28:20; that is to say, never, and also a certain limitation of time.

37. The copulative particle "and" is sometimes "when," when it is not joined to other matter, as Ezek.2:1 & 5:1, and so often else-where; also this particle "therefore" or "then," is not always illative or argumentative, Rom.8:1, or it couplets words outwardly to that which the Prophet heard inwardly.

38. The particle "if" is not always a note of doubting, but of reasoning, as Rom.8:31, Acts 8:22; sometimes it notes the difficulty of the duty, and sometimes the necessity of the thing, and sometimes it is put for doubtingly.

39. When a substantive is repeated or twice mentioned in one case, it signifies emphasis or force, as Lord, Lord; secondly, a multitude, as droves, droves, Gen. 32:16, is equivalent to many droves; a camp, and a camp, Lev.17:3, a city, and a city; that is, every city; diversity or variety, or as Prov.16:11, a weight and a weight, that is, divers weights; an heart and a heart, divers or a double heart.

40. A substantive, repeated in divers cases, if it be in the singular number, it argues certainty, as Sabbath of Sabbath, lamentation of lamentation; if it be in the plural number, it signifies excellency, as Eccl.1:2, vanity of vanities, God of God's, Psal.136:2, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, for Most High and

Excellent.

41. Repeating of an adjective, and of a substantive, sometimes signifies increasing, as holy, holy, holy; Jehovah, Jehovah; temple, temple, &c.

42. A verb repeated or twice gone over in a sentence, makes a speech more significant, or else it shows vehemence, certainty, speediness, as to die, by dying, "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," {Hebrew, "dying thou shalt die,"} Gen.2:17, "is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem," {Hebrew, "shortened in shortening,"} Isa.50:2.

43. A conjunction doubled, doth double the denial, and increase it the more, "and in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, by hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." Matt.13:14.

44. A figurative speech affords matter to nourish our faith, as Matt.15:35, I Cor.12:12, Acts 9:4.

45. An irony, which is when the contrary to that which is spoken is meant, carries with it a just reprehension of some sins, as Judg.10:14, I Kings 22:15, I Kings 18:27.

46. Questions do sometimes affirm an earnest affirmation, as Gen.4:7, Josh.10:13, Jn.4:35. Sometimes they signify a forbidding, as, "wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God," Psal.79:10; also II Sam.2:22; and sometimes they argue affection of admiring, compassion, fault-finding, and complaining, as Isa.1:21, Psal.22:1.

47. Confession and yielding, hath sometime in it a denial and reprehension, as II Cor.12:16-17.

48. The word "behold" is not used always, or only to stir up attention, as the report of some weighty or admirable thing, but most commonly it signifies a thing manifest and plain, where men may take knowledge, as Psal.51:6, Matt.1:23, and often else-where.

49. Doing doth sometimes import believing, "then said they unto him, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." {Jn.6:28-29}

50. Negative speeches in Scripture be more vehement and forcible than affirmative.

51. Grammar must give place to Divinity, because things are not subject to words, but contrariwise.

52. The placing of things before which should come after, and some things after which should be before, is frequent in Scripture.

53. We are commanded to be perfect, viz., in uprightness, shining to all duties, for perfection in measure and degree, we are not capable of in this world.

54. All places of Scripture have this proper to them, that they be interpreted by the matter handled, and phrase, scope, end, which is aimed at, or by circumstances of time, persons, places, also by precedence and subsequence, by conferring Scripture and analogy of faith.

55. Scripture hath allegories, as Gal.4:22-24; an allegory is ever to be expounded according to the meaning and drift of the place where it is found, allegorical senses are not of private motion, but to be followed where we have the Spirit for our precedent and subsequent, by conferring Scripture and analogy of faith.

56. Numeral words, as, 5, 7, 10, &c., notes not always a certain time, as seventy weeks of captivity, &c., yet a certain finite time is put for an uncertain oftentimes, as, to fall seven times, to forgive seventy times seven, Matt.18:22, and the like; also divers numbers be prophetical, as the number of Daniel's weeks, Dan.9:24, or mystical, as the number of the beast, Rev.13:18.

57. The Scripture often in one word saying, uttered one thing plurally, and many things singularly, as, blessed is the man, &c., hear, O Israel, and thou shall not have any strange god, because God would have every one to take to himself that which is meant of that society and kind whereof he is ONE. "Hear, O Israel; the LORD our God is one LORD." Deut.6:4.

58. In setting down numbers, the Scripture is not exact to reckon precisely, as Lk.3:23, Acts 1:15.

59. It is usual in Scripture, by a part to signify the whole, as Rom.13:1, "let every soul be subject," for every person, man and woman; and the whole sometimes notes only a part, Matt.3:5, "all Judea," that is, a great part.

60. Some wishing speeches be not so many prayers as prophesies, foretelling what shall be, rather than desiring they should be as imprecations against Judas, &c.

61. The Scripture repeats the same things in the beginning and end of the sentence, as, Psal.33:10; it is done by way of explication, sometimes for confirmation, sometimes for expressing or exciting zeal, as, Jn.1:3, Psal.6:9-10, II Kings 9:10, Rom.11:8.

62. In sundry places of the Old Testament, cited by Christ and the Apostles, the sense is kept, but not always the same words, as, Rom.10:15-21, and else-where, to teach us, that the Scripture is considered by the meaning, and not by the letters and syllables.

63. Some places in the old Testament, which seem mere historical, containing bare narrations of some things done, yet are mystical withal, and have a hid and spiritual sense, as Jonah's being in the belly of the whale, holds forth Christ's death, burial, resurrection, for it pleases God to make some histories already done, to be types and prophesies of things afterwards to be done; as that of Hagar and Sarah. Gal.4:22-31.

64. The Scripture hath sundry words which according to the place where they be used, do signify divers, yea even contrary things, as leaven, to signify the nature of the Gospel, Matt.13:3, and also heresy and superstition, Matt.16:6-12; and sometime for sinful corruption, as I Cor.5:6-8; so a lion signifies Christ, Rev.5:5, and the Devil, I Pet.5:8; likewise serpent is put in good part, Matt.10:16, and in ill part, Gen.3:1, because these things have several properties and contrary.

65. Where the text of Scripture is ambiguous, as it cannot be found out by us after diligent search, to which sense of two or three to lean unto, that text may be interpreted in both senses, if analogy of faith will suffer, and they be not against the circumstances of the text, for we must not swerve from the general scope of the whole word, faith in Christ, and love to God, and our neighbor.

66. Many things be first generally spoken, and presently declared by particulars, as II Tim.3:1, 2, and there are many such examples.

67. Some things in Scripture are incomprehensible by our reason, yet true.

68. Such Scriptures as have show of repugnancy, are easily reconciled by an discerning reader, as, I Tim.2:4 with Rom.9:18, not all, for by all is not meant every one, but of all sorts and kinds of men, rich and poor, &c., so Mathew speaks of a staff which might cumber and burden, Matt.10:10, but Mark of one that might ease and relieve a traveler. Mk.6:8-9.

69. Some things are said in Scripture not according to the truth of the things, but after their profession, appearance, or visibility and opinion of the times, as others thought. Thus, the Scribes and Pharisees are termed righteous, Matt.9:11, and thus hypocrites are said to have faith. Jer.2:18-19.

70. The Scriptures do not allow always the things and actions from whence similitudes are fetched, as the manners of thieves, and unjust stewards, and judges.

71. Some of Christ's works were miraculous, and proper to him as Mediator; but Christ's moral duties were given us for example and patterns, Matt.11:29-30, I Pet.2:21, I Jn.2:6, that we should walk as he hath walked.

72. By the words "poor and needy" in the Scriptures is often to be understood all God's people, poor or rich.

73. When sinful actions are attributed to God, as to provoke others to anger, to envy, or to harden Pharaoh's heart, and the like, we must know God tempts none to sin, but he doth it by delivering them over to Satan, and their lusts, to be hardened, as God oft punishes sin with sin. Rom.1:18-32.

74. Sundry interrogations in Scripture, as Rom.10:14-15, have the force of a negative, that is to say, they cannot; some again do so ask a question, as they require and have an express answer, Psal.15:1, Rom.11:1 & 3:10-12; and this is to quicken attention, or to urge more vehemently the affection, or to prepare way for some weighty discourse.

75. The title "God" is sometimes put absolutely, and in the singular number, then it notes the Creator, or the Divine Essence. Sometimes it is used with an addition, as in Exodus, "I have made thee a god to Pharaoh," Exod.7:1, or in the plural number, "I have said, ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High." Psal.82:6. In the Assembly of God's people, gathered together in Christ, there it belongs to the Creator, Rom.1:7; sometimes essentially, as Jn.4:24, "God is a Spirit;" and so the word "Father" is sometimes put essentially for the Deity, Matt.6:9-15, "our Father;" sometimes distinctly, "the Father is greater than I," Jn.14:28; ignorance in these Rules causes errors concerning God.

76. Words of knowledge and sense do signify {besides} action and affections, as "the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous," Psal.1:6, and "the Lord knoweth them that are his," II Tim.2:19, which means that he knows them with love, favor, and approbation, to reward and crown them. Also it is said, "whom he foreknew," Rom.11:2, with I Pet.1:2, by which is meant his eternal love that embraces these as his own; for he foreknows all reprobates and devils as well, and their works too, but not with favor and allowance. Also the word "remember" is a word of sense, yet it often imports care, love, delight, I Cor.11:24, "do this in remembrance of me."

77. Legal and Evangelical promises must not be distinguished by books, but by the nature and condition of the promises; for legal promises may be found in books of the New Testament, as Rom.2:7-13; 10:5, Gal.3:10-12, &c., and Evangelical promises of Grace are in the Old Testament, as, Ezek.11:19-20, Jer.24:6-7, 31:33-34, 32:39, &c., observe them according to these two rules following.

78. If promises of temporal or eternal things are propounded upon condition of works, they are Legal, Christ only hath kept the Law, and they which believe are to claim them by

this title conveyed to them by the grace of Christ.

79. All promises for this life or a better life, which are made as one condition, of believing, repenting, working, {for these are works though imperfect,} are only effects and fruits of faith, and not conditions nor causes, but are only to declare what persons God will save; godliness hath the promises, &c., but great is it's mystery, I Tim.3:16, essentially Christ, and Christ alone, and those that are his will evidence it by faith, repentance, good works, &c., and to understand them in any other sense is Legal.

80. Touching such places where moral duties are commended and commanded, they must be understood according to these rules following; as, though no word be spoken of Christ, yet it must be understood that he alone is the whole cause of every part of our salvation. Acts 4:12.

81. All moral duties are then commended in any party, when the party which doth them, is first in Christ, and his sins pardoned through his death, as I Pet.2:5, Heb.11:6, our best duties are imperfect, and in Christ only accepted; if out of Christ, men's best duties cannot cause them to be accepted.

82. All good works must have a pure heart, God's glory for the beginning and the end, having a conscience to God in obedience to his Word; so unless a person is accepted in Christ, the bare deed or action will profit them nothing.

83. Where blessedness is promised to moral duties doing, those places are not to be considered as causes thereof, {for Christ is the cause of all,} but only to declare what persons they are which God doth save; and what the Saints duty is to do.

84. These duties must not be understood in the strictness and rigor of the Moral Law, but of a continual and unfeigned desire, purpose, and endeavor to do them. This rule prevents scruples and fears, which weak ones have through the sense of their wants and failings.

85. The Scriptures use to call them sons, which by nature are no sons to them whose sons they are called, but they are sons legally, and by succession; thus Salathiel, being son of Neri naturally, Lk.3:27, is legally and by succession made the son of Jechonias, Matt.1:12, whom he succeeded in the Kingdom.

86. After this manner Zedekiah or Jehoiakim, and his son, I Chron.3:16-16, his brother by generation, his son by right of succession; and by this Rule the two Evangelists, Matthew and Luke are reconciled in their Genealogy; for Luke followed the natural order, and Matthew the legal order.

87. Many things are said in Scripture by anticipation and

recapitulation.

88. In Scripture some things are spoken well, when righteous things are taught rightly, as, repent and believe, &c., or secondly when evil things are taught evilly, when wicked things are persuaded, as, to curse God and die; or thirdly, when good things are uttered evilly, when some right thing is said with a perverse mind, as Joh. 9:28, "thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples;" or fourthly, evil things well spoken, and dishonest things uttered in honest terms; as, David went into Bathsheba, and Rom.1:26.

89. The Scripture speaks many things in the person of the ungodly men, whose crooked words it doth report unto us as well as their deeds.

90. That word which seemed to forbid goodness, or to command wickedness, is a figurative speech, as, unless a man eats my flesh, &c., this is wickedness, because the word is pure, it cannot allow anything against honesty of manners, or verity of faith.

91. Tropes and figures in Scriptures are not to be accounted lies; as for Christ calling Herod a fox, and himself a vine, a door, &c., because there is no purpose to deceive in them, but by meet resemblance to express the truth.

92. Similitudes are rather to make dark things plain, than to prove any doubtful thing; similitudes are not argumentative.

93. To make allegories and figures, where none are in exposition, is licentious, dangerous, and hurtful.

94. In things that be subordinate, the affirming the one doth not allow the denying of the other.

95. All interpretations must be fit as well as true.

96. It is a ready way to all error, to interpret Scripture by prejudice, in favor of some opinion of our own.

97. In Scripture a betrothed woman is called a wife, Matt.1:20, and so of the man, Deut.22:23, because betrothing is an essential part of marriage, yet the solemnization is necessary unto comeliness and avoiding of offence.

98. That interpretation is corrupt that builds not up in faith and love.

99. A figurative speech in Scripture does more affect us with delight, than if the same thing were spoken plainly without figures, as Psal.23:1, &c., God's care is often set out by a metaphor of a Shepherd, Isa.40:11, Jn.10:11-14, for new things engender delight.

100. When the Scripture speaks somewhat darkly, it uses for the most part to join thereto some plain thing in the same place to give light to it, as Isa.51:1, the latter part of the

1st verse is somewhat hard, is opened in the beginning of the second verse; so Rom.10:5-8 expounds Rom.10:9-13, saith "the word is nigh thee," that is, the Gospel. See the like, Rom.11:7-8, I Cor.5:9-10; yet this rule holds not always.

Demonstrations, that the Holy Scriptures, called the Bible, are of God, and from God.

The Scriptures are from God or from men; they are not from men, because neither the folly, nor the wisdom of men cannot affect such a work.

1. Because men as men cannot understand the meaning of them, nor agree upon any meaning of them; so that it appears they are a mystery above the reach of nature.

2. They are not from men, because they condemn that which is most excellent in man, as the wisdom of man, &c., it being contrary to nature to condemn that which is most excellent in nature; the Scriptures declare nature's wisdom in the things of God to be foolishness, and the wisdom in man esteems the wisdom of God to be foolishness.

3. It is not from men, because the whole scope of the Scriptures tends to destroy that which the nature of men love most.

4. Because that which the Scriptures require, is not only contrary to the nature of man, {so that men delight and choose to read any book rather than the Scripture,} therefore before men can submit unto it, they must deny themselves. So also that which it requires, is beyond the power of men, and requires a Divine Power, as the Scriptures and Experience teach.

5. It is not from men, because the more any is ruled by it, obeying it, the more such are hated and persecuted by men, which shows it came not from nature.

6. The Scriptures came from God, because they tend to God, it being a rule in nature that everything tends to its center, a stone to the earth, and the waters to the sea from whence they came. So the Scripture runs to God; shows God in his goodness, wisdom, power and love; there is in them a Divine wisdom, they speak for God, they call men to God, to be for God.

7. They are not from men, because the way of bringing them forth into the world, was contrary to the wisdom and expectation of men, who in great matters employed great, honorable, and wise men, but God takes a quite contrary course; he chooses such who were mean and contemptible, silly

tradesmen, as fishermen, and tent-makers, &c., to be the publishers and penmen of the Scriptures.

8. They are from God, because God hath wonderfully continued them, preserved them strangely; first, in making the Jews, who were enemies unto Christ, and the Scriptures, great preservers of them; also preserving them when the greatest power hath sought their destruction, by searching for them, and burning them, &c., the like preservation cannot be declared of any writings of men, which have had so great opposition.

9. The miracles that were wrought at the first publishing of them, {shows them to be immediately from God,} and for the proof of this we have the testimony of them who lived in Christ's time, the Jews, who would not own Christ, or his doctrine, yet in their writings they confess, there was one Jesus who did such miracles as the Scriptures declare, as Josephus; and others testify.

10. We know the Scriptures to be from God because we see some of the Prophecies accomplished in our days, according to the saying of Christ, that there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, that shall say, I am Christ; there being now two or three, or more, that have said so of themselves. Also the division foretold, "for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter," &c, which is now accomplished in these days, for when there hath been but five persons in one family, every one of them of a several opinion concerning Religion. The Spirit speaks expressly, "that in the latter times some should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils," and how many lies are now held, or more, that have said so of themselves. Also the division foretold, "for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter," &c, which is now accomplished in these days, for when there hath been but five persons in one family, every one of them of a several opinion concerning Religion. The Spirit speaks expressly, "that in the latter times some should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils," and how many lies are now held, or more, that have said so of themselves. Others teach that men and devils shall be saved; and that the soul is mortal; and that there is neither heaven nor hell; with divers other opinions, that I am ashamed to name some of them which are held for truths; "this know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof," which things our eyes have seen come to pass, more than ever hath been heard of by any that have been before us, and are like to increase more and more. And thus it must be that the Scriptures may be fulfilled;

and if men must have a reason for everything in Religion; for, saith one, how can the dead body eaten by another creature be raised again? To whom I reply, God is said to be without beginning, {and so he is, else he could not be God,} but what reason can be given, that God never had a beginning, or that God is ever present in all places, and knows, and ordered all things; yet he is so, yet I see not how reason can reach these things, &c.

To believe the Scriptures is a work of faith, and unless the Holy Spirit of God persuades the truth of them, there will be doubting; the Lord persuade his of the truth of the Scriptures, and of their interest in the same.

That Christ died not for the Sins of every Man in the World.

Some men affirm that Christ died for all the sins of every person in the world, and yet they shall not all be saved, to whom we reply, how can it agree with the wisdom of God, to grant that which he knew would never profit?

As for God to give Christ to die for the salvation of man, and yet decree to condemn him? And doth not Christ lose the end of his death, to die for their salvation who yet perish? Or is it justice to require the payment of one debt twice? Is there remission of sins in Christ for every man, but no righteousness, no everlasting life for them? Did Christ purchase salvation, but not the application of salvation, which is necessary to salvation? How doth it appear, Christ purchased salvation, or enough for salvation, or is the death of Christ of an uncertain event? Is Christ appointed to death, to purchase a possibility of salvation, but not salvation itself, with the application of it, then Christ shed his blood to save man, and yet no man saved by it; for if it depends upon man's believing of it, why may not all of them perish as well as any of them? And if it be so, if man please, Christ shall lose the end of his death; but it clearly appears, that all those for whose sins Christ died, are justified by his blood, and shall be saved from wrath through him; for if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life, Rom.5:8-10, {but this subject is handled at large by John Spilsbury in his book entitled, God's Ordinance,} "if the Son shall make you free, then are you free indeed," Jn.8:36, else not. But upon second thoughts, they affirm that Christ never died for the sin of unbelief, and that final unbelief is the unpardonable sin. It cannot truly be denied that unbelief, {a not

believing Christ,} which sin is most immediately and directly against Christ, is, along with all manner of sin and blasphemy, a sin that is pardonable, as Christ saith, which shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, as appears, Matt.12:31-32, therefore not believing in Christ, is not the unpardonable sin. Such as believe, have been guilty of unbelief, which is pardoned in them, and if the sin of unbelief, which is none of the least sins, is pardoned without the blood of Christ to the Elect who believe, why might not all other sins in like manner be so pardoned to them, and then shall not the blood of Jesus Christ be shed in vain, because by their reason their sins might have been pardoned without it, as well as their unbelief. And seeing without the shedding of blood there is no remission, Heb.9:22, let them declare how unbelief can be remitted; also if the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanses us from all sin, then from unbelief also, I Jn.1:7; also if final unbelief were the sin against the Holy Spirit that is unpardonable, then it could not be committed before death, "there is a sin unto death, if thou see thy brother sin, &c., I Jn.5:16, but if a man could not commit this sin before he die, he could not be seen so to sin, which sin is described, Heb.10:29, therefore final unbelief is not this sin here spoken of. To conclude, Christ died not for the sins of the entire world; for Christ saith that he laid down his life for his sheep, Jn.10:15, and that the reason why some {the majority} did not believe, is because they were not of his sheep. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." Jn.10:26. Yet as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. Acts 13:48. The end of Redemption is application, Phil.1:29, Jn.6:37,39; and the Scripture saith that Christ took upon him the seed of Abraham, Heb.2:16, and how Abraham's seed is considered, appears Gal.3:16, 22, 29; for such as are Christ's, are such as believe, and are Abraham's seed; and seeing all Adam's posterity cannot be considered to be Abraham's seed in no sense, therefore there is no ground to conceive that Christ died for the sins of all the seed of Adam, as they affirm.

That all Men under the Gospel, have not Sufficient Grace given them for Conversion.

For the word sufficient grace, how can we conceive that grace to be sufficient in power, which is not sufficient in performance of the work? For seeing conversion follows not, how is it sufficient to conversion? Is that sufficient to conversion that never attains it? Is that medicine sufficient to cure such a disease, which being taken doth not cure it? Sufficient and

effectual is all one; and seeing many were never converted, it must of necessities follow, that sufficient grace was never given unto them; for if sufficient strength be put to move the earth, motion must needs follow. The reason why they came not to Christ, was because the Father did not draw them, Jn.6:44, and inwardly teach them. God must give a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, for miracles cannot do it, Deut.29:3-4, Jn.12:37-40, the arm of the Lord must be revealed. They say it was because they would not believe. We answer that they neither would nor could, the Lord saith, they could not believe, Jn.12:39; therefore man cannot finally hinder his conversion; for whom God will save, no power of man can destroy. Man in his first conversion is wholly passive, we cannot work it in ourselves, nor hinder God's working of it, because we are dead in trespasses and sins, Eph.2:1, Col.2:13, Eph.5:14, and spiritually blind, Rev.3:18, Eph.4:17-18, Matt.6:23, Lk.4:18, Jn.1:5, Acts 26:18, I Cor.2:14, and our hearts stony and destitute of goodness. Ezek.36:26, 11:19. God's work in converting us is a raising from the dead, Eph.2:5, Col.2:12, Rev.20:6, Jn.5:21,25; a restoring the sight to the blind, Lk.4:18; a new birth, Jn.1:13, 3:3; another creation of him, Eph.2:10, II Cor.5:17; the giving of a new heart, Ezek.36:26; so that man cannot prepare himself to conversion. God regenerates man that he may believe. The tree must first be good, before it can bring forth good fruit. Matt.7:17-18. How can they that are evil speak good things? Matt.12:34. It's an error therefore to think that man's conversion to God begins in some act man performs, and not in a work first wrought in us by God. They allege, Isa.55:11, to prove the Word and the Spirit go together; but this is not to make it powerful in the conversion in all. They reply, Acts 7:51, ye have always resisted, &c. True; in resisting the outward means, but it cannot be proved that they resisted in the inward work of God upon their hearts. From Matt.25:29, they affirm that he that uses nature well, shall find grace. This text is to be understood of the gifts of the Ministry in the improvement of them, the increase is in the same kind, nature and grace are not so. Also it's plain, grace hath not been bestowed upon such as used nature best, as appears by the rejection of the Sidonians and Capernaits, Matt.11:21-24, who were better fitted for nature. Therefore the well using of nature, is no preparation for the receiving of the Gospel. And to what end shall God give means sufficient to work faith and repentance in such as he hath not appointed to life? But all that are given unto Christ, do in time come to him, and he brings them to everlasting life. Jn.6:37,39. "For unto you it is given {saints, elected in Christ} in the behalf of Christ...to believe on him."

Reasons why we Dissent from such as Hold Free Will.

1. Because it exempts the creature from being under the power of God, for that which gives a creature power to do as he will, when God hath done all he may unto him, that doth make him no instrument subject to God's power; for they affirm, that God doth not work in his omnipotence, but leaves it to the free will of the creature. It is one thing to be able to do a thing by persuasion, and another to do it by power which I cannot refuse, this latter they deny.

2. It denies God's decree to be infallible, for either God determines in such and such cases, with the circumstances thereof, or not; if not, then he cometh short of the creature herein, for he determines such things in his matters.

3. If God doth not determine and apply the creature to will and work that which he works in the creature, then the creature is the cause why God wills this or that, and by consequence is the cause why he wills this or that, but the creature is not the cause, &c., God's working this or that, must either go before the will, and so cause it to will, or else it must follow, accomplishing that which man's will wills, the latter makes God to follow and tend on man's will; also it makes the will of man to have a casual force in God himself, as if God should say, I will work conversion, faith, &c., in such a person if he will.

4. If liberty of will stands in such a power, free for exercising good or evil, then Christ had not liberty of will, for he had liberty only to work that which was good; nor hath man of himself any liberty or power to come to Christ; for, saith Christ, none can come to me, except the Father draw him, Jn.6:44,37, so that they are deceived who make God by his grace to convert us. So that he leaves it in our power, whether we will be converted or no; but who can resist that which God worked by his almighty power, Eph.1:19, when he puts forth his power which raised Christ from the dead; and if this could be resisted, it were not almighty. The Apostle saith, that the power did work in him mightily. Col.1:29, Eph.1:19, 3:20.

5. Because God in his good pleasure of his will, doth freely and effectually determine of all things whatsoever he will, he doth all things according to the counsel of his own will, Eph.1:11, all things are in the mind of God before they are in themselves, and what he will, he effected in his time, and nothing is done, if he wills it not to be done, Psal.115:3, 35:6; Jehovah doth whatsoever he pleases. The will of God is the first

cause of all things; "for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev.4:11.

He by willing makes the object willing, Jer.1:18, he hath mercy on whom he will, Rom.9:18, and there is no cause to be given of his will. It's God that works in you to will and to do, Phil.2:13; and such as make the will of God to depend upon the creature, as if he believes, God wills his salvation, if he believes not, he wills his damnation, makes God's will mutable, and to depend upon the act of the creature; and then it will follow, so often as the will of the creature changes, so often God changes, and then God will do this or that if man will; but whatsoever God wills in all things he wills effectually, so that he cannot in no wise be hindered or disappointed; for if God should will anything he could not obtain, there should be imperfection in God, and if he can obtain it and will not, how then doth he will it? "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa.46:10. Every decree of God is eternal, I Cor.2:7, Acts 15:18, and remains always immutable, Num.23:23, Prov.19:21, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed, Acts 13:48; whom he predestinated, them he called, Rom.8:30; for God did from eternity know every several thing, with all the circumstances thereof, and knows how to apply the fittest occasion to everything, and how to effect all things according to his own immeasurable glory. He that frames the heart, observes and orders all their works, Psal.33:15, Isa.44:2, even those things that seem to happen most freely and spontaneously, God determines of according to his sovereign will, of the very heart of man. I Sam.10:9,26, Prov.21:1. Of the lot cast into the lap, and the entire disposing thereof being of the LORD, Prov.16:33; of sparrows falling, Matt.10:29-30; of lilies, flowers, and grass of the earth, Matt.6:28-30; yea of all creatures and things. Amos 4:13, Jer.14:22. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the LORD do all these things." Isa.45:7. By all which it appears that the will of God determined the certainty of all things; and if God should not determine all things, the will of God should not be simply and universally the first cause; and to deny him to be the first cause, implies that there are two first beginnings, or more than two, which cannot be truth. And for any to say, that man hath power to resist all God can work for his conversion, is to put grace in man's power, {and not man's will under the power of grace;} and this is to say, that man is able to frustrate God's counsel concerning his conversion, and that man possesses a power to resist all that God can work herein; and this is to affirm, that man hath power to frustrate

God's counsel; and if it be so, will it not follow that man hath power to make God a liar? If God by his omnipotent power inclines the wills of men whither he wills, then he hath them more in his power than man hath; then his will decreeing is the cause necessity followed, and the will of the creature is not the cause of the necessities of things. The Scriptures declare that God works all things after the counsel of his will {not man's will} and that the LORD hath made all things for himself. "The LORD hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov.16:4.

Objection: Then you take away the liberty of the will, if man have no power to do otherwise.

Answer: That which doth {not having power to do otherwise} from second causes, compelling it so to do in that it is not free; God's will in himself is the first cause of all things, and this omnipotent will of God doth determine the creature.

2. Men ground the freedom of will falsely, for the freedom of will as it is a faculty voluntary or elective, doth not require this indifference of the inclination in exercise, for it is bound by God's decree, so as not anything can be done but what he hath determined, yet nothing can satisfy some, unless it be granted, that they have power of will to cross God's decree.

3. If the cause why God chooses me {and not another} is because I will, &c., then it is not merely from his will, and then you deny the freedom of God's will. Also if a man hath liberty of will to resist God's will and work, so as God shall not convert him, it will follow that when we are converted, we convert ourselves, which is contrary to the Scriptures; and do not they give the Scriptures the lie, that say the will of an unregenerate man may be free to righteousness, will it, and embrace it when it is proposed; but if a seeing eye were in darkness, it could not discern anything, how much less shall the blind see? By nature we are blind, Rev.3:17-18; we are darkness, till we be made light in the Lord, Eph.5:8; darkness cannot comprehend the light, Jn.1:5; the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness to him, I Cor.2:14; therefore the Saints pray to God to reveal to them the knowledge of Christ, and to enlighten their eyes by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, Eph.1:17-18; man's will being wholly enthralled into sin, as appears, Rom.6:20 & 8:6; the carnal mind is enmity to God, it is not subject to the Law of God, nor can be; how then can it will, desire, and receive grace by nature? As God commanded Pharaoh to let Israel go, yet he could not, for God hardened his heart that he could not be willing, Jn.12:39, Rom.11:32; but they confess, that unless God give faith, it's impossible for men to believe; so then the reason men do not

believe, is because God doth not give them faith, Phil.1:29; but to what purpose is it for God to give Christ to die for men's sins, seeing as they confess, they shall have no benefit by him unless they believe, and that they cannot do without God, and God doth not give them faith, {for if he did, they could not but believe;} what great love is this which is showed to them? The substance of those famous, or rather infamous opinions, of such as hold free will, and that Christ died for the sins of all Adam's posterity, is that God wills the salvation of all men, but he is disappointed of his will. Those whom God will save by his antecedent will, he will destroy by his consequent will; that God doth seriously intend the salvation of all persons, yet nevertheless, he calls men by a means, and time, that is, not apt, nor fit, by reason whereof those who are so called, do not follow God's calling. That faith is partly from grace, and partly from free will; that God is bound to give all men power to believe. They distinguish between the obtaining of salvation, and the application of salvation; the first, they say, is for all; the second is only for them that believe, but the application of salvation is neither willed, nor nilled to men. That man may determine and open his own heart, and receive the word of God; that the reprobate may be saved; that the number of the Elect is not certain; that the decree of Reprobation is not peremptory; and that a Reprobate may convert himself; and that faith is not of mere grace. They bring in God speaking thus; I decree to send my Son to save all who shall believe; but who and how many they shall be, I have not determined, only I will give to all men sufficient power to believe, but he shall believe who will himself; I will send Christ to die for the sins of many, whom I know it shall not be effectual at all unto, to whom I will never give faith, and notwithstanding Christ hath satisfied for all their sins, yet they shall suffer my wrath for them forever, and much more such Babylonian gibberish.

That God did not elect for foreseen Faith.

We grant God knew all that ever was, is, or shall be, but we deny that God did elect to life any for anything he did foresee in them; for if God should look out of himself to anything in the creature, upon which his will may be determined to elect, were against his all sufficiency, as if he should get knowledge from things we do, implies an imperfection of knowledge, and of will, if he should see something in us before he can determine, as if God were in suspense, saying, I will choose this man if he will, I will upon foresight of fulfilling my condition absolutely choose

him. To say, I will elect, if they believe, is a conditional election, and if they can do this without God, then God is not omnipotent; if they say, he will give them faith to believe, then it is all one with an absolute will, as I elect to life, and I will give these faith; for whom he predestinated, them he efficaciously calls, &c. It seems God wills our salvation, if we believe; that is, he wills the having a thing on a condition, that he will not work, and then it is impossible, unless the creature can do something that is good, which he will not do in him, or on a condition, which he will work, and then he works all he wills, or on such a condition as he sees the creature cannot perform, nor himself will not make him perform; and this is altogether frivolous. Also to say God decreed to send Christ to save all, if they will believe, I see they neither will nor can, therefore I will condemn them. "They have not known nor understood; for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand." Isa.44:18. God hath shut up all in unbelief, as, Rom.11:32, "therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." Jn.12:39-40.

Concerning Infant Baptism.

Some Reasons why we Dissent from it. 1. Because we find no command, nor example in the Word of God, that any infants were baptized, and we are forbidden to presume above what is written; and if we should admit of any one thing in the worship of God which we find no warrant for in the Word, we should be forced by the same reason to admit of many, yea, any invention of men.

2. Because God requires that such as are baptized, should first be made Disciples, believe and repent, &c. Matt.28:19, Acts 8:12-13, 36-38. Acts 2:38, 41, Matt.3:6, Mk.1:4-5, Acts 10:47-48.

3. Because Christ in his Testament, which is his last will, the legacies therein contained are given to such as believe, and to none else. Matt.13:11, Gal.3:6,7,14,23,29, Rom.8:17. These are the heirs of the kingdom of Christ, with the privileges thereof, Jn.1:12-13, I Jn.3:9-10; those that believe are the seed of the righteous, and of the promise. Isa.43:5, Rev.12:17, Gal.4:26,31.

4. Because the matter of the Church of Christ ought to be Saints, living stones, as, I Pet.2:5,9, Eph.2:19-23, 4:6, I Cor.12:12-13, 25-27, Eph.5:25-27, Jn.4:23, Acts 20:28,

Rev.17:14. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy," I Pet.2:9-10, "and they sung a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Rev.5:9.

5. Because God in his Word denies fellowship and communion with such as do not believe. Jn.3:5-6, 36, Heb.11:6. "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Rom.9:8. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal.3:29. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Gal.3:26. Those God owns for his in his Word are purchased by his blood, who are called, chosen, and faithful. I Pet.2:5-9, Eph.2:19-22, 4:16, Rom.8:29-30, Eph.1:4-6, II Thes.2:13-14, I Pet.1:2, Acts 2:47, 13:48. The natural posterity of believers is not so much as in appearance such.

But because this Controversy is handled largely in several Treatises, such as desire further satisfaction, may have recourse to them.

Some affirm, that the children of believers in Church-fellowship, are to be baptized, which is now practiced in New-England, and else-where. There are three doubts to be answered.

1. What if neither of my parents, nor their parents can be proved believers?

2. Nor any members of a true visible Church?

3. If I were baptized with god-fathers and god-mothers, a Common Prayer Book, a Cross, and Surplice, and by a Minister made by the Bishops, all which are now found out to be Antichristian; and the manner of Baptism was also by sprinkling water upon my face; concerning which the Scripture is silent; how may I be assured God will own such a baptizing for his Ordinance, seeing also themselves confess, that no man may lawfully baptize but a true Minister that hath a lawful calling? And although we conceive that men able to preach the Gospel may baptize, yet we do not believe God sends such to baptize, whom he hath not informed of the manner how to do it, which is not by sprinkling water on the face, but by dipping in the River. Acts 8:38. "But John forbid him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus

answering said unto him, suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt.3:14-17.

**That the Gift of Miracles is not essential
in him that dispenses Baptism.**

That some of those that did baptize, did miracles we grant, and that all that baptized did so, cannot be proved. John baptized, yet he did no miracle, Jn.10:41, nor Apollos, &c., and seeing that the Scriptures do not declare that the gifts of tongues, or miracles, or laying on of hands, is to be in those that dispense Baptism, we have no word to warrant such a restriction; if men are to administer baptism by virtue of gifts.

1. Then that gift and ministry which God in his Word owns, is to be acknowledged sufficient for his Ordinance; but some one or more of those gifts, I Cor.12:8-11, 28-29., &c., still continue, as they confess.

2. Therefore, all the gifts of the Spirit are of the same nature, viz., spiritual, though divers in operation, and are of equal authority, and so to be esteemed by us.

3. As in the natural body, we honor and put comeliness upon those parts which we think least honored, for our comely parts have no need; so ought we to do the same in spiritual gifts, as, I Cor.12:23-24; do they so who tie the administration to one of the gifts of the Spirit, and not to another; and do not they who seek to honor one gift, to the dishonor of another, dishonor all the gifts of the Spirit? For as it is in the body, I Cor.12:26, so it is in this case; and this was the sin of Corinth.

4. We are all baptized by one Spirit. I Cor.12:13. He saith not by the gift of miracles, &c., and he that is baptized by any gift of the Spirit, is baptized by the same Spirit.

5. If the administration of Baptism be not annexed to the operation of one gift of the Spirit, more than to another of the same Spirit, then we may not so annex them; but to the operation of any one gift of the Spirit, Baptism is not annexed. I Cor.12:7-14.

6. If God works in all the operations of the Spirit, then to be baptized by any of the operations of the same Spirit, it must be acknowledged to be the Baptism of the same God; but the first is true, I Cor.12:6; therefore, the latter is true also.

7. If the Apostles might baptize, because they were Apostles, then might they baptize in case they had not the gift of miracles and tongues, &c., for it is one thing to be an Apostle, and another to have the gift of tongues or miracles, as appears, I Cor.12:28-30; they were several gifts, and though they might have the gift of miracles; it's not because they were Apostles, for they were given according to the good pleasure of his will; he divides to every man severally as he will. I Cor.12:11.

8. If any affirm Baptism was to be administered by those who had such gifts of miracles, &c., because those gifts were greater in operation, and so the greater gifts, I answer, that the gift of faith is greater than the gift of miracles, for a man may perish with the latter. They confess, some of these gifts still continue, if the rest are not, then these are the greatest now, and so Baptism may be dispensed by him that hath any of them, and if they be ceased, might it not be, because they were idolized above the rest of the same Spirit?

9. It is said, that Apollos conferred the gifts of the Holy Spirit by laying on of hands, because he baptized not until he had learned the principles of Religion, and so understood the ministry of the Spirit. I answer, it follows not, because it is one thing to understand the ministry of the Spirit, and another to work miracles, and confer the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and speak with tongues, &c., as it is one thing to learn the doctrine of Baptism, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, Heb.6:2, and another thing to have the gifts, and to confer them by laying on of hands; it is one thing to learn and believe the resurrection of the dead, and another to raise the dead.

10. They affirm, that those that believe in truth, are of the body of which Christ is the head, and that they are of the Church, and that many now believe. Whence I also infer, those who are of the Church of Christ, they have the power of Christ, because Christ is theirs, and Christ and his power are never separated, Matt.28:18-20; therefore, they have the power of Christ, and so consequently they have authority to administer the Ordinance of Christ.

11. They grant that many have right to Baptism by the free gift of God, and the blood of Christ. Be it so, I cannot believe that God gives his a right to anything that would do them no good; and if the enjoying the Ordinance be good, how can we think that God so orders it, that they cannot come by it? Christ purchased no privilege for his, which they may be as well without; is not God's power as great as his love; and as the Communion of Saints, Baptism, and the Supper, are the privileges of the Saints, given them in love, so God hath appointed a way for them to enjoy them, and so to affirm, holds

forth as much wisdom and love in God to them; as to say, God hath given them a right to such privileges, but hath not afforded them anyway or means for them to come by them, that they might enjoy them. But this subject is handled at large in John Spilsbury's Book, entitled, God's Ordinance. It is foretold that Antichrist shall come with signs and wonders. Matt.24:23-24, II Thes.2:9-10. We are not to look for Christ to come in this way, yet it may be said of some, "except ye see signs and wonders, {to sense,} ye will not believe." Jn.4:48.

Observations and Experiences.

Of the Attributes of God.

They are fountains of comfort, and rocks of strength to his elect, and those that eye them, live comfortably upon them.

Of Affections.

The affections do oft persuade the judgment. Our affections oft deceive ourselves, and others, and go for spiritual, when they are natural. In our greatest earnestness, we have most cause to examine our hearts and affections. All the disquietness and distempers within us, and by us, is occasioned by the want of bounding and well ordering our affections. Our affections of joy and sorrow will exceed their bounds, unless they are forced. When the object is spiritual, and the motive is spiritual, the affection is spiritual. If our affections, anger, grief, joy, &c., do fit us to pray, they are spiritual, else not. Our affections come far short of that which we think we have in our judgment. Our affections declare to us what we love. We have many occasions of doing good, but we often want hearts and affections to improve them. The quickness of our affections depends much upon the spirits of our bodies. If our affections were answerable to our apprehensions of God, &c., they would destroy our bodies, because they could not bear it.

Of Actions.

That which is the ground, cause, and end of a man's action, in that he lives, whether it is God or self; in those actions that concern ourselves we often exceed in, but such actions as are for God chiefly, we are hardly drawn unto, but easily drawn from. If Satan cannot corrupt the action, he will endeavor to corrupt the judgment and affection. Many conceive that some of

those things God commands, are needless, but it is a great error.

Of Afflictions.

Afflictions are little, light, short, and seasonable, though they oft seem to be many, great, and long. Affliction breeds patience, humbles and mortifies self, teaches a Saint experience, and sends him the oftener to God. God is always present with his elect, yet in affliction they least see him, by reason they look so much to the affliction, if oppressed with it, but some see God best in afflictions. God is as sweet and may be as much enjoyed in adversity, &c., as in prosperity; not any affliction could trouble a child of God, if he knew wherefore God did send it.

Of Assurance of the Love of God.

He that hath assurance of God's love, can trust himself with God in any estate and strait. He that hath assurance of the love of God, can part with anything for God.

Of Christ.

Christ is sweet in meditation, more sweet in contemplation, most sweet in fruition. Union with Christ is equal alike to all who have union with him; and union with Christ is the greatest happiness and honor a believer can enjoy. Such as have union with Christ, should spare no cost for him, although no cost of ours can procure him. Christ's servants are for the most part poor, and they appear to the world very silly and contemptible.

Of Corruption.

Corruption cannot be reformed. Corruption neither will nor can subdue corruption.

Of Counsel.

There is much safety in many counselors, who are wise and faithful. Such as follow their own counsel, do often prove burdens to themselves and others.

Of Creatures.

The creatures are full of emptiness. The reason why we are so subject to be drawn away with the creatures, is because we see

not the emptiness of them. We oft love creatures more before we had them, then when we had them, because we expected more from them, then was in them. All things below are fading, part we must with them, and with life also ere too long. So much as the creature takes away in parting, so much our life was in it. He is not troubled at the coming and going of the creatures, when the heart is fixed on God. The love of creatures hinders us in good things, but the wise use of them does much further us. A child of God uses many things spiritually, which others use carnally. God often bestows abundance of outward things upon some, not for themselves, {for they need them not,} but that they might supply the wants of others; and many of them keep them for themselves.

Concupiscence.

Concupiscence is strong and raging, and hardly tamed, yet it is to be tamed with difficulty.

Comfort.

We oft seek comfort in creatures, which have no power to comfort; all my comfort is in Christ, if I live, he will provide for me, if I die, he will receive me.

Of Conscience.

Sinning against conscience exceedingly hardens the heart. Conscience can see best in darkness, and speak most loudly in silence. Conscience is a very tender thing, a small thing will trouble it, but a blind conscience will swallow up anything. The natural conscience will be satisfied with the outside of a duty.

Contemplation.

Divine contemplation, makes us high in thoughts, and rich in expectation. Contemplation of God's free love, and the soul's interest in it, doth revive, raise, and enlarge the soul. To contemplate on the things above, is most pleasant of all things to them who have tasted the sweetness of them.

Contentment.

Earthly contents are present to our sense. No earthly thing can give content. Joy in God breeds content. So much as we deny ourselves, so much contentment we have.

Contraries.

Every contrary, the more it is resisted, the more it appears.

Covetousness.

Such as are not contented with that they have, are covetous. Distrust of God causes covetousness, which is the root of all evil. So much as we are discontented with our estates, so much covetousness there is in us. Covetousness doth us and others more hurt than we are aware of. Such as think themselves least covetous, are most covetous. A child of God knows not how to be revenged upon his self for his covetousness of the things of this world.

Crosses.

Crosses are not pleasing to the flesh, but profitable to the spirit. The more crosses a Saint hath, the more they do him good, and is the more like Christ. Great crosses are good physic for great stomachs.

Custom.

Form and custom are deadly enemies to spirituality. Custom without truth, is but an old error. Custom so shuts men's eyes, that they cannot see the true visage of things. Custom makes hard things easy, and bondage no burden, and adds delusion to blindness. The rich observe customs, but the poor pay dear for them, for they are starved by them; if that which is spent at burials were wisely bestowed upon the poor, it was far better; and so in other needless customs.

Deadness of spirit.

Deadness of heart is an enemy to action; he that will support diligence, must support cheerfulness; deadness is the grave of many graces. Such as come to God uncheerfully, oft return unthankfully. Spiritual deadness, is a great grief to a child of God.

Death.

Death hath something to say to every man, and would fain be

heard, but men are not at leisure to listen. Every man must die. The day of death is the first day of life. He whose hopes are in heaven, is not much afraid of death. Death is to him no misery, whose hope is in eternity. Death when it seems to dispossess a Saint of all, it possesses him of all things. Such as are spiritually dead, are not aware of it; they only mind and savor the things of the flesh.

Delays.

Delays arise from sloth. The more we delay, the more we may. By deferring we presume upon that we have not, and neglect that we have. Tomorrow, tomorrow, cozens many a man.

Denial of Self.

They live the sweetest lives that most deny themselves. There are very few that do deny themselves, but many can deny Christ, and his truth. Self may be denied a little in one kind, if it may please self much in another.

Difficulties.

Difficulties are discouragements; and handsome excuses are welcome to a slothful heart. Love will carry on through all difficulties, and to undergo all manner of torments.

Distractions.

Distractions of mind in duties, is either from our minding other things, or resting in our own strength, or from a not serious setting our minds on the thing propounded by us; for that which the heart is thoroughly set upon, it is so attentive to it, that it can be present to no other thing at that instant, especially to hinder the thing in hand. The want of a wise ordering and dispatch of business causes a great distraction in men.

Dreams.

An evil dream shows some evil that prevails in the heart. By dreams God may foreshow some sin to come, which we are in danger to fall into, which we are not afraid of.

Duties.

It is no wonder some do so much, because they expect heaven for what they do. Such duties as flow not from faith and love, are legal and slavish. Many will own and confess their duty in the general, who will wholly deny it in particular, especially when it concerns them. A believer, as he is a believer, he doth fetch all from God, refer all unto God, and do all for God.

Education.

Good education doth oft cause an outward reformation. Evil education is a great provocation to sin.

Effects.

Effects are in order to second causes, not to God, who most certainly, necessarily, and wisely hath willed them; and nothing falls out accidentally, as referred to Him whose wise intention reaches everything.

Ends in Duties.

The end rules the means, and is above them. A believer is ever true to his end, but he often fails in the means.

Error.

When errors prove profitable, many will embrace them. Ignorance is the foundation of error. It's common for error to be called truth, and truth to be called error.

Examples.

The examples of men are not to be any rule to walk by. Men's example is very forcible, when it is universal. The worst examples are most observed.

Excesses.

Men do too little, or too much; men love extremes; as many eat too little, or too much; work too little, or too much. Most men are drowned in adversity, or drunk with prosperity.

Excuses.

When we have sinned, Satan and our corruptions help us to cover it with excuses; which is to cover a lesser evil with a greater. It is easy to frame an excuse for any evil.

Extraordinary.

For men not to seek themselves is extraordinary. To practice the truth against great opposition, to be the more humbled by knowledge, and to go against custom, is extraordinary. For a man to refuse to join house to house when he can, is extraordinary. For the rich to take reproof willingly and profitably of the poor, is extraordinary. For to part with riches as freely as they were received, is extraordinary.

Faith.

Where God gives faith, he gives trials also to exercise it. Faith quiets, comforts, and strengthens the soul. We enjoy Christ by faith, and not by feeling. When faith is at the greatest, then there is the least feeling. As our faith is, so are we encouraged to obey God; the more faith, the less fear.

Favor of Men.

The favor of men is a vanity, yet much desired. The favor of men is an uncertain thing, soon got, and soon lost. Men desire the favor of men, God denies it to some, to exercise their faith, wean them from the world, or because we perform not our duties unto them.

Folly.

Many never see their folly, until it be too late.

Fears.

Fears make the understanding weak and the judgment dull. Fears hinder the certainty of faith. So much as we fear men, we forget and sleight God.

God.

God's presence in every place is a great comfort to his. They that live upon God alone, live most comfortably, for there is

satisfaction, and no changes, he fears nothing that can befall him, he lives comfortably in all.

Grace.

Grace is exceeding strong {especially faith and love} to carry a man through all. God will exercise the graces that are in his. The more grace any have, the more need to pray, because Satan is most ready to tempt such.

Grief.

We cannot heartily be grieved for that sin in another, of which we make not conscience in ourselves. It is a grief to a child of God, to speak of any good they find a want of in themselves. If we did not immoderately love outward things, we would not grieve at the loss of them, nor keep such an effort to get them.

Of Gifts.

The greater gifts spiritual or temporal, the prouder the flesh is, and the readier Satan is to assault.

Good.

A man may do good in the strength of a lust. We oft do least good to them to whom we owe most. There be many good things will decay if let alone, but evil things let alone will increase. Parents think they do their children great good, when they can make them rich and great in the world, they make them the greater sinners; for then they shall have little else to do but to waste the creatures, and live in excess idleness, lust, pride, and oppression.

Glory.

When we think we most seek the glory of God, we too often most seek our own. What a man trusts in, he glories in, and what a man glories in, he trusts in, and is confident of.

Healing.

God sometimes heals corruption by not healing it.

Hope.

The Saints hope is in Heaven in God. The natural man's hope is to get honor, fine clothes, good cheer, ease, and pleasures.

Hearts.

Many men's brains deceive their hearts. What the heart likes best, the mind studies most.

Habits.

In acquired habits the act goes before the habit, and prepares for it, but in infused habits it is contrary, for as we have first the faculty of seeing before we see, so we have first the infused habit, before we exercise the operation of it.

Humility.

One may be humbled, but not humble. When we are content to be admonished of our faults sharply by our inferiors, we have some humility.

Honor.

The honor of men, is a very shadow, a vanity. The more men desire honor, the less they deserve, and the less they often have.

Hatred.

That sin which a child of God loved most before conversion, he hates most when he is converted.

Joy.

While we live here, we have joy and grief mixed; this life, nor our bodies will not admit of perfect joy. Outward joys make a great noise, but never truly heat and comfort the heart. There is no sound joy in earthly things, they reach not the heart, but the fancy. In temporal things, our joy is greater than the cause; in spiritual things, the cause is greater than the joy. Every heart seeks joy such as it is. Spiritual joy opposes carnal, and carnal opposes spiritual; the more we relish heavenly, the less we relish earthly. Now joy is in the Saints, when they are in heaven they shall be in joy.

Ignorance.

Ignorance is the cause of profaneness, and all evil. Devotion with ignorance breeds superstition, and idolatry, and persecution. Hope with ignorance causes presumption. Fear with ignorance causes desperation.

Impossible things.

It is impossible to be conformable to Christ, and to the world; to please God, and the world.

Of idleness.

An idle person is fit for nothing, but sin and temptation. An idle life is much loved and entertained of most men.

Knowledge.

That knowledge that is from God, subjects the soul to God. That knowledge that is only in the brain, is notional, and neither subdues sin nor Satan. If we know good things, we cannot but love and affect them.

Love.

That love which is not constant is false. Love is most active, when it is least known, and cannot be requited. Love and labour go together, as our longing is to enjoy God, so is our love to him; if we greatly love the Lord, we greatly long to enjoy him; for as our love is to anything, so accordingly is our endeavor to enjoy it. Such love the way of God, who hate all things that are contrary unto it, and practice it when it is most despised. Such things as we love, we keep with care, possess with joy, and lose with grief.

Live.

We live in that we mind and love, and are made like the things we love. The most seek life in the regions of death, where it is not. Many in this natural life have comforts few, cross frequent, pleasures short, and pains lasting.

Light.

Light causes them that see it to follow it.

Liberty.

We are more prone to desire liberty, than to know how to use it. Many of the Saints abuse their liberty they have in Christ. It is the greatest liberty to enjoy God, and to have a free heart to serve him. Such as plot and plead for liberty for the flesh, are very carnal.

Of Losses.

There is no loss in losing for God. What we lose for God, shall be made up unto us in God. The benefit which follows the loss of outward things, is that they are never troubled with them more.

Motions.

Forced motions cannot be perpetual.

Mind.

When our minds are not fixed, they rove everywhere, and are nowhere to purpose. Such as mind the things above, savor them, and have interest in them.

Mirth.

When men are most cheerful and merry, they are most free and bountiful. Natural mirth ends in sadness and sorrow. In natural mirth, when we are most merry, we are nearest to danger. The mirth of the wicked is vanity and madness.

Mercies.

Many possess many mercies, and yet want the comfort of them. We enjoy far more mercies than we are aware of.

Occasions.

The more secret and colorable any occasion of evil is, the more men are endangered by it.

Obedience.

Our obedience to God is most direct, when there is nothing else to sweeten the action.

Of Peace.

Men cannot give peace; until the Lord speaks peace to the soul, there is no peace. Where there is no peace, there may be quietness or silence. God's people are a peaceable people.

Passion.

The causes of anger and passion, are ignorance and pride.

Promises.

The wicked desire promises for peace, and not for strength against sin. The promises make the people of God not careless, but more fruitful and serviceable. There were never any ashamed that rested only upon God in his promise. One promise from a man will please some men more than ten from God.

Of Prayer.

There is no duty in Religion that is so much counterfeited as the duty of prayer is. Verbal prayer causes great deadness. Some pray when they should sleep, and sleep in prayer, and pray when they should work, but wisdom divides to each its proper time and season.

Of Poverty.

The heirs of the earth are oft pinched with poverty, and Saints who are kings lie in prison. It is better to be poor and weaned from the world, than rich and covetous. Men are much afraid of poverty, yet it never did any hurt.

Pride.

The proudest men are the weakest, and most troubled with discontent.

Principles.

When that which is taken for a principle of truth, is a principle

of error, the more it is relied on, the worse it is.

Pleasure.

Such as have their eyes open, see outward pleasures to be very mean things. Sin is desired for the pleasure of it, but there is in sin more grief and misery than pleasure. The more carnal a heart is, the more it affects natural pleasures. Sinful pleasure ends in sorrow.

Quietness.

When quietness is in the heart, there is not much disquietness in the tongue. He can easily be at peace with men, who knows he is at peace with God.

Reports.

Such as cannot with patience bear ill reports, cannot live a comfortable life. Such as are much joined at good reports, will be much grieved at ill. Oft times the best suffer, {the worst reports,} because they will be no worse. There is not a good man that can escape evil and false reports from the wicked.

Riches.

Riches are uncertain, we must leave them, they ensnare many, but there are but few that are drawn the nearer to God by them. The greediness of riches is more sharpened by the having of them, than by their wants. Riches are the destruction of many. Commonly the richest men do the least good to others. Riches make many afraid to confess Christ and his truth, &c.

Religion.

It is impossible for every man to be of one Religion and Judgment, because their lights and ends differ. Where Religion is in truth, it is in power, and enables a man to practice it. A form of Religion only with riches is embraced, rather than the power of Religion with poverty. Most men love that Religion best, which best suits with their lusts, as, honor, pleasure, ease, and their bellies. A little Religion goes a great way in rich persons.

Reproof for Sin.

Those that complain, because they are reproved for sinning, show their folly. Poor persons have a privilege above the rich, in that they are reproved. Such as are wise count reproof a privilege.

Sin.

Many sin by omission and commission at one and the same time, and yet know of neither. Some sins of omission may exceed some of commission. The beginning of sin is oft by the Devils concupiscence suggesting evil thoughts, evil thoughts cause delight, delight consent, consent engenders action, action causes custom, and custom causes necessity; custom gains strength by time, and is more fierce than nature; one sin draws on another; grant a little, and a great deal will follow. The more there is of the will in the acting of sin, the greater the sin is. The more deliberation and the weaker temptation any hath, and yet sin, the greater the sin is. According as men's sight of sin is, so they hate it, and themselves for it. The less sensibleness of sin there is after sin is committed, the greater is the hardness of heart. Ignorance and unbelief, and want of consideration and meditation, and not shunning the occasion of sin, causes much sin. Such as the more they fall into sin, the more they hate it, and are grieved for it, and the more they go to God against it with faith, they shall conquer it.

Satan.

It is the great design of Satan to draw the Saints from God, his truth and people, and that we neglect the means, or wholly rely upon them; in good things he severest the means from the end, in evil he separates the end from the means.

Sorrow.

It is the nature of sorrow to bring the soul down.

Senses.

Our senses every day decay by little and little, though we take not notice of it.

Truth.

Jesus Christ is the truth, and his word is truth. No man can teach himself or another the mystery of truth. Whatsoever is without, or against the Word, is not truth. That which the most men do is not truth. The authority of men is not always for the truth. That which carries the greatest show of humility is not truth. Neither the learned, nor the unlearned, can know the truth, until God shall please to teach it them. Man's reason cannot dive so deep as the truth lay. He that is naturally wise, is least capable of divine things. The greatest enemy that truth hath, is concealment, for the more manifest truth is, the more gloriously it appears. If truth may have liberty to go abroad, it will quickly suppress errors.

Thirst.

Spiritual thirst is as strong as natural thirst, yea, stronger.

Time.

Time is not valued to its worth. Time past cannot be recalled again. Time ill spent turns to great loss, and ends in deep sorrow.

Temptations.

Temptation tries men's strength; he is strong that stands in strong temptations. When temptation is absent, a fool is wise, and the forward patient. Those temptations are most dangerous which suits best with holy ends. Strong and lasting temptations, are to show us ourselves, and humble us. An over-much fearing a temptation and a weak purpose to resist it, weakens us, and encourages Satan to tempt. When we are tempted, it is best presently to fall to prayer, and not to stand reasoning with the temptation.

Trials.

They who are least exercised with trials, have the least wisdom and experience.

Trouble.

There is nothing but trouble under the Sun. The less trouble men expect, the more they oft meet withal. A troubled soul cannot

do good, nor receive good. A soul cast down by self, or Satan, rests not in God, but in trouble. Self cannot stay, nor check itself, much less recover itself out of sinful trouble.

Usury.

To pay use when the profit is uncertain, is a means to fill men with troubles, cares, distrust, if not with oppression.

Want.

It is a sin and a dishonor to a child of God, to say or think he shall want, or to say, what shall I do? A child of God never wants, though he may think he wants; for he is possessed of all things. If hands, estate, or friends fail, God will send supply some other way. He that suffers want contentedly, is a strong man.

Of Weeping.

Excess in weeping, is against nature, reason, and Religion. Many make a God of their tears.

World.

Such as are full of the things of this world, are empty enough of spiritual things. According as the world is sweet unto us, the things of God are bitter to us. The world is a deadly enemy to spirituality. He that is full of worldly business, needs no other troubles.

Will.

Many prefer their wills before their lives; for when they are crossed, they wish for death. When we want a will to do anything, we pretend want of power, and say, I cannot. To will is natural, but to will well, to will spiritually, is supernatural. Those virtues that grace the will, as, love, grace, mercy, justice, are more glorious than those that grace the understanding, as power and wisdom, &c.

Weakness.

The wisest Saint is most sensible of his own weakness. Weakness with watchfulness will stand, when great strength with self-confidence fails.

Watchfulness.

Spiritual watchfulness is a special grace of God, a chief part of godliness, a special help to holiness, and a great privilege of a Saint. Because the Saints watch no more, they fall so much. There is no good order in their lives, who watch not.

A Wonder.

Natural men wonder at worldly and sensual things. It is no wonder for a natural man to seek himself in all things.

Zeal.

Every man is zealous, either for God or himself.

These few Experiences, I present unto thee for a taste, though many more might be added, which I leave thee to find out by experience; also considering there are many sweet experiences recorded in the Scriptures, especially in the Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, and also in other places in the Bible, to which I refer thee.

GRAVE COUNSELS.

Concerning Actions.

Let all your actions have a good foundation, a word of God to warrant them, else they are evil; to do things not required by God, is the error of the wicked. II Pet.3:17. The LORD will say, who required this at your hands? Isa.1:12. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." Deut.12:32. First look that what ye do be lawful, next consider that it be expedient, the circumstances of time, place, persons, must be wisely considered; to a good action is required that all the circumstances be good also. Next, look to your ends, why ye do what ye do, for the end and scope of an action conducts to the being of it; if two duties come together, do the chiefest first, unless works of mercy and necessity hinder, and look to do every duty required of thee; to do one, and neglect another, is uncomely; give each duty its due respect; and look with what affections ye do what ye do; serve the Lord with the best, and serve him fully for measure and degree; he that doth these things, his conversation is

beautiful and savory.

Concerning the Judgment and Affections.

Ever suspect your judgment and affections when the cause concerns your selves. Often call your affections to account. When your affections exceed their bounds, ask thy soul the reason of it. Let not your judgment be taken captive by your affections. Make not your affections known in company as little as may be, unless the cause be extraordinary.

Concerning Afflictions.

Sleight not affliction, nor let it over press thee, for these are all appointed. I Thes.3:3, Rom.8:28. There is a fruit of the least cross, look more at the fruit than deliverance from the cross, the longer it continues, the more thou may get by it.

Labor to know the cause of every Affliction.

All that are the Lord's, are to stay themselves in the love of God, and attend upon him for the time, manner and measure of their deliverance.

Bondage.

Esteem that bondage that causes thee to sin, or keeps thee from God.

Conscience.

Conscience is a very tender thing, and must be tenderly used. Prize and preserve a tender Conscience, and hearken to the noise of it. Take heed ye wound not your Consciences to please your affections.

Creatures.

Use the creatures so as thou be not unfitted by them to serve God and man. God gave not the creatures to hurt us.

Companion.

In the choice of a companion consider what soundness of judgment there is, what knowledge and sensibleness of their own inward corruption, and whether they speak of other's

infirmities with compassion; never trust him who will not.

Crosses.

Be not offended at crosses, they may do thee much good, and let out sinful self.

Concupiscence.

To avoid concupiscence be temperate in all things, diet, sleep, apparel, recreation, &c., and fear thy self, watch thy senses, and avoid the occasion of it, as, persons, times, places, be frequent in fasting and prayer, and look up to God for strength against it.

Desires.

We had need to use means to moderate our desires to things below. We should rather endeavor to make our desires equal to our estates, than to make our estates equal to our desires.

Excuses.

Be afraid to cover over any evil with an excuse.

Of Errors.

If you would be kept from errors, pray to God, search the Scriptures, and be well grounded in the principles of truth. Of the falls of others, let the consideration of the many great falls the Saints have had, cause thee to fear thy self.

A Friend.

Esteem him thy friend that would hinder thee in sin.

Grief.

Discover not thy griefs to many, and choose such as are able and willing to help thee. The Lord is loving and pitiful, able and willing to help; it's best to complain to him.

Of Good.

To do well, we live therefore; think not much of doing a little good, though it is with great trouble. Esteem not that to be the

chiefest good that may be taken from thee.

Concerning thy Estate.

Judge not thy estate by thy knowledge, affections, and actions, but by the principle.

Men.

Be sure you try men well, and have good experience of their faithfulness, before you trust them with much.

Reproofs.

Receive reproofs willingly and profitably.

Reproaches.

Sleight not reproaches, he that is not guilty, may be guilty in part, or hath been, or is in another kind, &c., so it's but a mistake, thou may be guilty in the same kind, it may be sent to humble thee, and give thee warning of the same sin.

Of Success.

Judge not of the goodness of thy action by the success, but judge thy success by the goodness of the action, &c.

Of Sin.

Judge not sin always by the matter or act of it, but by the rule and greatness of the authorities of the Commander that forbids it, and bring in all the circumstances and aggravations of it.

Of Speech.

When thou speakest of thy self, speak modestly, without vanities and boasting.

Time.

Redeem the present time to do well, depend not upon the time to come, which is uncertain, and not at thy disposing.

Counsel to the Unmarried.

1. Think not of marrying, until you have first sought God by earnest prayer, for strength and contentedness to live a single life.

2. Use such means as may best enable and fit thee for a single life; observe a careful and temperate diet, company, fasting, and prayer, meditation on God, &c., diligence in thy calling; it may please God by these, and the like means, thou may attain the gift of chastity.

3. Be informed of the conveniences and inconveniences of a married life; consider whether you be able and willing to drink of the bitter cup of discontents, which the married oft drink of; what cares and burdens attend that state.

If upon the use of means for some space you find God inclines your heart to marry, fear nothing, but cast thy care upon God, and be as wise as thou canst, and venture upon a wife or husband.

1. Pray to God to give thee a wife, {or husband,} that may be a meet help for thee; a virtuous wife is called a gift of God, the crown of her husband; crowns are precious and honorable; happier is he that hath such a crown; her price is far above rubies. Prov.31:10. No jewel is to be compared unto her; she is worth the asking.

2. Do nothing rashly, snatch not up the first that comes to hand, prove she well or ill; she may please well for a moment, and be a thorn in thy side for ever after.

3. If thou be the Lord's, marry in the Lord, love such as the Lord loves; that which is desirable in a man is his goodness, Prov.19:22, so in a woman; men seek wealth and beauty, though they have no Religion, but these things cannot supply the want of Religion; great portions, and great stomachs, high spirits, costly fashions, and great expenses often goes together; external things will quickly blast, and the most resolved loves vanish quickly, when the fuel of love fails.

4. Choose one that is suitable to thee; first, suitable in Religion; how can there be amities and love, where divers Religions are, seeing no opposition is as strong as that which is for Religion? Consider, Deut.22:11; Job 1:8-9; II Cor.6:15; apply it. Secondly, suitable for age, some marry as old again, others as young again, &c., but unsuitable matches are dishonorable. Thirdly, suitability in dispositions are to be looked to, lest you smart for it; because you are not made of brass but of flesh, a few odious qualities will in time wear off much doting delight. Fourthly, suitable in respect of condition of

life, and abilities of body, to labour and fare as thy abilities requires, such wives as must fare and wear that which is costly, and so weak not able to labour, are fit for such as can bear it, in respect of their estates and minds.

5. Take heed of wronging yourself, or any others; take heed what you promise, if you give your promise, then your liberties is gone, and another is added to you, it may be to your perpetual grief, and make as much conscience, not only of keeping your promises with others, but take heed lest you express yourself in such a way as shall justly cause it to be interpreted love in that kind. A man may make a profession of love, and yet so express himself as he shall not be engaged by promise, {when by his practice he is,} and so at pleasure depart, to the great wrong and hazard of the other parties, without giving any sufficient reason of it; the wrongs in this kind are fit to be severely punished by the Magistrate for an example to others.

6. Marry with parents' consent, Deut.7:3, unless they extend their authorities to the hurt of soul and body; in some cases the want of parents' consent hinders not, as in case the parties hath been married before, or Num.30:4, or Exod.22:16.

Mutual Counsel to Husbands and Wives.

1. Have you both a high esteem of marriage, if you prize not marriage, who shall? You should preserve the honor and comfort of marriage, and say, what is equal to marriage for the being and well-being of life, it's the prop of mutual content, the aid of nature, the perfection of health, wealth, beauty, honor, experience; no condition is sweet where marriage supplies it not, it's the preservation of chastity, the pillar of the world, and of the Church, the glory of peace, and the life of the dead; nothing is so precious in worldly respects as that for which the husband loves and desires the wife, and she him; no union so strong as this, no joy in any outward union so content full as this, &c.

2. Nourish love, and abhor all occasions to the contrary, strive who shall love each other with the most cordial affection; love is given to both, to make the miseries of marriage tolerable, therefore live and love, and cease not to love, till you cease to live; have a care you lose not your first love; and so demean yourselves, as may best draw forth each other's heart in all love and friendships, and ever be ready to express love and sympathy, avoiding a peevish carriage, which provokes to weariness, impatience, and discontent.

3. Bear with each other's infirmities, fret not, cavil not at them, cover them with tenderness; if you have a bad bargain, make the best of it you can, now it is too late to complain; impart not your discontents to strangers, ask no counsel of them but with a free consent of both, and only when necessity requires it. Observe it, such as complain to others, they show their clamorous and turbulent spirits, and want of wisdom and love; if thy husbands or wives virtues be but small, make them great by contemplation, and put upon them the great value of their worth; an eying each other's infirmities, deadens and kills the affection of love.

4. Observe each other's tempers to prevent discontents, and preserve your first love.

5. If there fall out a difference between you, are both freely willing the Word of God may decide it, and to submit unto it; fear breaches, and know a small spark of difference may increase a great flame, if not timely prevented.

6. Be both chaste, and love each other's company, and be faithful each to other; let one purse, one bed, one house, serve them that are but one.

7. Be industrious and provident, that neither of you may want.

8. Hinder not each other in serving of God.

9. Tender each other's good name.

10. Find as little fault one with another as possibly you can, and then express them not in anger, but in love, and when you be both alone.

Counsel to the Wife.

1. Love your own husbands, and express your love in a respected, amiable and modest manner, in thy husband thou may behold authority, government, dominion; from man thou first received thy being, from thy husband thou enjoyest countenance, protection, direction, honor, love, &c.

2. Honor your husband inwardly in your heart, and outwardly in your actions, esteem him as he is your superior and head, and yield to him, let your will be subject to his; you must have no will but his, if he speaks the word, you must not contest, but in humility yield; if he be angry, be you silent, set before you what the carriage of the Church ought to be to Christ, to be a pattern for you, and know where love is, duties are frequent, and acted with ease and delight.

3. Obey thy husband; obedience is a hard word, many a proud stout stomach neither will nor can yield their necks to

the collar of subjection in everything; the Lord knew how it would come to pass, that both husband and wife would both have their wills, though each were quite contrary to the other, therefore God thought fit to order it as he would have it, that the wife should yield to her husband, and be obedient to him in everything. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church...therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." Eph.5:22-24. Therefore know, O woman, whosoever thou art, rich or poor, that God hath commanded you to be subject to your husband, and if you do it not, God will call you to an account for it one day, though it may be, your husband be contented to let it pass, in the fear of God consider it, and tremble at the thought of living in the breach of so plain and clear a command; consider Christ is the author of salvation to all that obey him, Heb.5:9; therefore go to God for humility and self-denial, to stoop to thy husband's command, {if it be lawful,} because God hath commanded it, and though marriage be an equal state, yet the carriage of both is not to be the same, therefore let thy love to thy husband be with a loyal sweet subjection, without slavery, and thy obedience shall be a blessing to thee, and an increase of thy inward peace and joy; also thou shalt avoid many quarrels, envies, and discontents, which others endure; also by thy obedience thou shalt honor God, and be a good pattern to others to do so also.

Counsel to the Husband.

1. Consider the command of God is upon you, that you love your own wives, and be not bitter unto them, let love descend, first from thee, for she is a deserving object of love, as she hath forsaken all for thee, and perhaps is shiftless without thee; great are her burdens and pains in conception, and bearing children, &c., let thy love to her be full and free, love her in some sense better than thy self, and let thy love be conveyed to her with royalties without tyranny. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it...so ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself," Eph.5:25-28, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, vs.29, they two are one flesh, "for this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." Eph.5:31.

2. Let her share with thee in the benefit of thy {graces, gifts,} estate, if thou hast plenty, let her have plenty also, for

she shall be sure to share with thee in the ill, in poverties, sicknesses, disgrace, and other miseries; oh therefore let her share in thy plenty also; let her have for delight as well as thy self, make her cause thy own, and do so as thou wouldst be done unto, and give it her freely without asking. Some men have much, and spend much upon their pleasures, but allow their wives just nothing; such give their wives ground enough to question their love to them, because love is bountiful where there is plenty; why should not part of that which is yours be hers, for her necessities and comfort?

3. Ease thy wife as much as thou canst, though she be bound to obey thy command, yet it's like you need not command so many things, or not so frequently, and so the burden of subjection may be much lighter to her; if she be willing to obey, spare her; if unwilling, forbear her, that she may sin less. Say not, that thou wilt make her, be not too confident of thy strength to mold thy wife into subjection, as wise and strong as thou art, could not do it, for only God can make a stout stomach to yield to a weak and willful Governor. Victory is not always to the strong, Eccl.9:11; it's ill grappling with a head-strong woman, she may be weak in body, but strong in mischief; the tongue is an unruly member, no man can tame; be not so mad as to strike thy crown, nor cast it in the dirt; if she answers not thy desires, inform her of her duties from the Scriptures, and pray to God to set it home upon her conscience; if God be not regarded, who shall?

4. Honor thy wife, right her wrongs, suffer none to sleight nor abuse her in no kind, &c., follow thou Christ's carriage to his Church, which is most loving, meek, and sweet.

5. Provide all things needful for her, that she may live comfortably with thee; and whether she be good or bad, you ought to do what you can to provide means that she may live comfortably after you in this world.

6. Dwell with her, deprive her not of the benefit of thy presence, by long journeys, &c., unless absolute necessities enforce it, and rather ere with over-loving thy wife, than otherwise.

Thus I have thought fit to mention some few things, which so much concern the comfort of a married life. This may be of use to some of those into whose hands it may come, though this is more largely handled in several Treatises.

The Remedy of Fears.

Some few observations from Isaiah 41:10. "Fear thou not; for I

am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

1. Some things are terrible to a Saint, which he is subject to fear.

2. It is the will of God, that his people be not troubled, but to live a sweet and quiet life, in, and upon God.

3. God is always present with his own, to keep them from evil and do them well, though they know it not, or consider it not.

4. Fears arise in not beholding the presence of God.

5. The consideration of the presence of God is a remedy against fears.

6. I am thy God; when a child of God is at the worst, still God is his God.

7. The knowledge of an interest in God is enough to raise a soul out of all its fears.

8. I will strengthen thee; God is engaged by promise to help and strengthen his elect.

9. The Saints should mind God’s promise, and live upon it.

10. The promise of God is enough to quiet and settle a soul from fears.

11. The weakest Saint with God shall prevail.

12. Strengthen thee; there is strength enough in God.

13. The Saints strength is God.

14. It’s in vain for men to oppose the Saints, for God is with them to help them.

15. I will help thee; the Saints in themselves are weak, and cannot help themselves.

16. There is no help but in God; creatures cannot help, they are vanity.

17. So much as the soul rests upon the promise of God for help, so much it’s freed from fears in the greatest appearance of dangers.

18. Uphold thee; the trials of the Saints are above their strength, they cannot stand without God, for the LORD upholds his.

19. Strengthen, help, uphold; God applies himself suitable, and in particular, to the wants of his people.

20. When God will preserve a man, there is not anything that can hurt him.

From all which we may Observe.

That the ground of fear is ignorance, "for my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge," Jer.4:22, "do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee, and established thee," Deut.32:6; and forgetfulness, "because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength," Isa.17:10, "then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage," Deut.8:14; and living by sense, and not by faith.

That it is unreasonable and sinful for a child of God, to fear men, or be dismayed at anything. Reason. 1. Because it's against God's command, which saith, fear not, &c. 2. They have the presence of God to keep them. 3. They have an interest in God, which is happiness beyond all miseries. 4. Because nothing can befall them, but what God appoints, who loves them infinitely. 5. Because whatsoever befalls them, shall do them good. 6. The bitterness shall be but short. 7. Fears never do any good, but hurt; they dishonor God, his truth, and people, and oft cause an omission of duties. 8. Fear is unsuitable for a Saint.

Lastly, fears are unreasonable for a child of God, because God hath given unto them many great, sweet, and precious promises, that they shall not want a good thing, "for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Heb.13:5, therefore they are well enough, they need not care, nor fear, but in God always rejoice, and sing praises to him.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Jude 1:24-25.

**A SONG OF THE LOVE OF GOD
TO SUCH AS ARE IN CHRIST.**

The love of God hath been to me full great,
In leaving me in such a state to be;
And then to set me free from this estate,
He gave his only Son to die for me.
Which is a greater happiness to me,
Then if I had not been in misery.

I was as vile as any man could be,
And my vile state did openly appear;
When God in love did please to look on me,
And caused me a joyful voice to hear.
For passing by me, he to me said, Live,
Which voice of his unto me life did give.

When I heard this sweet voice of God to me,
Upon my heart effectually it wrought;
That I was then so set at liberty,
That oft times I did ponder in my thought.
From sin, Satan, curse, wrath and hell, so free,
That I fear not what they can do to me.

Love caused God for me his Son to give;
Love caused Jesus Christ for me to die;
Love caused God to say to my soul, Live;
Love in my soul doth again reply,
In songs, how lovingly Christ did come,
A mighty price, and ransom of great worth.

What glorious sight of love is this I see,
That being had before the world could be;
Without al time, bonds, measure, or degree,
Is this his love which he hath set on me.
One glorious sight of this so great love,
Will cause a soul for to be sick of love.

This love made known to me, made me to muse,
That ever God should be to me so good;
To give his Son for me, and me to choose,
Which was his enemy, and in my blood;
When I fled from him, after me came he,
I sought not him, but he sought after me.

The love of God to me is passing great,
Which had a being ere the world began;
It boundless is, and every way complete,
And longer doth endure than this world can.
Like love to this hath never yet been heard,
And there is none can be to this compared.

That many in their sins should be destroyed,
Whose first condition was as good as mine;
And yet to me this mercy is enjoyed;
Thus being freed I shall in glory shine.
This shows his love to me was great and free,
And could not be deserved at all by me.

Oh, who could wish himself a thing so rare,
As to be hemmed in, and compact about,
With boundless love, oh; who can it declare,
Or who by fathoming can find it out?
My heart, my hand and song are all too weak,
Of matchless love, to think, or write, or speak.

It is through faith applied so excellent,
It comforted and elevates on high,
The saddest heart, and fills it with content;
Yea it revives a soul ready to die.
The apprehending it, brings joy and peace,
When it is clouded, peace and joy do cease.

Each soul that doth this boundless joy possess,
May well be swallowed up in admiration;
And to the praise of God may it express,
And often have it in his meditation.
Well may it cause him to serve, fear, and love,
This boundless lover, ever God above.

A SONG THAT JESUS CHRIST, IS ALL IN ALL TO HIS.

Christ is his Father's chiefest choice,
And I in him the very same;
Why should I not in him rejoice?
Who am secured from all blame.

In God through Christ, the Saints rejoice,
When they know they in Christ are found;

Through Christ they with a joyful voice,
In singing do his praises sound.

I now in Christ have beauty bright,
I am complete in him alone,
Being clothed in his robe that's white,
In him I have perfection.

In me God doth, through Christ delight,
In God through Christ I interest have;
Through Christ I may come in his sight,
And needful things may ask and have.

My privileges are full large,
Through Christ my Saviour and my King;
Who only under-went the charge,
Me to redeem, and me home bring.

And now I am by him set free,
Union with him for to enjoy;
The thought of it so cleaves to me,
That nothing can me much annoy.

What is it worldly men desire,
But beauty, riches, and fine fare;
With pleasures, ease, and rich attire,
Things which the world in them do share?

And what these things to them can be,
The same is Christ to me and more;
And what thy best works are to thee,
Better to me is Christ my store.

Christ is my light, my life, and power,
My Prophet, Priest, and King is he;
My husband, Head, and Saviour,
Oh, none but Jesus Christ for me.

Should my performances grow slack,
And should I dead and lumpish be;
Or should God seem to turn his back,
My part in Christ shall never lack.

Though my corruptions should increase,
And sin should seem to master me,
Yet Christ shall be my health and peace,

My strength and righteousness is he.

In life and death so shall I be,
For all things else are vanity;
Whatever my condition be,
Nothing but Christ shall comfort me.

For Christ to me is all in all,
In life and death, advantage he,
Unto me is, and sure he shall,
More than a Conqueror make me.

And in this doth my joy abound,
That I in Christ am ever found,
Where all perfections do abound,
And I with him shall be crowned.

Therefore I shall set forth his praise,
And honor him while I have breath,
Yea, him love, fear, and serve always,
From henceforth to my day of death.

FINISHED.