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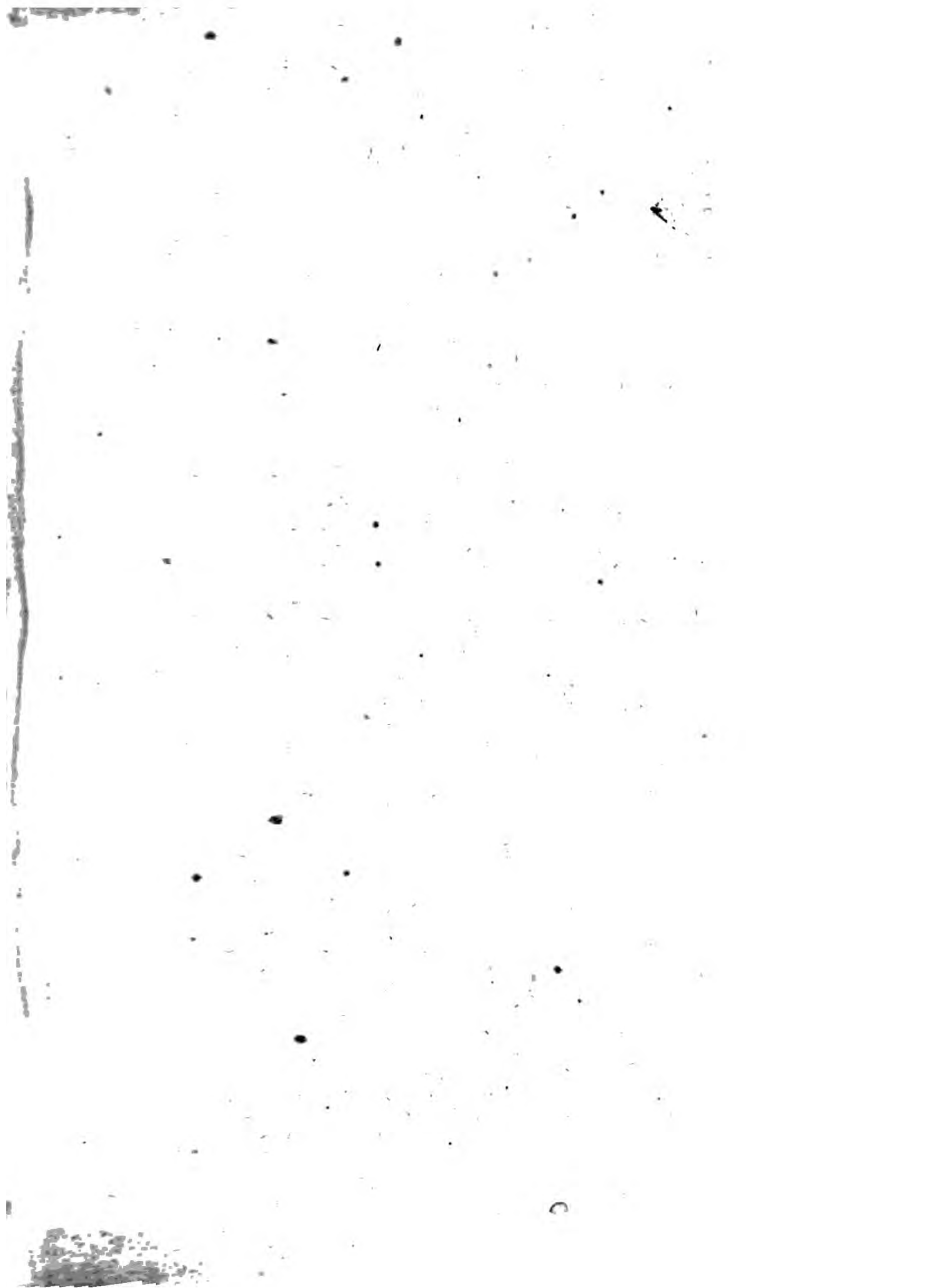
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ANNE, R.

WHEREAS Our Trusty and Well beloved Richard Smith of our City of London, Bookseller, has humbly represented unto Us, that he has, with great Labour and Expence, prepared for the Press a New Edition of the Sermons, and other Works written in English by the Right Reverend Father in God, Dr. William Beveridge, Bishop of St. Asaph, Deceased; and has therefore humbly besought Us to grant him our Royal Privilege and Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing thereof for the Term of Fourteen Years: We being willing to give all due Encouragement to Works of this Nature, tending to the Advancement of Piety and Learning, are graciously pleas'd to condescend to his Request: And do therefore, by these Presents, grant to him the said Richard Smith, his Executors, Administrators, and Assigns, Our Royal Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing the English Works of the said late Bishop of St. Asaph, for the Term of Fourteen Years from the Date hereof; strictly forbidding all our Subjects within our Kingdoms and Dominions, to reprint the same, either in Whole, or in Part; or to import, buy, vend, utter, or distribute any Copies thereof reprinted beyond Seas, during the aforesaid Term of Fourteen Years, without the Consent and Approbation of the said Richard Smith, his Heirs, Executors, and Assigns, under his or their Hands and Seals first had and obtained, as they will answer the contrary at their Perils. Whereof the Master, Wardens, and Company of Stationers are to take Notice, that the same may be entred in their Register, and that due Obedience be rendred thereunto. Given at our Court at Kensington, the 5th Day of June, 1708. in the Seventh Year of Our Reign.

By Her Majesty's Command.

SUNDERLAND.

F. F. O. Sh.

SERMONS

O N

Several Subjects.

V I Z.

Holiness the Great Design
of the Gospel Dispensa-
tion.

Christ's Life a Pattern of
Holiness to Christians.

The Holiness of Christi-
ans ought to be Emi-
nent.

The Holiness of Christi-
ans ought to be Conspi-
cuous.

The Wisdom of being
Holy.

The Advantage of being
Holy.

The Pleasure of being
Holy.

The Exemplary Holiness
of the Primitive Chri-
stians.

Christ's Grace sufficient to
make Christians Holy.

By the Right Reverend Father in God,
WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, D. D.
Late Lord Bishop of St. ASAPH.

Printed from his Original Manuscripts.

V O L. VIII.

L O N D O N:

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OF THE
Eighth Volume.

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Holiness

BY THE COURT

IN FAVOR OF

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN SENATE

AND IN ASSEMBLY

AND IN SENATE

AND IN ASSEMBLY

1898

Holiness the great Design of
the Gospel-Dispensation.

IN FOUR
SERMONS

On TIT. II. 11, 12. XIII. 4.

*For the Grace of God that bringeth
Salvation hath appeared
to all Men;*

*Teaching us, that denying ungod-
liness, and worldly lusts, we
should live soberly, righteously
and godly in this present
world.*

Amongst the many Excellent and
Divine Sayings which proceeded
from our Saviour's Mouth when
he was here upon Earth, and
are still left upon Record for us to know
B and



and consider, I know nothing more sharp and severe than that short Sentence of his, that *many are called but few chosen*, Matt. xxii. 14. The Consideration whereof cannot surely but cut us to the Heart, especially if we remember likewise who it was that said it, even that very Person which came into the World on purpose to lay down his own Life to ransom and save ours. And that he should say that for all those horrid Blasphemies, those bitter Agonies, that cruel Death which he hath undergone for Mankind, yet but few of them should be chosen to Salvation? Yea that of those very Persons who are called to partake of it, but few are chosen to it? This is such a thing that no Man can seriously consider it but it must needs startle and awake him from his Security, and make him look about him, and bethink himself how he may be in the number of these few which are chosen and saved by Christ. And verily it is a great Comfort to us that though there be but few there are some chosen, especially considering that you and I also are as capable of being in the number of those few as any other whatsoever, and it is our own Faults if we be not; for we are all be sure in the number of the many which are called, we are all invited to accept of the
Grace

of the Gospel-Dispensation.

3

Serm. I.

Grace and Pardon which is offered us in the Gospel. But if we refuse to answer when we are called, and will not come up to these easie terms which are proposed to us in the Gospel, and so exclude our selves from being chosen, whom can we blame but our selves for it? As suppose an Earthly Prince having a Company of stubborn and refractory Subjects under him, they with one Consent rise up and rebel against him. But his only Son having appeased his wrath and interceding for them, he is pleased to send his Heralds to proclaim Peace and Pardon to all that will lay down their Arms, and return to their Obedience again, otherwise he will use the rigour of his Laws against them, and inflict the severest Punishments that he can upon them. And if they remain so obstinate as not to accept of their Prince's Favour, you'll all acknowledge that they deserve the Height of his Fury and Displeasure.

The Case is clearly our own. We and all Mankind have rebelled against the Universal Monarch of the World; we have broken his Laws and refused to submit to his Government and Authority over us, by which means we have incurred the severest of his Displeasure against us. But his only Begotten Son having made Atone-

B 2

ment,



ment, and still interceding for us, he is pleased to send his Servants and Ministers to proclaim Pardon to all that will cease from their rebellious and treasonable Practices against him, and for the future pay their just Homage and Obedience unto him; and to assure us withal, that all such Persons as will not come in and lay hold upon that Mercy and Favour which is offered them, shall be proceeded against with all the Severity imaginable, as Traytors and Rebels to the King of Heaven. And therefore if we still stand out, and will not accept of the gracious Offers which are made unto us, whatsoever Punishment shall be inflicted upon us, we must even thank our selves for it. For if we be not in the number of the chosen as well as of the called, it is only because we will not perform those things which we are called to; for this is most certain, that he that doth what the Gospel requires, cannot but attain whatsoever is promised in it, the Promises being altogether as faithful as the Commands are just. So that if we do but observe those Rules which the Gospel lays down before us, all the good things which are promised in it, shall most faithfully be conferred upon us? What those good things are which are promised in the Gospel I need

need not tell you, for you cannot but know your selves that there is nothing desirable or needful to make Men happy, but what Christ in his Gospel offers to all such as believe and obey him, by whom we may have our sins all pardoned, our Persons justified, our Duties accepted, our God reconciled, our Lusts subdued, our Hearts adorned with Grace in time, and our Heads crowned with Glory to Eternity. So that in and through Christ, there is never a Soul here present, but may hereafter sit down with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* in the Kingdom of Heaven, and be made *ισάγγελος*, like or equal to the Angels themselves in Glory, Happiness, Purity and Perfection.

But the great Question is, What it is which the Gospel requires of us in order to our partaking of such glorious and transcendent Privileges as these are. For nothing can be more certain than that all those who hear and profess the Gospel shall not receive any real Benefit or Advantage by it, no more than as if Christ had never died, or his Gospel had never been Preached amongst them. But this cannot be imputed to the Gospel itself, but only to some Defect in them that hear it, because they come not up to the terms which are proposed, nor perform such Duties as are

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commanded in it, without which no Man can have any Interest at all, in any one Promise made therein to Mankind. And therefore, as ever we desire to partake of those glorious things which are propounded and offered to us in the Gospel, we must be sure to observe such Rules as the Gospel hath prescribed in order thereunto. And that you may clearly understand what these are, I have chosen these Words to explain unto you, wherein they are as fully and plainly discovered to us as Words could do it. *For the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, &c.*

Which Words therefore containing Matter of so great and necessary Importance to us all, in speaking to them, I shall not discourage your Attention with raising any intricate or impertinent Observations from them, but shall endeavour to explain them as briefly and clearly as possibly I can unto you, and that too in the same Order wherein they lie, that so the meanest Capacity in the Congregation may apprehend the true Meaning and Purport of them.

First therefore, By the *Grace of God*, we are here to understand God's infinite Love and Mercy to Mankind, in sending his Son into the World to die for us, as it is revealed

of the Gospel-Dispensation.

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Serm. I.

revealed to us in the Gospel, which is therefore called *εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *the Gospel of the Grace of God*, Acts xx. 24. and *λόγος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ*, *the Word of his Grace*, ver. 32. And for this Reason it is that it is called *εὐαγγέλιον*, *glad tidings*, because it is in the Gospel that God hath revealed or made known to Mankind, his undeserved Grace and Favour in the Pardon, Acceptance and Assistance of all such Persons as sincerely repent of their Sins, and believe in Jesus Christ. And by this it is that the Gospel is distinguished from the Law. The Law requires exact and perfect Obedience from us, unto every Punctilio and Circumstance of it, and threatens Death and Destruction to every one that doth not punctually observe every thing prescribed in it. But the Gospel is as it were a Court of *Chancery*, that mitigates the Rigour of the Common Law, accepting of our Sincerity instead of Perfection, and promising Pardon and Forgiveness to all such as sincerely endeavour to do what they can, and trust in the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, for the acceptance of what they do. By which means we are all now in a Capacity, though not of performing perfect Obedience yet of performing such an Obedience as for Christ's sake may be accepted of in Lieu of perfect,



fect, which is certainly the highest Act of Grace and Favour that could possibly be shewn to Mankind, we being now put into way of being restored to that Happiness which by our Sins we are fallen from; so that our Sins may be all pardon'd, our Persons justified, our Duties accepted, and so our Souls eternally saved. And hence it is that this Grace of God to Mankind thus clearly revealed to us in the Gospel of Christ is here called, *The Grace of God which bringeth Salvation*, which is the Second Expression to be considered.

The Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, the χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ, the σωτηρία, *the saving Grace of God*, as the Words may be expounded; that is, that Grace of God whereby alone it is possible for Mankind to be saved; so that our Salvation here is wholly attributed to the Grace of God, yet so as not to exclude either Christ's Satisfaction for us, or our Duty and Obedience to God.

1. I say, The Grace of God doth not so bring Salvation as to exclude the Satisfaction of Christ for our Sins, and not so as if our Salvation was to be ascribed wholly and solely to the Free Grace and Mercy of God without any respect at all to the Death and Sufferings of Jesus Christ.

For

of the Gospel-Dispensation.

9

Serm. I.

For if so, to what Purpose did Christ die at all? What need he have assumed our Humane Nature, and suffered so much as he hath done in it, if our Sins might be pardoned, and our Souls saved without it? Certainly he that seriously considers who Christ was, what he did, and how much he underwent for Mankind, cannot but acknowledge that his Death was of indispensable Necessity in order to our Life and Happiness, or otherwise he would not have undergone it. Infomuch that though we are not to dispute the Infiniteness of God's Grace and Power, yet all things being duly considered, I do not see how it was possible for fallen Man to be restored to Happiness without the Death and Sufferings of Christ for him. For God having expressly said to *Adam*, and in him to all Mankind, *of the Tree of Knowledge, of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat; for in the Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*, Gen. ii. 17. And it being impossible for God to lie, or not to do according as he hath said. Hence it necessarily follows that Death must be inflicted upon Mankind, at least upon the general Nature of Man, as it was then contained wholly in the First *Adam*; and by Consequence, that unless Christ had suffered that Death in the Nature of Man
which

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which was then threatened to it, all Mankind partaking of that Nature, must of necessity have undergone it in their own Persons, or else the Word that proceeded out of God's Mouth would not have been fulfilled. And upon this account it is that Christ is called our Saviour, and asserted to have saved us from Death, to have redeemed us from our Sins, and to be the *Propitiation for our Sins; and not for ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World*, 1 John ii. 2. Yea Christ himself saith, That he came to give his Life a Ransome for many, *λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*; a Ransome instead of many, Matt. xx. 28. where the Word *λύτρον* or Ransome, properly signifies *Redemptionis Pretium*, the Price which is given for the Redemption of Captives. And therefore our Saviour's Saying, That he came to give his Life, *λύτρον*, or Ransome, or Price of Redemption for many; it plainly argues that he pay'd as it were something for us, whereby to redeem us from the Slavery of Sin and Satan, by undergoing the Death which we were obnoxious to, and so making full and compleat Satisfaction to the Justice of God for us. He having suffered infinitely more for us than it was possible for ourselves ever to have done in our own Persons. From whence it necessarily follows that when

it

of the Gospel-Dispensation.

II

it is here said that the Grace of God bringeth Salvation; our Salvation is not so attributed to the Grace of God, as to exclude the Merits and Satisfaction of Christ.

Serm. I.

And then, *Secondly*, as the Grace of God bringeth Salvation doth not exclude the Satisfaction that Christ hath made for us, so neither doth it exclude the Duties and Obedience which we owe to God. But although we must acknowledge that our Salvation is to be ascribed to the free Grace and infinite Goodness and Mercy of God to Mankind, yet we are as much obliged or bound to obey the Moral Law, and to perform whatsoever is requir'd in it, either to God or Man, as if we were to be saved by our Obedience without respect either to God's Grace or Christ's Merits; because it is by this that we are qualify'd for that Salvation which the Grace of God in Christ hath brought to us, inso-much that our Salvation depends upon that too as *a causa sine qua non*, as without which we shall never be saved. And therefore as it is a dangerous and mischievous Doctrine to assert that our Obedience or good Works can merit any thing at the Hand of God, or bring us to Heaven without Faith in Christ. So on the other side it is a fond and ridiculous Opinion

Vol. VIII. nion to fancy that either God's Love or
 ~~~~~ Christ's Death for Mankind hath taken off  
 any of our Obligations to Obedience, as  
 if we were not as much or more ob-  
 liged to obey God now, we are in a Capa-  
 city of Salvation, than we were when our  
 Obedience would stand us in no stead  
 at all, as without the Grace of God in  
 Jesus Christ, it would not. Before the  
 Apostle here was quite of another Mind;  
 even that the Grace of God bringing Sal-  
 vation to Mankind, is so far from encou-  
 raging us in Vice and Wickedness, that it  
 teacheth us to deny Ungodliness and  
 worldly Lusts, &c. as I shall endeavour to  
 shew more fully when I come to those  
 Words.

In the mean time having seen how  
 these Words, *the Grace of God which  
 bringeth Salvation* are not to be under-  
 stood, even not so as to exclude either  
 Christ's Merits, or Man's Duty: We are  
 now to consider positively, in what sense  
 the Grace of God is here said to bring Sal-  
 vation, why in few terms our Salvation is  
 here attributed to the Grace of God as the  
 first moving Cause of it. Whatsoever hath  
 or can be done in order to our Salvation  
 being still from the infinite Grace and  
 Love of God. For when all Mankind were  
 become guilty before him, he might justly  
 have

*of the Gospel-Dispensation.*

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Serm. I.

have left them in the same Condition with the fallen or apostatized Angels, without any Hopes of Pardon or Mercy from him, or without ever putting them into a Way of Recovery from Sin and Misery. But he was pleased of his infinite and essential Goodness, to have so much Pity and Compassion upon fallen Man, as to find out a way how to raise him up again; which can be ascribed to nothing else but to his own free Grace, and altogether undeserved Mercy to us. And hence it is that whatsoever hath been done in order to Man's Salvation, is all along in Scripture resolved into the Grace and Love of God towards us. As for Example; Did God send his Son into the World to die for us? He did so: But wherefore did he do it? Was it because Mankind had deserved so great a Favour at his Hands? No: It was only of his infinite Love and Mercy towards us. Herein is Love, saith the Apostle, *not that we love God, but he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins*, 1 John iv. 10. and Christ himself assures us of the same, *Job. 3. 16.* Did Christ the Son of God come down, to lay down his own Life to redeem ours? What should move him to so strange and astonishing a Condescension as that was? Nothing certainly could do  
it,



Vol. VIII. it, but his own intrinſick Love and Com-  
 ~~~~~ paſſion towards us. *I live*, ſaith the Apo-  
 ſtle, *by the Son of God, who loved me, and
 gave himſelf for me*, Gal. ii. 20. becauſe
 he loved us; he was therefore pleaſed to
 give himſelf for us. Doth God chuſe
 and elect any of us to ſerve him here,
 and to enjoy him hereafter? How well
 may this be termed the Election of Grace
 as it is, *Rom. xi. 5.* and aſcribed wholly to
 his Good-will and Pleaſure, *Eph. i. 5.*
 Doth God call us by the Miniſters of his
 Word from Darkneſs to Light, and from
 the Power of Satan unto God? Doth he
 invite us to partake of all the Merits
 of Chriſt's Death, and Paſſion? Doth he
 reveal his Goſpel to us, and call upon
 us to receive and embrace it? Blessed be
 his great Name for it! He doth ſo: But
 wherefore doth he do it? Becauſe we are
 better or more obedient than others unto
 him? No: But becauſe he is more gracious
 and merciful to us than to others, *2 Tim.*
i. 9. Doth he waſh us from our Sins, and
 cleanſe us from all Unrighteouſneſs? Doth
 he ſanctifie us throughout by his Grace
 and Spirit, and make us holy as he is
 Holy? Oh! Wherefore ſhould the Eternal
 God be thus favourable to ſuch filly
 Worms as we are, but meerly for his
 free Grace and Mercy towards us?
Tit.

of the Gospel-Dispensation.

15

Serm. I.

Tit. iii. 5. & *Pet.* i. 3. Doth God also upon our sincere Repentance and Faith in Christ pardon our manifold and great Transgressions? Doth he accept of our Persons and Performances, so that we are justified before him? How comes this about? Have we any thing in us that can commend us to so Holy a God as he is? Or can we be acquitted from our Sins, or justified before him, by vertue of any thing that ourselves can do? No, alas! We have all sinned and come short of the Glory of God; we have all broken his Laws, incurred his Displeasures, and so stand but as so many guilty, yea condemned Malefactors before him. But how then is it possible for any of us to be justified or accepted of as righteous before him? The Apostle resolves the Question in few terms: *We are justify'd freely by his Grace through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ, Rom. iii. 24.* It is by the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ; and yet it is freely too by the Grace of God that any of us are justified; What shall I say more? Do we expect after all this to come to Heaven? Shall any of us be ever so happy as to be admitted into God's Presence, to behold his Glory, and enjoy his Divine Perfections for evermore? Who are we poor sinful Mortals
that

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that we should ever expect such Happiness as this is? Or what Grounds can we have to hope for it? None surely, but the infinite Grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. As the Apostle teacheth saying, *The Wages of Sin is Death; but the Gift of God is eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Rom. vi. 23. If we speak of our Desert, that is Death; Death is the only Wages we have all deserved. And if we speak of eternal Life, that we must acknowledge to be the free Gift of God in Jesus Christ.

Thus we see how it is the Grace of God alone that bringeth Salvation to Mankind. It was of his infinite Grace that he was pleased to send his Son to die for us, it is by this that Christ gave his Life as a Ransome for many, it is by this that we are both called and chosen, it is by this that our Persons are justified, it is by this that our Natures are sanctified, and it is by this that our Souls are saved; so that the whole Matter of Man's Salvation, from the Beginning to the End, must be ultimately resolved into God's infinite Grace to Mankind, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Which Grace of his is here asserted to have appeared to all Men, *ἐπεφάνη πᾶσι ἀνθρώποις*, it hath shined forth to all Men; implying, that before
Men

of the Gospel-Dispensation.

17

Serm. I.

Men sat in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death, looking for no such thing as Salvation, but rather despairing of it; when upon a suddain, as the Word properly signifies, there sprang forth an unexpected Light into the World, God's infinite Love to Mankind being made clear and manifest to all Men. Before this time, God made known his Grace and Favour only to his own peculiar People, the Jews, suffering all other Nations to walk in their own ways, *Act. xiv. 16.* But now the former Shades of Darkness and Error being dispersed, the Son of Righteousness arose with healing in his Wings upon all the Corners of the World, darting forth his Beams of Light and Grace to all Men, that is, to Men of all Nations, Ages, Tongues, Estates and Conditions in the World; so that now there is no difference betwixt *Jew* and *Gentile*, *Greek* and *Barbarian*, *Bond* or *Free*, all have the Grace of God equally dispensed unto them; they are all one in Jesus Christ, *Gal. iii. 28. Col. iii. 11.* So that now the meanest as well as the highest Persons in the World may have their share in the Grace of God, Servants as well as Masters; which is principally intended here, as *Theophylact* observes, from the Connexion of these Words with the foregoing

C

Verses


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Verſes concerning Servants, *Ver. 9, 10.* which muſt needs be an extraordinary both Excitement and Encouragement to our laying hold upon the Grace of God, conſidering that it is ſo large and boundleſs, that the pooreſt as well as richeſt Perſon amongſt us may be partaker of it; for it hath appeared to all Men, and particularly to you and me who are here aſſembled. From whence we may infer Two Things which highly concern us all.

1. That we ought to be truly thankful for this extraordinary Expression of God's Love to Mankind, as alſo for the Revelation of it unto us, that we the moſt unworthy of all his Creatures ſhould be ſo fully acquainted with it as we either are or may be, *Matt. xi. 25.*

2. Hence we may infer likewise what a Neceſſity lies upon us to be ſerious and conſtant in our Proſecution of eternal Happineſs, ſeeing the way to it is made ſo plain before us. If we had never heard of God's Grace and Readineſs to accept us in Jeſus Chriſt, our Sin and Folly would not have been ſo great, *Matt. xi. 21, 23.* But now that *the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all Men,* and to us in an eſpecial manner, as clearly as to any in the whole World,

World, *How shall we escape, if we neglect* Serm. I.
so great Salvation. 

Thus we have seen now what we are here to understand by *the Grace of God*, in what sense this *Grace* is said to *bring Salvation*, and how it *hath appeared to all Men*. But as there were some in the Apostle's time which turned *the Grace of God into lasciviousness*, Jud. iv. So I fear there may be too many amongst ourselves, who hearing of *the Grace of God bringing Salvation to Mankind*, think themselves secure and safe, so that they need not trouble themselves about their eternal Happiness; for *the Grace of God*, they fancy, will do all things for them, and leave nothing for themselves to do. They cannot but confess that they have sinned, and still continue in Sin too; but seeing it is not themselves, but God's *Grace that bringeth Salvation to them*, they hope that by that their Sins will be all pardoned, whether they repent seriously of them or no. But this is a dangerous Mistake; a meer Trap or Engine of the Devil to catch and destroy Souls. It is true, it is only by *the Grace of God* that our Sins are pardoned, our Persons justified, or our Souls saved; but we must not think that our Sins are pardoned, unless our Lusts be also subdued; nor our Per-

Vol. VIII.  sons justified, unless our Natures be also sanctified; nor our Souls saved, unless they be also cleansed by *the Grace of God*; which so remits our former Sins, that it turns us also for the future from them. This is the great Doctrine which the Apostle preacheth in these Words, assuring us, that *the same Grace of God which bringeth Salvation to us,* teacheth us likewise to *deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts*, or rather, *it bringeth Salvation*, by teaching of us to do so.

But this being the great Lesson which we must all learn if we desire to partake of the Privileges of the Gospel, and without which we shall have no Part nor Portion in what Christ hath done and suffered for Mankind, that you may not be deceived in your Hopes of eternal Salvation, I shall endeavour to explain it more particularly unto you. And for that end shall first shew that *the Grace of God* manifested to Mankind in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, doth, indeed, teach us all to *deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts*, even all manner of Sin and Corruption whatsoever; which is so clearly asserted in the Word of God. That I should think it superfluous to prove it; but that the Lives and Actions of those who are called Christians, and pretend to believe in Jesus Christ,

so

so palpably contradict it. For I verily think that there is no one thing in all the Scriptures wherein the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to express himself more fully and clearly to our weak Apprehensions than this, telling us in plain Terms that the highest Expression of God's Love to Mankind, even the sending of his Son into the World, was to bleis us, *by turning every one of us from his Iniquities*, Acts iii. 26. Yea, that he was therefore called Jesus that is a Saviour, because he was to *save his People from their Sins*, Mat. i. 21. And Christ himself, so soon as he had taken upon him the Office of Mediatorship for us, the first thing that he preached and taught Mankind was, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, Mat. iv. 17. Or, as St. Mark words it, *Repent and believe the Gospel*, Mark. i. 15. And elsewhere he tells us with his own Mouth, *That he came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance*, Mat. ix. 13. Hence the Apostle gathers, that when Christ came into the World, *God commanded all Men every where to repent*, Acts xvii. 30. And that he was exalted to be a *Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance to Israel, and Remission of Sins*, Acts v. 31. First Repentance, and then Remission of Sins. In all which Places by Repentance,

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we are to understand not only Contrition for, but Conversion from our Sins; and by Consequence Obedience to all the Precepts of the Moral Law. For that this is required of all such who expect Salvation by Jesus Christ, is expressly asserted by the Holy Ghost, saying, *That Christ being made perfect, became the Author of eternal Salvation to all that obey him, Heb. v. 9.* that is unto all, and to them only which obey whatsoever he hath commanded; All which may be reduced to the Two Heads before spoken of, *Repent and believe the Gospel.* These are the Two great Things which we are all obliged to perform in order to our being saved by Jesus Christ; even sincerely to repent of our Sins, turn to God, or perform whatsoever he in his Law hath been pleased to enjoin us and then to believe or trust in him, both for the Pardon of our Defects, and for the Acceptance of our sincere though weak Performances.

But I needed not to have gone so far to have proved this. For it is not only expressly asserted in my Text, but likewise in the Words immediately following: *Looking for the blessed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself*
for

for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar People Zealous of good Works, Ver. 13, 14.

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Where we have the Two great Ends of Christ's Death both described together; For he gave himself for us that he might reedeem us from all Iniquity, that is, from the Guilt and deserved Punishment of our Sins; and then, that he might purifie to himself a peculiar People; that is, that he might cleanse us from our Sins, and make us an holy and peculiar People to himself, and Zealous for, and wholly devoted to the doing of good Works, both of Piety towards God, and likewise of Justice and Charity to our Neighbour.

I should not have insisted so long upon so plain a Truth as this is, but only for two sorts of Persons amongst us of quite different Opinions: The first are such as are altogether for such a notional and speculative Faith in Christ, which relies upon his Merits without observing his Commands; of which I fear there are too many amongst us. The other are such as oppose or at least neglect the preaching up the Merits and Righteousness of Jesus Christ, or the Grace and Love of God to Mankind in him, as if it opened a Gap to all manner of Licentiousness and Debauchery; which is the greatest Mistake

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 knows

knows that no Obedience that he can attain to will ever stand him in any stead, because he cannot but find it to be imperfect, and to come short of what the Law requires. What others think I know not, but for my own Part should think that I could never be saved but by my Obedience to the Moral Law, I should never much matter whether I obeyed it or no, because I am conscious to my self that I can never obey it as I ought to do. But when I consider that if I obey it as well as I can, and trust on the Merits of Jesus Christ for the pardoning of my Infirmity, and supplying the many Defects of my own Obedience, that then my Sins shall indeed be pardoned, and my self and Actions accepted in and through him; this puts me upon my highest Endeavours to do all I can to walk in all the Commandments of God blameless, because I believe that my sincere Endeavours for Christ Jesus's sake shall be accepted of instead of Absolute and Legal Perfection. And therefore it is a fond and ridiculous thing to say that the Preaching up the imputed Righteousness of Jesus Christ encourageth Wickedness and Vice, for it is certainly the greatest Encouragement to Grace and Vertue that can possibly be set before us: For, as the Apostle saith,

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faith, *Shall we continue in sin that Grace may abound? God forbid.* Rom. vi. 1, 2. So say I, Shall we so believe in Jesus Christ, and God's Grace in him, as to continue in Sin? God forbid. No, we are so far from that, that the more God's Grace in Jesus Christ is manifested unto us, the more we are both obliged and encouraged to honour and obey him, still remembering the Apostle's Rule here, that *the same Grace which bringeth Salvation teacheth us likewise to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, &c.* Nothing therefore being more sure and certain from the whole Tenure of the Gospel than that the Grace of God offer'd and reveal'd in it, doth teach us to deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, we are now to consider more particularly what it is properly to deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and then what is that Ungodliness and those Worldly Lusts which it teacheth us to deny.

As for the first, what it is properly to deny Ungodliness, it is much the same with that Expression in the Sacrament of Baptism, where the Party Baptized promiseth *to renounce the Devil and all his works;* for this is that which the Grace of God teacheth us all to do, even to renounce our former sinful Ways and Practices,
and

and to deny our selves for the future the Pleasure we used to take in them. So that this denying Ungodliness, as St. Chrysostom observes, denotes πολλήν ἢ διάστασιν πολὺ τὸ μῖσος, πολλήν ἢ ἀναστροφὴν, A great Distance off of it, a great Hatred against it, and a great Aversion from it. And so it doth not consist only in mourning for, but in turning from all manner of Sin, and that too not only in our Lives but our Hearts and Affections also; so as to dry up the Fountain as well as disperse the Streams, and kill the Root as well as lop off the Branches of Sin within us; that is, in plain Terms, the Grace of God teacheth you not only to forsake the outward Acts, but likewise all love to desire of, and delight in all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts whatsoever; which is the next thing to be considered, even what we are here to understand by Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, which the Grace of God teacheth us to deny.

First, By Ungodliness we are here to understand whatsoever is contrary to God's Word or Worship; against his Word, as all manner of Heresies and damnable Errors, as the Apostle calls them, 2 Pet. ii. 1. So St. Chrysostom expounds the Words, ἀσέβειαν τὰ δόγματα φησὶς, he calls erroneous Opinions

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Opinions Ungodliness, as being contrary to God's revealed Will and Word. But by Ungodliness here we are principally to understand what is against or contrary to the Worship of God, which indeed is the proper Notion of the Word ἀσεβεια, which according to its Notation and Etymology, signifies the Non-Performance of Divine Worship, or at least some Defect in it; and by Consequence whatsoever Sin is committed immediately against God himself, which we therefore call Ungodliness, because it maketh a Man ungodly, that is, unlike to God, of a different Nature and Disposition from him.

But would you have me come more home and close unto you? Would you know more particularly what Acts of Ungodliness the Gospel teacheth you to deny? Take it in few Terms; *The Grace of God which bringeth Salvation*, being made manifest unto you in the Gospel of Jesus Christ; it teacheth, admonisheth, adviseth, obliges and enjoins you all, as you tender your Eternal Salvation, to renounce, deny and forsake whatsoever you know to be offensive to God's Person, contrary to his Nature, injurious to his Name, or unbecoming his Honour and Majesty in the World. As for Example; It teacheth you to renounce and strive against your former

mer Ignorance and Senseless of God, and that you labour to get your Hearts possessed with a due Sense, with clear and awful Apprehensions of him. It teacheth you to deny all Hardness of Heart, and Impenitence for Sins past, and to dread the Thoughts of ever displeasing God any more, as heretofore you have done. It teacheth you to deny all Atheistical and Unbelieving Thoughts of God, and to banish them out of your Minds, so as never to doubt of the Certainty of his Existence, the Truth of his Word, the Equity of his Precepts, nor of the Faithfulness of his Promises, which he hath made and confirmed to Mankind in the Blood of his only Son. It teacheth you to deny Divine Worship and Honour to all Persons and Things in the whole World, except to the True and Living God; That you do not pray to any Creature, nor fall down before, or worship any Image or Idol whatsoever in a religious manner, but to follow the Apostle's Direction, even to *flee from Idolatry*, 1 Cor. x. 14. It teacheth you to deny not only Perjury and forswearing your selves, but likewise the taking of God's Name in vain, or to no purpose, so as to fear an Oath, and dread the profaning so sacred and glorious a Name with your polluted Lips. It teacheth

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eth you to lay aside all secular and worldly Business upon the Lord's-Day; not to profane the Sabbath, but to devote it wholly to the Service and Worship of Almighty God. It teacheth you to avoid all Irreverence and unseemly Deportment of your selves in the Presence of God: That all the while you are before him, praying unto him, singing forth his Praises, or hearing his holy Word, you carry your selves so as becometh those who believe themselves to be in the Presence of the Supreme Being and Governour of the World, performing their Homage and Devotions to him. It teacheth you not to contemn, slight, or profane the Ordinances and Word of God; not to absent yourselves from his Publick Worship, nor neglect his Holy Sacrament; not to despise his Ministers, nor abuse or arrest his Scriptures to your own Destruction. It teacheth you to deny Hypocrisy and Dissembling with God, the Searcher of your Hearts; not to think to cheat God, and put him off with a specious Shew and plausible Pretence of Piety, without the Power and Substance of it. It teacheth you not to presume upon his Mercy, nor yet to mistrust his Promises; not to neglect your Duty unto him, nor to despair of his Goodness and Mercy unto you. In a
 Word,

Word, *The Grace of God made known unto you*, teacheth you to abstain from whatsoever is offensive or dishonourable unto God, and to perform whatsoever you think to be pleasing and acceptable unto him, and all because it *teacheth you to deny Ungodliness*.

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And *Worldly Lusts*, that is the next thing which the *Grace of God* teacheth you to deny; where, by *Worldly Lusts*, we are to understand all inordinate Desires of the things of this World, which the Apostle reduces to those Three Heads, *The Lusts of the Flesh, the Lusts of the Eye, and the Pride of Life*, 1 Joh. ii. 16. under which all the *κοσμικαὶ ἐπιθυμίαι*, the *Worldly Lusts* here spoken of are comprehended, which being premised in general, it is easy to determine what kind of *Worldly Lusts* the *Grace of God* teacheth you to deny. It teacheth you to deny yourselves all Sensual and Carnal Pleasures arising from Lust or Luxury, from Drunkenness, Uncleaness, and the like; and still to keep yourselves within the Bounds of Modesty, Temperance and Sobriety, *abstaining from fleshly lusts which war against the Soul*, 1 Pet. ii. 11. *Walking honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying*, Rom. xiii. 13. It teacheth you to deny and
con-

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of the Gospel-Dispensation.

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all. In a Word ; *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation to you*, teacheth you to be eminent in Grace and Vertue, and in all manner of good works whatsoever, *that your light may so shine, that others may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven*, Mat. v. 16. and that you be *stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. xv. 58.

Thus you see in Part what that Lesson is which the *Grace of God* teaches all such as are called to it, even to *deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts*. And now I have done my Duty in expounding this Gospel-Lecture to you, it is both your Duty and Interest to learn and practise it ; but that is a thing I fear there are but few that ever mind or think of ; you can make a shift to come and hear a Sermon, but it ordinarily proves but as the *Seed which was sown among the thorns, for the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches soon choke the Word, so that it becomes unfruitful*, Matt. xiii. 22. I have now shewn you what the Gospel which you all profess requires from you ; but what will it avail you to hear these things without the doing of them ? *Alas it will be so far from furthering your*
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Eternal Happiness that it will but sink you lower into Sin and Misery: *For he that knoweth his Master's Will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes;* they are your Lord and Saviour's own Words, *Luke xii. 47.* The Consideration whereof makes me sometimes tremble at the Thoughts of the approaching Day; when my Preaching the Gospel to you will be found, I fear, to be the Occasion of greater Damnation to many of you: But we must do our Duty and leave the issue unto God, in whose Name therefore I advise and beseech you all to consider seriously with your selves, what you have heard at this time, even what that is which the *Grace of God*, upon which your Salvation depends, teaches and commands from you, nothing less than *to deny all manner of Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts.* And do not content yourselves with the bare hearing of these things, but set your selves immediately, and in good earnest upon the Practice of them: You know every one the Plague of his own Heart, and the Sins which do so easily beset you. Have a care for the future of them, and make it your Business to mortifie and suppress them: Study and Practise this Heavenly and Divine Art of *denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts;* that Art which the *Grace*
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of the Gospel-Dispensation.

*of God teacheth all those who would be
Partakers of it, whereby they may work out
their Salvation with fear and trembling :*

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*Which God of his infinite Mercy grant we
may all do, &c.*

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Holiness the great Design of
the Gospel-Dispensation.

S E R M O N II.

On TIT. II. 11, 12.

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.

THUS we have seen what it is which the Grace of God teacheth us to deny, we are now to consider what it would have us do: For we must not think that the Gospel teacheth only a negative Religion, consisting only in denying or abstaining from

from Ungodliness and worldly Lusts; but it requires likewise positive Obedience to all the moral Law. As we desire and expect, not only to escape Hell, but to get to Heaven; not only to be freed from Misery, but to be made Happy: So the Grace of God in order thereunto, teacheth us not only to depart from evil, but to do good: not only to forsake our Sins, but to turn to God: not only to cease from doing what God hath forbidden, but to do likewise what he hath commanded: or as it is here expressed, not only to *deny ungodliness and worldly Lusts*, but to *live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world*. Under which Three Heads the whole Duty of Man is briefly but fully comprehended: For Sobriety contains under it all such Duties as respect our selves: Righteousness those which we owe our Neighbour: and Godliness such as are due to God: and so amongst them they make up the whole chain of Universal and Evangelical Obedience. Neither can they ever go alone, or be separated from one another: For Sobriety without Righteousness is but Self-seeking: Righteousness without Godliness is but Men-pleasing: and Godliness without either of them is downright Hypocrisy and Deceit. So that he that is *not* Godly, cannot be properly said to

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be either sober, or righteous; and he that is not both sober and righteous, cannot be said to be Godly. And therefore he that would attain to any of these Vertues, must labour after all. He must first begin with Sobriety in himself, to keep his mind in an even frame and temper; then he must proceed to Righteousness to his Neighbour, to render unto all Men their just due and rights; and then he must advance so far as to Piety towards God, to obey, worship and honour him. This is the Method which the Grace of God itself directs us to walk by. First, to live Soberly, and then Righteously, and then Godly in this present World: Not as if in order of Nature, Godliness was not before both Sobriety and Righteousness; but because in order of time, a Man must first begin with himself, and then go on to perform such plain and easy Offices as are due unto his Neighbour: and then at last come up to the highest Duties of all, even such as he oweth immediately unto God himself: Which no Man can rationally expect ever to arrive at, that doth not observe this method. For how can that Man be righteous to his Neighbour, who is not so just to himself, as to keep himself Sober? And how can he love God whom he hath not seen, who doth not love his Brother whom he

he hath seen? No: There neither is nor can be any true Religion or Piety towards God, where there is not likewise Sobriety and Justice towards Men. Neither can that Man be Just to another that is not Sober in himself. Hence it is, that the Grace of God, which brings Salvation, prescribes this method in order to our attaining of it; even that we live first Soberly, then Righteously, and then Godly in this present World. And that you may all understand the full and true meaning of every Duty here expressed, I shall endeavour to explain them in order as they lie. Only give me leave to premise before-hand one general Observation concerning all of them, which is this, that the Grace of God doth not here teach us to be Sober, Righteous and Godly only now and then; but that we live Soberly, Righteously and Godly all the while that we are in this present World: So that our whole Lives must be adorned with these resplendent Graces, and Gospel Vertues. There is not the most debauched Person in the World but may be sometimes Sober; not the most unrighteous Man upon Earth but he may perform some Acts of Justice: Neither is there any Man so Wicked but he may sometimes seem to be Godly. But this will not do our work: We must exercise

our selves continually in these things, so as always, unto the utmost of our Power. to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World, which being premised in general, we must now come to the particular Explication of each Duty.

First therefore, the *Grace of God* teacheth us to live soberly. The Word here used is σωφρόνως, which some translate wisely, some temperately, others soberly, but they will amount to one and the same thing: For as to its Notation, the Adjective σώφρων, is deriv'd, ἀπο τῆ σωζέω ἢ φέρω, from preserving or keeping the Mind, and so the Vertue σωφροσύνη Sobriety, is so called because σώζει ἢ φέρει, it keeps the Mind in its right Frame and Temper, and that is the proper Notion of Sobriety: For a Man can then only be said to be sober, when his Mind is serene, clear, and free from all Disturbance and Intoxication. And therefore when the Grace of God teacheth us to live soberly, it thereby enjoins us to avoid whatsoever may any way disturb, or discompose our Senses, Reason, Mind or Judgment, so as always to keep ourselves in an equal Frame and Disposition of Spirit. And for that end it teacheth us to avoid;

1. All Excess in Meats and Drinks: For Gluttony and Drunkenness do strangely

ly affect the Brain, distract the Intellectuals, disorder the whole Soul, so as to make it altogether unfit for any Business either of our general or particular Calling; and whensoever a Man is so, he may be truly said to be drunk, even when by reason of excessive Drinking, he is indisposed for any religious or Civil Duties, or at least, cannot set upon them, nor carry them on so well as he could before. This is the most certain, and proper Notion of Drunkenness; and this is the Reason why the Scripture all along condemns it for so heinous and great a Sin, so odious and detestable both to God and Man, because it unfits a Man for the Performance of those Duties which he owes to both, depriving him for the present of that little Reason which before he had, and so making him incapable of following any Employment, or doing any Work as he ought to do it, being indeed for the present more like a Beast than Man. And hence it is that the Apostle here places Sobriety in the fore front, because unless a Man be first sober in himself, he is not in a Capacity of performing any Acts of Justice to his Neighbour, or of Piety towards God: And therefore he that would discharge his Duty unto either, must be sure in the first place to avoid this first sort
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of Drunkenness which is contrary to Sobriety, and to follow the Apostle's Rule, *not to be drunk with wine, wherein is excess*, Eph. v. 18.

2. He that would live soberly must be sure to avoid all inordinate Desires of and Love to the things of this World, which have a strange kind of inebriating Quality in them, making Men exactly like the Brutes that perish, always looking downwards upon Earth, and minding nothing but Mire and Dirt. This our Saviour himself forewarneth us of, saying, *Take heed to your selves, 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*, Luke xxi. 34. Where we may observe, he joins Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and the Cares of this Life together, as things equally overcharging the Hearts of Men, and making them so careless and negligent of their own good, that the Day of Judgment will take them unawares; so that over-caring for the World, that Sin which we call Covetousness, is but a sober kind of Drunkenness, wherewith a Man may be egregiously overtaken, or drunken, and yet be accounted Sober, which is in a manner altogether as bad as being drunk with Wine, and in some Sense worse: For this kind
of

of Drunkenness usually continues far longer than the other, Men being ordinarily intoxicated with the Cares of this World all their Life long, so as to be never sober, never moderate in the Prosecution of their worldly Designs, but are in a continual hurry and distraction, always unfit to look after Heaven, because always poring upon Earth, and doating upon the transient Vanities here below. And therefore, in order to our living soberly, it is necessary that our Desires of this World be moderated, and regulated by the Rules of Scripture, and the Dictates of Right Reason: That we never go higher than *Agur's* Wish, *Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me, Prov. xxx. 8.*

3. In order to our living soberly, we must take care likewise to keep all our Passions within their proper Bounds and Limits, and not suffer them to be unruly or exorbitant: For excessive Love or Hatred, Joy or Grief, or any other Passion whatsoever, if it be once excessive, will as certainly disturb our Reason and pervert our Judgment, as excessive Drinking can ever do. As *St. Hieron* long ago observed, saying, That Drunkenness doth not only consist in drinking Wine, but it shews forth itself in other things; for, saith he among other things, *Amore & odio*

Vol. VIII. *odio mens inebriatur, & fluctuat, & statum suum tenere non potest,* By Love and Hatred the Mind is intoxicated, and reels to and fro, and cannot keep its proper Station. The same may be said of Joy and Grief, but especially of Anger, which is indeed one of the worst sorts of Intoxication, a kind of short Frenzy or Madness whereby the Senses of Men are so much oppressed, and their Rational Faculty so vehemently disturbed, that their very Countenances are changed, their Eyes distorted, their whole Bodies often discomposed, their Souls be sure are always disabled from excepting any Act of Reason, much more of Grace or Vertue as they ought to do. Hence the Apostle tell us, *That the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God,* i. 20. That is, no Man can perform any Act of Righteousness so long as Wrath or Anger is boyling in him; for the Man is not himself at present; he cannot govern his Tongue nor any Member of his Body, much less can he exercise his Reason so far as to perform acceptable Obedience unto God, which requireth the greatest Composure and Settledness of Mind that we can be possibly in. And therefore, so long as a Man is in this Condition, subject to the unweildy Power and Tyranny of his headstrong Passions, he can by no means

means be termed a sober Man, being drunk with Passion, and so doth not reach so far as the first Duty which *the Grace of God* here teacheth, even to live soberly.

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4. The Sobriety here spoken of, as it regulates our Passions, so it moderates also our Thoughts especially of ourselves. It doth not suffer a Man to be drunk or besotted with Self-admiration and Esteem as many are, who have such high and overweening Conceits of their own Parts and Gifts, and other seeming Excellencies, that, like Men in drink, they fancy themselves great and good, and wise, far beyond any of their Neighbours; which plainly argues that they have a kind of Delirium in their Brains, their Reason being disturbed, and their Fancy distracted with Self-conceit, wherewith many are so strangely overcome, that they are not able to contain it, but vent it at their Mouths by Self-applause. But these are far from true Sobriety which always composeth and moderateth a Man's Thoughts so, that he looks upon himself as he is, even as a poor and worthless Creature, as the greatest of all Sinners, as *St. Paul* did, *1 Tim. i. 15.* and therefore is still mean and vile in his own Eyes, thinking every Man better than himself. This is the Lesson

Vol. VIII. Lesson which *the Grace of God* here teacheth, and which *St. Paul* taught by it, saying; *For I say, through the Grace of God given unto me, to every Man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every Man the Measure of Faith, Rom. xii. 3.*

5. Give me leave to mention one more Act of Sobriety which is too rare amongst us, and seldom thought of, and that is Sobriety in Matters of Religion. For there is a new Kind of Riot and Drunkenness which hath intoxicated the Age we live in. Men being now grown so unstable and giddy in Religion it self, that they reel too and fro, and stagger from one Opinion to another, not able to walk steadily in the narrow Path that leads to Heaven. If we preach sound and wholesome Doctrine to them, that these brainsick Persons cannot down with, they are for new Words and Phrases, new Notions and Speculations in Divinity, by which means they soon turn Scepticks in Divine Religion; which is the ready way to degenerate into downright Atheists, and so to have no Religion at all. This therefore *the Grace of God* here warns us to have a care of, enjoining us to live soberly, to bridle and restrain this Looseness, Extravagancy

vagancy and Distraction of the Mind about Opinions in Religion, and to be grave, stayed, and sober in Matters of such eternal Concern as they are. As when *Festus* said to the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, Paul, *Thou art beside thy self: much learning hath made thee mad.* St. Paul replied with a great deal of Gravity and Moderation, *I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and Soberness,* Acts xxvi. 24, 25. so should it be with us. We ought not to be either sceptical or fanatical in Religion; but should always speak and love to hear *the Words of Truth and Soberness*, not tossed too and fro with every Wind of Doctrine, but firm, steadfast and unmoveable in the main Articles of our Christian Faith. This is to live soberly indeed in the Business of the greatest Importance that our Sobriety can ever manifest its self in.

Thus you see what it is which *the Grace of God* would have you do by teaching you to live soberly. It teacheth you to be temperate in the Use of all Creature Comforts, so as to avoid the very Appearance of Gluttony and Drunkenness. It teacheth you to moderate your Desires of, and Love to the Things of this Life. It teacheth you to keep your Passions and Affections all within their proper Bounds and Limits.

Vol. VIII. Limits. It teacheth you to bring down all high and proud Conceits of yourselves, and to think soberly and lowly of yourselves as ye ought to think. It teacheth you to be well-grounded, grave and sober in Matters of Religion, not to swallow down every new Doctrine, Opinion and Errour that is broach'd amongst us, wherewith so many have been infatuated, and made drunk. And verily, although this living soberly be but the first Part of the Lesson which *the Grace of God* teacheth its Disciples, yet he that hath but learnt this aright will find the other to be facile and easie. For when a Man hath once got the mastery over himself, so as keep himself always in this even and sober Frame, he will be rightly qualified and fitted for the Performance of all Just and Righteous Acts, which *the Grace of God* teacheth us in the next Place to observe even to live righteously as well as soberly.

Now as Sobriety teacheth a Man how to comport and behave himself within and to himself; Righteousness, that shews him how to carry himself to others, especially his fellow Creatures; how to live and converse with them. And so it is, indeed, the Bond and Support of all Humane Society; so that as without Sobriety a Man is a Brute himself; so without
Righ-

Vol. VIII. others both present and future Welfare.

That you sympathize with one another in the various Changes of this transient Life, *rejoicing with them that rejoice, and weeping with them that weep.* That you use all means to draw one another from Wickedness and Vice, and to entice and persuade each other into the Practice of Grace and Vertue, That you pray and intercede for one another at the Throne of Grace, and be really thankful for Mercies conferr'd on others, as well as for those you receive yourselves. That you be ready to distribute, willing to communicate to others Necessities, supplying their Wants of your Abundance. That you *consider one another to provoke unto love, and to good works,* Heb. x. 24. That you do not entertain any evil Opinion of your Neighbours without a Cause, but still account all others as better than yourselves. That you do not backbite or defame each other, but rather labour to keep up each others good Name and Credit in the World. That you be Faithful to any Trust that others shall repose in you, and reveal no Secrets that they commit unto you. That you prevent as much as in you lies any Evil or Mischief that you know to be falling upon others, and be as helpful and assistant as you can in procuring or advancing of their

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their Good. In a Word, *The Grace of God* Serm. II. teacheth you that *all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice; and that you be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you,* Eph. iv. 31, 32.

2. *The Grace of God* teacheth you to render to all Men their due, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour, Rom. xiii. 7. And so it teacheth, that you Honour your Superiours in order or degree, and obey the lawful Commands of the Magistrates which God hath set over you. That you submit to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the King as Supream, or unto Governours as unto them which are sent by him for the Punishment of evil Doers, and for the praise of them that do well, 1 Pet. ii. 15, 16. That ye have a due Respect and Honour for all that are in Power and Authority over you; yea, that you honour and esteem all Men, ver. 17. That you do not cheat, couzen, over-reach, or defraud one another in any matter, 1 Thess. iv. 6. That you use not Oppression, Extortion, Rapine, or any other unlawful Means whereby to encrease your own Estate, to the Diminution of anothers. That

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you restore whatsoever you have unjustly either by fraud or violence taken from another. That you with-held not from the Poor that just Provision and Maintenance which God hath put into your Hands for them. That you neglect no opportunity of doing good to any Man; but that as you have opportunity you do good to all Men, especially to them *who are of the Household of Faith*, Gal. vi. 10. or in brief, that you *owe no Man any thing, but to love one another*, Rom. xiii. 8.

Lastly, The Grace of God teaching you to live righteously, it thereby enjoins you to model all your Actions by that Divine Rule of our Blessed Saviour, *That whatsoever you would that others should do to you, you do even so to them*, Mat. vii. 12. Or as we briefly Phrase it, *That you always do as you would be done by*. That you do no more wrong to others, than you are willing to receive from them. That as you would have others do what good they can for you, so you do what good you can for others. That you injure no Man in his Soul, Body, Name or Estate, any more than you could be content to be injured yourselves. In a Word, that you be as kind and courteous, as helpful and assistant, as true and trusty, as just and faithful unto all Men, as you desire all Men should be to you. **These**

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Serm. II.


These are the general Rules of Righteousness and Equity, which the Gospel Commands you to walk by. And as you cannot be thus righteous towards Men, unless you be sober in yourself, so neither can you be pious towards God, unless you be thus righteous towards Men; and therefore the Gospel teaches us first to live soberly, then righteously, then godly. But it is not enough for us to live soberly and righteously, unless we live godly too, which is therefore placed last; because it is that which crowns the rest, and without which neither our Sobriety nor Righteousness will stand us in any stead. And therefore it must needs very highly concern us to understand what it is which *the Grace of God* would have us do, by teaching us to live godly. In searching into which, we had need be very cautious and circumspect; it being a thing which so many pretend to, and so few, so very few that ever arrive at, and that not only amongst *Jews, Turks and Heathens*, but even amongst *Christians* themselves: People being generally mistaken about the Notion of Godliness in general. Go among the *Papists*, and there you'll find them esteemed the most godly and pious Persons who say the most *Ave-Maria's*, and *Pater-Noster's*,



that bow the most reverently to Images, and worship the Host or consecrated Wa-
 fer with the greatest Devotion; as if God-
 liness consisted only in some few Supersti-
 tious Rites and Ceremonies; or at the best,
 but in some few external Acts and Perfor-
 mances. Go among the Enthusiasts, and
 there you'll find Godliness placed in Rap-
 tures and Extasies, in new Revelations, and
 in the frequent Repetition of Scripture Phra-
 ses. Go among others, who boast them-
 selves the godly Party, and there you'll
 find Godliness asserted to consist princi-
 pally in long *extempore* Prayers, in fre-
 quent Hearing of Sermons, and Receiving
 of the Sacrament without kneeling. Nay
 there are too many among us, who have
 not been ashamed to abuse the sacred
 Name of Godliness, to palliate the most
 atrocious Crimes, the most barbarous Enor-
 mities, the most hellish Enterprises that
 ever the Sons of Men could be guilty
 of. No Schism in the Church, no Sedi-
 tion in the State, no Rebellion itself be-
 ing ever contrived or carried on but un-
 der the Pretence of Godliness: All which
 can certainly be ascribed to nothing else
 but to the gross Ignorance that is in the
 World concerning the true Nature of
 Godliness; which certainly is a thing of
 an higher Nature, and more Divine Stamp
 than

than such deluded Mortals would make it. Serm. II.
And therefore that you may not fall into the same Errour and Danger, as others have done before you, fancying themselves to be godly when they are not. I shall endeavour as plainly as I can to clear up your Apprehensions concerning the Nature of true Godliness, that you may all understand what really it is to live godly in this present World.

For which end we must first know in general, that the Word here translated godly, is *εὐσεβής*; and wheresoever in the New Testament you read of Godliness, in the Original, it is *εὐσεβεία*, or *δευσεβεία*; which according to its Notation or Etymology, properly signifies true worship, or the worshipping of God, or if you will, right worshipping of the true God. And therefore seeing it is by Words that we come to the true Notion of Things; and the Holy Ghost always using this Word to express that which we call Godliness. Hence it follows, that when we speak of Godliness, we must not restrain it to some few particular Acts, but look upon it as comprehending the whole System of all those Duties which we as Creatures owe to him that made us, and in the due Performance whereof, our Worship and Adoration of him consisteth;


 sisteth; so that he that worships God aright, may be justly termed a godly Man, and no Man else can be properly called by that Name. And therefore if we would not be mistaken in a matter of such Consequence as this is, in order to our finding out what real Godliness is, we must search into the true Nature of Divine Worship, and seriously consider with ourselves, what it is in a Scripture Sense to worship God.

Now if we consult the Scriptures to know wherein the Worship of God doth principally consist, we may easily find that as God hath made both our Souls and Bodies, so he expects that we should worship him in both, according to their several Capacities. And by Consequence that there are two sorts of Acts wherein Godliness in general consisteth: The one External, performed by the Body together with the Soul; the other Internal, performed by the Soul without the Body.

For, *First*, nothing can be more plain and certain than that God in Scripture requires some kind of External or Bodily Worship from us, whereby to testify our Acknowledgment of his Sovereignty over us, as likewise of our Dependance upon, and Submission unto him. Insomuch that, it is very observable, all the Words that

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are ever used to express our Worshipping Serm. II.
of God, in the Old Testament, they properly and primarily signifie our outward
Gesture and Deportment before him. For there are but Three Words that the Holy
Ghost ever makes use of there to this purpose; and they are *ניע ביד* and *השתחוה*
whereof the one signifies the Bending of our Knees; the other the Bowing of our
Heads with the upper Part of our Bodies; and the last the Prostration of ourselves
upon the Ground with our Hands spread out before him. And it would be very
strange if God should use no other Words to express his Worship, than what denote
the reverential Postures of our Bodies, and yet should require no bodily Wor-
ship at all from us; which is such a blind and groundless Conceit, that I may
confidently assert, that whosoever entertains it, never understood the true Mean-
ing and Purport of the Second Commandment, wherein God expressly enjoins us
not to bow or fall down before any Image or Idol, which certainly he would
never have done, had not that been an essential Part of his own Worship. And if
it be no Part of Divine Worship to kneel, bow or fall down before God,
neither can any Man be said to Worship an Idol, by kneeling, bowing or falling
down

down before it; but seeing God hath expressly forbidden us to do so to an Idol, he hath thereby as expressly enjoined us to Worship him after that manner. And verily had he never enjoined it to us, yet the very Law of Nature would teach us the same thing. For if we really fear and dread the Presence but of an earthly Prince, we cannot but express it some way or other before him. How much more shall we sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself by our reverential Deportment in his Presence, if he be our only fear, and our only dread as he ought to be? In-
somuch that for my own Part I think that Man must have a great deal more Charity than now is usual in the World, that can think or believe that such Persons truly fear God, who can sit as confidently before him, and speak as malapertly to him as if he was their fellow Creature. If this be to Worship God, I must confess myself altogether ignorant of what it is to Worship him. For if I know any thing of God, and of that Service and Honour which is due unto him, we that live and move, and have our being in him, ought to be possessed with such an awe and dread, such a fear and reverence of him, as not to dare to carry ourselves irreverently or unseemly

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Serm. II.

in his Presence; especially while he is speaking unto us, or we to him. Yea, whatsoever Duty we perform either to or for him, if we would have it to be acceptable to him, we must perform it *with reverence and godly fear*, Heb. xii. 28. And the Reason which the Apostle there gives, is, because *our God is a consuming Fire*, ver. 29. And verily, he that rightly knows, seriously considers, and clearly apprehends that, even that *God is a consuming Fire*, that he is a great and glorious, an infinitely powerful, almighty, and terrible being, such a one cannot but express his fear and reverence of him in all his approaches to him, he cannot be like the proud *Pharisee*, who had the Impudence to talk as malapertly with God as if he had been his fellow; and to say, *God I thank thee that I am not as other Men, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, nor even as this Publican*, Luke xviii. 11. Where he had the Confidence to tell God a Lye to his Face, in saying that himself was not so Unjust as the *Publican*, that stood by when Christ himself saith afterwards, that the *Publican* went home justified rather than he: And why did he so? But by reason of his Reverence and humble Deportment before God; for he stood *afar off, and would not so much as lift up his Eyes to*
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Vol. VIII. *Heaven, but smote upon his Breast, saying, God be merciful to me a Sinner, ver. 13.* so that he testified his inward fear and dread of God by his outward Carriage and Behaviour before him. And if any of you desire to manifest yourselves to be truly godly indeed, you must be sure to lay aside all carelesness and indifferency, much more, all irreverence and rudeness in the Presence and Worship of God, and to perform all your Devotions to him with all the Modesty and Humility, with all the Reverence and Solemnity that possibly you can, as becometh those who believe themselves to be engaged in the highest Acts that they are or can be capable of performing.

How you ought to express your inward fear of God by your outward Deportment before him, I shall not undertake to determine, or rather I need not do it. For I dare confidently assert that he that truly fears God, will be so far from thinking these solemn Gestures prescribed by our Church in Divine Worship to be either superfluous or superstitious, that he will rather conclude them to be essential Parts of the Worship of God, and that they naturally flow from, and necessarily follow upon the true fear and reverence of the eternal God wheresoever it is.

But,

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But, though, in order to our worship-
ing God aright, and by Consequence to
our being truly godly, it is necessary
that we behave ourselves thus solemnly
and reverently in his Presence and Ser-
vice, yet we must not think that this
is all that is required of us; for, in-
deed, it is nothing at all without those
other sort of Acts wherein, as I told you,
Godliness consisteth, even the internal
Acts of the Soul, from whence these out-
ward Performances of the Body do or
ought to flow. And what these are we
come now to consider. And I shall en-
deavour to explain them so clearly unto
you, that none of you, but for the future,
may know what it really is to be godly.

Serm. II.

First, Therefore, to your being or liv-
ing godly, it is indispensably required that
your Minds be possessed with a due Sense
of God, with right, and if possible clear
Conceptions of him, so as not only to be
able to talk or discourse of God as he is
the Creator, the Preserver, Governour,
Possessor, and Disposer of all Things in
the World; for that a wicked and un-
godly Man may do as well, and perhaps
far better than he that is truly pious. For
we may find by our own Experience,
that we may utter many things with our
Mouths which we do not rightly apprehend

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hend, nor have any true sense of them in our Hearts. And, therefore, although it be necessary that we have such a Knowledge of God as to be able to discourse of what he is, and hath done, and still doth in the World, yet the bare Theory or Speculation of such Things cannot be reckoned amongst the Acts of true Godliness; because not only ungodly Men, but the Devils themselves go so far, and yet remain Ungodly and Devils still. But that Knowledge of God which is the first Act of Godliness, and that whereupon all the rest are grounded, although it pre-supposeth right Notions and Conceptions of the Divine Perfections, yet it consisteth principally in a due Sense of God upon the Heart; what that is I must confess myself unable to express, so as that any one should apprehend it but they that have it. But only in general we may call it an experimental Knowledge, whereby a Man hath the Sense or Experience of these Perfections upon his own Heart, which he knows and believes to be in God, whereby his Thoughts and Conceptions are so strangely enlarged, that he seems to apprehend him that is altogether incomprehensible, so that he is no longer able to endure himself, but is forced to cry out with *Job*, in
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the same Case, *by reason of God's Highness* Serm. II. *I cannot endure*, Job. xxxi. 23. This is that Knowledge of God, which the Scripture so often enjoins, whereby a Man sensibly apprehends, and contemplates the Great God as the First of all Beings, the Cause of all Causes, the Chiefest of all Goods, the Source of all Happiness, and the Center of all Perfections, as one whose Nature is so pure, whose Glory is so transcendent, whose Wisdom is so incomprehensible, whose Power is so boundless, and all whose Perfections are so high, so glorious, so infinite and eternal, that our highest Apprehensions of him are still infinitely below him. And when once a Man hath attained to such a Sense of God as this is, all other Acts of Piety will be facile and easie to him; for indeed he cannot but exert them.

For *Secondly*, Another Act of Godliness, and a great One too, *is to love the Lord your God with all your Souls*, Matt. xxii. 37. that is, to chuse him as your chiefest Good, and prefer him in your choicest Affections before all things in the World besides; to look upon Riches, Pleasures, Honours, Health, Strength, Life, Liberty, and all things else, as less than nothing and vanity, in Comparison of so glorious and infinite a Good as he
is.

Vol. VIII. is. But he that knows God as I have shewn you ought to do, cannot chuse but chuse him before all things else; for he that apprehends God as his chiefest Good, must love him too under the same Notion. And therefore, so long as your Affections are entangled among your Creature-Comforts, Enjoyments, and Relations, so as to be fixed upon them more than upon God, you are far as yet from being Godly, far from worshipping God as ye ought to do, because you give to the Creature the highest Honour and Worship which is due to God, even your Hearts, your Love and Affection. And by Consequence, as you ever desire to learn and practice the Lesson which the Grace of God here teacheth, you must besure to gather up all your scattered Affections from all things upon Earth, and raise and unite them upon him that made them, and who therefore made them that himself alone might have them.

Thirdly; The Sacred Fire of Divine Love being thus enkindled in your Breasts, it must break forth into ardent Desires after him whom your Souls love. You must not think that you love God before all things else, so long as you desire any thing else before him, until you can say with *David, Whom have I in heaven but thee, neither is there any thing that I desire upon*
earth

earth in comparison of thee, Psal. lxxiii. 25. And it being natural for us to labour for that which we desire, yea so that our Endeavours after it are always proportional to our Desires of it: Hence, as we are to desire so we are to seek God before all things else, and to make use of all means that lead to the Enjoyment of him, so as always to follow our Saviour's Rule, to *seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness* in the first place, *Mat. vi. 33.* And he that always doth so may be properly said to live godly :

Fourthly: As our Love is to be fixed upon, and our Desires to be carried after, so is our Joy to be placed in God alone, so as to make him the only Object of all our Happiness and Felicity. We must not think to find any true Joy or Comfort there where God was never pleased to put it, even in any Creature whatsoever. But we must always rejoyce in God, and in him alone, both when we have and when we have not any thing else to rejoyce in, still observing the Apostle's Command, *to rejoyce in the Lord always,* *Phil. iv. 4.*


Fifthly: But we are so to rejoyce in the Lord as to make him the only Object of our Fear too, fearing nothing in the World so much as his Anger and Dis-
F pleasure

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pleasure against us. This is the way where-
 by himself hath commanded us to sanctifie
 him the Lord of Hosts, by making him our
 only Fear and our only Dread: *Sancti-
 fie the Lord of Hosts himself*, saith the
 Prophet, *let him be your fear, let him be
 your dread*, Isa. viii. 13. And verily this
 is so great a Part of Godliness, that in the
 Old Testament it is frequently, yea con-
 stantly put for the whole, Godliness there
 being generally termed the Fear of God.
 And so in the Language our Saviour spake
 there is no other Word for Godliness but
 only *φοβος*, the Fear of God ;
 so that no Man can be said to be godly but
 he that fears God ; and whosoever fears
 God may be justly said to be a godly
 Man ; yea he is therefore a godly Man
 because he fears God, but he that fears
 God dare not but obey his Command-
 ments.

Sixthly : Hence in the Sixth Place, in
 order to your being godly, it is necessary
 that you obey all the Commands of God.
 I do not say it is necessary only to do
 what God commands, but you must there-
 fore do it because God commands it, other-
 wise you cannot be said to obey him in
 the doing of it. And whatsoever you do
 in obedience unto God, you thereby make
 it an Act of Godliness or of Piety towards
 God,

God, although the Matter of the Act be Serm. II.
not referred immediately unto him, *ex gr.* 
When you give an Alms to the Poor, if
you do it out of pure Obedience unto
God, though the Alms you give respect
the Poor, and so it is an Act of Justice or
Charity, yet your giving it after that
manner, makes it an Act of Piety towards
God, and an high one too, in that your
Eye is fixed upon God's Commands, at
the same time that your hand is stretched
out to relieve the Poor. And by this
means, not only our praying and hearing,
and the like, but every Act of our Life
both may and ought to be an Act of God-
liness, for all our Actions are to be accor-
ding to God's Command, and we are to
do then only upon that Account, because
they are so; and whatsoever we thus do
in obedience to God, cannot but be a god-
ly Act.


Seventhly: But there is still another Act
of Godliness behind, without which all the
rest will cease to be so, and that is be-
lieving and trusting in God, and in such
Promises as he hath made unto us in Je-
sus Christ; for that trusting in God is
really a Duty incumbent upon all, can be
denied by none that believe the Scriptures,
wherein we are as expressly commanded to
trust in the Lord with all our hearts, as to

Vol. VIII. love him with all our hearts, *Prov. iii. 5.*
 But all the Ground that we have to trust and depend upon God, is only because he hath made us several Promises of good things unto us, and sealed them also in the Blood of his only Son: and therefore he expects and commands that we take his Word for what he hath said, and depend upon him for the fulfilling of it; as believing him to be both infinitely wise, faithful, and able to perform whatsoever he hath promised. And whosoever doth not thus believe in him, so as to trust and rely upon what he hath said, it is plain that he suspects either his faithfulness to his Promise, or else his ability to perform it: Which cannot but be acknowledged one of the greatest Sins that we can possibly be guilty of. And so on the other side, our trusting in him is certainly one of the highest Acts of Godliness that we can possibly exert: yea, it is that which the Scripture lays so much stress upon, that without it no other Acts of Godliness can be accepted of as such by God: For we cannot but be conscious to our selves that the best Acts of Piety that we can perform are very defective, and fraught with many sinful Infirmities, and so in themselves are not really good and pious Acts.

ACTS. But God in his Gospel hath been pleased to promise us, that if we do but sincerely endeavour to perform them or well as we can, and trust in him and his Promise for it, he will pardon our defects and accept of what we do for Christ Jesus sake: Which trusting in Jesus Christ, or the Promises made in him, is that Act of Faith to which our Justification or Acceptance in the Gospel is so frequently ascribed, and which in the Old Testament is called trusting in the Lord, in the New, believing in Jesus Christ, upon which our Eternal Salvation is expressly said to depend; because nothing that we do can be accepted of without Jesus Christ, nor by him neither without trusting on those Promises which are made and confirmed in him. And therefore, in order to our living so as we are here commanded, even a Godly Life, or such a Life as may be accepted of as Godly, it is absolutely necessary, that to the other Acts of Godliness before-mentioned, we add this of trusting in God, which alone crowns all the rest, and renders them acceptable in Jesus Christ.

Thus now I have shewn you how you may and ought to lead, not only a Sober and Righteous, but also a Godly Life, as the Grace of God here teacheth you to

Vol. VIII. do, which you may do by keeping your
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 Hearts and Minds continually possessed  
 with a due Sense and awful Apprehen-  
 sions of God, by loving him with all  
 your Hearts, by desiring him above all  
 things else, by rejoicing in him as your  
 chiefest Good, by making him your only  
 Fear and your only Dread, by obeying  
 to the utmost of your Power whatsoever  
 he hath commanded you; and when you  
 have done all, trusting only on the Pro-  
 mises which he hath made in Christ, for  
 your Pardon and Acceptance. These are  
 the things which the Grace of God re-  
 quires of you, in teaching you to live  
 Godly. And need I now use any more Ar-  
 guments to perswade you to the Practice  
 of what you have now heard? I hope I  
 need not: For I know I speak to none  
 but Rational and Understanding Per-  
 sons, who are all capable both of know-  
 ing and doing whatsoever I have been  
 speaking of, yea and who hope and ex-  
 pect too e're long to go to Heaven? But  
 give me leave to ask you seriously as in  
 the Presence of God how do any of you  
 think to get thither? Do you ever look  
 to go to Heaven any other way than  
 that which God himself hath prescribed  
 in his holy Word? Is it not by the Grace  
 of God in Jesus Christ that you expect  
 your

your Sins shall be pardoned, and your Souls **Serm. II.**  
saved? But what! Doth not this very   
Grace of God, from which you expect these  
glorious things, expressly teach you to live  
soberly, righteously and godly in this pre-  
sent World? With what Confidence then  
can you expect to receive the Blessings  
which the Grace of God hath promised  
to you, if you will not perform those  
Duties which it requireth of you? No,  
do not deceive your selves, there is not  
one Duty which the Grace of God here  
enjoins you, and which I have endeavour'd  
this Day to explain unto you, but you  
must do it, or never come to Heaven.  
And therefore let me beg of you to dally  
no longer in a matter of such Consequence,  
but devote your selves wholly to the Pra-  
ctice of these Duties, for nothing less than  
your Eternal Welfare depends upon it; for  
these are the Gospel-Terms upon which  
your Salvation depends; and unless you  
come up to them, I dare assure you that  
although you be called, you will never be  
chosen. And therefore be advised to set  
upon these great Duties before it be too  
late, otherwise, remember my Words, you  
will one Day wish you had, but then wish-  
ing will do no good.



Holiness the great Design of  
the Gospel-Dispensation.


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## S E R M O N III.

On TIT. II. 13.

*Looking for that blessed Hope,  
and the glorious Appearing of  
the great God, and our Savi-  
our Jesus Christ.*

**T**HE Apostle in the Words im-  
mediately foregoing these, ac-  
quaints us with the great My-  
stery of Man's Salvation by *the*  
*Grace of God*, together with the Doctrines  
which the same *Grace* teacheth all those  
to whom it brings Salvation. *The Grace*  
*of God*, saith he, *which brings Salvation*  
*hath appeared to all Men*, ver. 11. That  
is Gods infinite Love and Mercy to Man-  
kind in sending his Son into the World to  
die

die for us, it is that which hath brought Serm. III.  
Salvation to us, not so as to exclude either   
Christ's Satisfaction for us, or our Obedi-  
ence unto God; but so that our Salvation  
is still to be ultimately resolved into God's  
Grace, and ascribed to his infinite Mercy  
and Compassion to fallen Man, as it is  
revealed to us in the Gospel of Jesus  
Christ, which hath now appeared to all  
Men, putting them into a way how they  
may be recovered from the State of Sin  
and Misery, into a State of Grace and  
eternal Salvation, by the Merits and Me-  
diation of Jesus Christ our Lord and Sa-  
viour.

This therefore is that saving Grace of  
God whereby every Soul here present may  
attain to everlasting Bliss and Happiness;  
but in order to your partaking of it, it  
is indispensably required that you observe  
what *the Grace of God* teacheth, as well  
as what it hath promised to you.

But what is it which *the Grace of God*  
here teacheth you to do? Why it teach-  
eth you that denying Ungodliness and  
worldly Lusts, you should live soberly,  
righteously, and godly in this present  
World. The Meaning of which Words  
in brief is, That that Grace by which  
alone it is possible for you to be saved,  
teacheth you to deny, renounce, and for-  
sake



fake whatsoever is offensive unto God, or contrary to his Law and Nature; that you do not blaspheme his Name, nor prophane his Sabbaths, nor despise his Ordinances, nor abuse his Mercies, nor slight his Judgments, nor mistrust his Promises, nor carry yourselves irreverently in his Presence. It teacheth you also to deny, avoid and hate all worldly Lusts, whether the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lusts of the Eye, or the Pride of Life, to keep yourselves within the Bounds of Modesty and Temperance; neither ambitious of the Honours, desirous of the Pleasures, nor covetous of the Riches of this transient World. It teacheth you to live soberly, that is, to avoid all excess in eating and drinking, so as never to overcharge your Bodies, distemper your Brains, nor discompose yourselves for the Works either of your general or particular Calling; that you avoid all inordinate Desires of, and Love to the Things of this Life; that you keep your Passions all within their proper Limits, and never suffer them to be either unruly or exorbitant; that you have moderate and sober Thoughts of yourselves, so as never to be drunk or befotted with Self-applause, or Admiration: As also that you be well-grounded, grave and sober in Matters of  
Reli-

Religion, not reeling too and fro from Sermon. III.  
one Opinion to another; but remain firm and stedfast, especially to the fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith. It teacheth you likewise to live righteously, that is to love your Neighbour as yourselves, to render to all their due, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, and honour to whom honour; as also that you model all your civil Actions by that golden Rule prescribed by our blessed Saviour, *That whatsoever you would that others should do to you, you do even so to them.* It teacheth you, *lastly*, to live Godly too; that is, that you sincerely perform all such Duties as you owe immediately to God that made you; that you serve him with a perfect Heart and willing Mind, and worship him with reverence and godly fear; that you have a due Sense and awful Apprehensions of him, and love him with all your Hearts and Souls, with all your Might and Mind; that you desire his Love and Favour, and rejoice in his Presence and Service more than all things in the World besides; that you fear nothing so much as his Displeasure, and therefore obey whatsoever he hath commanded; and when you have done all to trust only in the Promises which he hath



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hath made in Christ, for the Pardon of your Sins, and the Acceptance of what you do. These, these are the great Lessons which *the Grace of God* that brings Salvation teacheth, and requires you all to learn and practise.

Now the Apostle having thus shewn what it is which *the Grace of God* revealed in the Gospel enjoins us; and knowing how backward we are to the Performance of such Duties as these are. He here in the next Place presents us with the best Means, the highest Motive, and the strongest Encouragement that he can to set ourselves in good Earnest upon it, and that is to consider that transcendent Glory and Happiness which they shall hereafter have, *who denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World; looking, saith he, for that blessed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ: That is in brief, expecting that Blessedness which we hope for when the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ shall appear in Glory.*

The Words being thus brought in, it is easie to gather and observe several things from them; but I shall instance only in Three Things wherein the Scope and Substance of the Words is briefly  
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contained from those Words. Therefore **Serm. III.**  
we may observe,

I. That Jesus Christ, our Saviour, is the great God.

II. That this great God shall one Day appear in Glory.

III. That blessed Hope which we look for at the glorious Appearance of Christ, should encourage and excite us to *live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.* Of these Three Things therefore I shall speak in the same order wherein I here propound them, beginning with that which is placed last in my Text; but must be first explained, because it makes way for the other Two.

*First,* Therefore I observe from hence that our blessed Saviour is really and truly God; being here called the great God. For his Appearance is here said to be the glorious Appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Indeed, whatsoever is necessary to be known concerning our blessed Saviour is briefly couched under these Words, both his Natures, his Office, and his Unction, or Ordination to that Office, being contained in them. His human Nature is intimated in his Name Jesus; for so he was named  
when

Vol. VIII. when he was born of the Virgin *Mary*, called therefore *Jesus of Nazareth*; his Divine Nature is here asserted in his being called, *The great God*. His Office is implied in his being our Saviour. *The great God and our Saviour*. Not only Saviour in general, but our Saviour in particular; that is, the Saviour of Mankind. And then his *Unction or Ordination* to this Office is plainly signified, by his Name *Christ* that is anointed, and so ordained by God to be the Saviour of Mankind. But not to insist upon the other; the principal Thing I desire you here to observe, is the Divinity of our blessed Saviour, plainly and expressly here asserted. For nothing can be more clear than that he is here called, *The great God*. The glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour *Jesus Christ*; where the great God cannot be understood of any other but of our Saviour *Jesus Christ*. And that for *Two Reasons*.

*First*, In the Greek Text, one and the same Article serves both these Predicates, τὸ μέγας θεὸς ἢ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν, not ἢ τὸ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν; which we therefore rightly translate of the great God, and our Saviour; not of the great God, and of our Saviour; as if the great God, and our Saviour, were here *Two distinct Persons*.

sons: For the *Greek* Idiom would not admit of such an Interpretation; constantly requiring that where one only Article is used in common to Two Predicates, they be both referred to the same Subject; and by Consequence that it is Jesus Christ alone who is here called both the great God, and our Saviour. Serm. III.

But that you may not think that the Divinity of Christ can be proved from this Place only, upon so nice a Criticism as an Article. I desire you to observe in the second Place, that the glorious Appearing here spoken of, is likewise an undeniable Demonstration of it. For we never read in Scripture of the glorious Appearing of God the Father; but only of Jesus Christ, whose Second coming in Glory to judge the World, is called his glorious Appearing; or, ἐπιφάνια ἡ δόξης αὐτοῦ, The Appearance of his Glory. But here is express mention made of the glorious Appearing of the great God; which therefore cannot be understood of any other but of that great God who is likewise our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Nothing therefore can be more plain than that our blessed Saviour is here called the great God: Or as *St. Chrysostom* observes, ἔτι πρὸς τὸ μέγας φησὶν, ἀλλ' ἀπολύτως μέγας, he doth not say relatively  
Great,



Vol. VIII. Great, but absolutely Great; none being greater than he. And therefore he cries out, *πῶ, εἰπὼν οἱ τῷ πατρὶ ἐλάττονα τῷ υἱὸν λέγοντες*, where are they that say, The Son is less than the Father; seeing he is here absolutely called the great God. Hence *Athanasius* useth this Place against the *Arians*, to prove, *ὅτι μέγας θεὸς ἐκλήθη ὁ υἱός*, that the Son is called the great God. And so do the other Fathers, both *Greek* and *Latin*, frequently produce these Words to prove that the Son is not only God, but the same Great and Almighty God that the Father is.

And verily was there no other place in all the Scriptures whereupon to ground this the fundamental Article of our Christian Faith; this to any sober and unprejudiced Person would be sufficient. Howsoever to confirm you still more in this great Truth, least living in such a sceptical and wavering Age as this is, you should be persuaded to doubt of it. I desire you to consider, that the same Names, the same Properties, the same Works, and the same Worship which is ascribed to the Father, is likewise frequently in Holy Scripture given to the Son: So that he that denies the Son to be God, may as well deny that we have any reason to believe the Father to be so. And therefore

fore, if this be once proved, you will have Serm. III.  
as clear a Demonstration of the Divinity of Christ, as the Nature of the thing is capable of. But now to prove this;

1. I say the same Names that are given to the Father, are ascribed also to the Son in the Holy Scriptures. For, *Is the Father called God? so is the Son:* For, *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God,* Joh. i. 1. So also, *Acts xx. 28. Which he, that is, which God hath purchased with his own blood,* which cannot possibly be understood of any but God the Son. *Is the Father the true God? so is the Son,* 1 Joh. v. 20. *Is the Father over all, God blessed for ever? so is the Son,* Rom. ix. 5. *Is the Father called the Lord? so is the Son,* Joh. xx. 28. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Isa. xl. 3. Joh. i. 23.

2. The same Properties or Perfections which are attributed to the Father, are attributed likewise to the Son. *Is the Father eternal? so is the Son,* Rev. i. 17, 18. *Is the Father omniscient? so is the Son; he knoweth all things,* Joh. xxi. 17. Is the Father omnipresent, or every where present? so is the Son. *For wheresoever, where but two or three, saith he, are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,* Matth. xviii. 20. which is impossible he should be, was not he present every where.

Vol. VIII. *Is the Father omnipotent, or the Almighty God? so is the Son, Rev. i. 8.*

3. The same works also which the Father is said to do are ascribed likewise to the Son. Did the Father make all things? so did the Son. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made, Joh. i. 3. Col. i. 16.* Doth the Father preserve and uphold all things? so doth the Son; *he upholdeth all things by the word of his power, Heb. i. 3. And by him all things consist, Col. i. 17.* Doth the Father forgive sins? that certainly none can do but God, and yet the Son doth so too, *Mark ii. 5, 7.*

4. The same Honour and Worship which is due to the Father, ought to be given to the Son too. Are we obliged to believe in God the Father? so are we bound to believe in the Son too, *Joh. xiv. 1.* Is the Father to be worshipped, by all Creatures? so is the Son, *even by the Angels themselves, Heb. i. 6.* Insomuch that our Saviour tells us, *that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father, Joh. v. 23. And as we pray to the Father, so are we to pray to the Son too, Luke xvii. 3. Acts vii. 59.*

Many other Arguments might be produced for the Confirmation of this great Truth, even that our Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ really is as he is here called,  
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the Great God: For I think it is impossible that so high a Truth as this is should be expressed more clearly in the Holy Scriptures than this is expressed. Howsoever, the Arguments already produced may suffice to confirm any impartial, unprejudiced, sober and considerative Person in the Truth, that Jesus Christ is really the same Great and Eternal God as the Father is, and by Consequence, co-equal, co-essential and con-substantial with the Father, which being once acknowledged, it will easily be granted, that there is a Trinity of Persons in the Divine Nature; for no Man ever denied the one that believed the other. Neither indeed can any one in Reason deny a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, that acknowledgeth the Godhead of the Son; for the Father and Son being both Divine Persons, the Holy Ghost must needs be so too, he being still associated with them; as where *St. Paul saith, The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, 2 Cor. xiii. 14.* where we have all the Three Persons distinctly mentioned. As also in the Institution of the Sacrament of Baptism, where our Blessed Saviour expressly commands his Apostles, saying, *Go ye therefore and teach or disciple all Nation, baptizing them in the Name*

Serm. III.  
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Vol. VIII. *of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Mat. xxviii. 19.* which Words I cannot but wonder how any Man can read, and yet deny or doubt of a Trinity of Divine Persons; seeing the Sacrament of Baptism itself, whereby we are all initiated into the Christian Religion, by Christ's own Institution is to be administered in the Name of Three distinct Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: For how can any Man imagine that Two other Persons should be joyned with the Father, in one of the highest Acts of Divine Worship, even Baptism itself, if they were not really and truly Divine Persons as well as he; or if they were not one and the same God with himself. For although there be a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, yet we must still believe there is but one Godhead in that Trinity. According to St. *John's* Words, *There are Three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one,* 1 Joh. v. 7. That is, tho' they be Three Persons, they are still but One God; One in Nature, One in Power, One in Wisdom, One in Glory, One in all manner of Perfections whatsoever; so that all Three, and every one of the Three is that One Glorious, Eternal, Supreme, and Universal Being which we call God.

So

So much may suffice for the First Observation I presented you from these Words, even that Jesus Christ our Saviour is the Great God. The next Thing to be considered is, That this Great God will one Day appear in Glory, *looking for that blessed hope, saith the Apostle, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; for the opening of which we must know there is a two-fold Appearing of Christ; the one is *ἐπιφάνεια ἡ χάρις*, the appearing of his Grace, spoken of, *v. 11.* the other is, *ἐπιφάνεια ἡ δόξα*, the appearing of his Glory mentioned here. His first Coming was with great Lowliness and Humility, the second will be with as great Majesty and Glory, concerning which his glorious Appearing, the Angels certified the Apostles, *Acts i. 11.* *In like manner, that is, as he was carried to heaven in a cloud, so shall he come down in a cloud again, and that with power and great glory, as himself tells us, Matt. xxiv. 30.* The Angels also, and the Archangels shall attend upon him, and be both his Heralds and Trumpeters, *1 Thes. iv. 16.* At which time, to manifest his great Power and Glory to all the World, he will do these things which we shall all be then Eye-witnesses of, and not only we but all, both Angels and Men.

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1. He will by his Almighty Power raise the dead; so that whatsoever Humane Bodies were ever endowed with a Rational Soul, how long soever they have been scattered into Dust and Atoms, shall then be reduced to their ancient Form again, every Particle being fetched from the remote Places where they have been dispersed, and hastening into the same Places where before they were, so as to compose the selfsame individual Bodies which before they did. This our Saviour himself hath told us of beforehand, assuring us, *that all that are in their graves shall then hear his voice*, Joh. v. 28. Joh. xi. 43.

2. All Mankind that ever did or shall live upon the face of the Earth, and carried again into it, being then raised from their Graves; they, together with such as shall be then alive, shall be gathered together, before Christ, without any Distinction of Ages, Sex, Conditions, Languages, or Estates, they shall all be equally summoned and stand upon the same ground before him that shall then sit as Judge both of Quick and Dead; for himself hath told us, *That when he, the Son of Man, shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all Nations*, Mat. xxv. 31, 32.

3. All

3. All Nations being thus assembled before him, he shall review every Man's Actions that he ever did; together with the very Thoughts that ever sprang up in his Heart, and the Words that ever proceeded out of his Mouth. Then shall your secret Sins be laid open, and the very Thoughts of your Heart be made as manifest as the most notorious Actions of your whole Life; for nothing can be hid from that All-seeing Judge that then will sit upon the Bench; for he hath all the Thoughts, the Words, and Actions of your whole Life written in the Book of his Omniscience, which your own Consciences shall then give witness to, either for or against your selves. This St. John had long ago revealed to him, when he saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the Books were opened: and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works, Apoc. xx. 12, 13. And what St. John then saw in a Vision, you shall see e'er long with your own Eyes: For we must all appear before the

Vol. VIII *Judgment-Seat of Christ, 2 Cor. v. 10.*

4. Your Actions being all thus scanned, and your Lives examined by the Word of God, before this Great God at his glorious Appearing, he will then pass a final and irrevocable Sentence upon all Persons, such as have truly repented of their Sins and believed in the Gospel, they being accepted of as righteous by the Merits of Jesus Christ, shall have that blessed Sentence pronounced upon them, *Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, Mat. xxv. 34.* The Righteous being thus cleared from all Indictments brought against them, they shall then with Joy and Triumph see the Condemnation of the wicked World, even all impenitent and unbelieving Persons, who having nothing to plead for themselves, will be soon found guilty, and will therefore have that dreadful Sentence passed upon them, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, Mat. xxv. 41.* Sentence being thus passed, it will be accordingly executed; for *these, the wicked, shall go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal, ver. 46.* These are the great Things which Christ shall do at his glorious Appearing, and which shall
make

make his Appearing seem so glorious. Sermon. III.

The *Third* Thing which I promised to shew from these Words, is, That that blessed Hope which we look for at the glorious Appearance of Christ should excite and encourage us all *to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.* For this is the great Argument which the Apostle here useth, why we should learn and practice the Lesson which *the Grace of God* here teacheth, even *to live soberly, righteously and godly*; because we look for so much Happiness and Felicity, when Christ shall appear in Glory. *Looking, saith he, for that blessed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God*; that is, looking for or expecting that Blessedness we hope for at the glorious Appearing of Christ. For the blessed Hope, is here put for the Blessedness we hope for.

Now in speaking unto this, we must first consider what that Blessedness is which we hope for, and which shall certainly be conferred upon all those in the World to come, that live soberly, righteously and godly in this: And then we shall easily shew how the Expectation of so great a Blessedness should put us upon the diligent and unwearied Prosecution of true Grace and Vertue in this present World, as the only way whereby it is possible to attain unto it. As




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As to the *First*, You must not expect that I should give you a perfect Description of that transcendent Glory and Happiness which is prepared in the World to come for all those that truly love and fear, honour and obey God in this. I being as unable to express what it is to you, as I am desirous to Experience what it is in myself. Alas, we poor Mortals upon Earth that ordinarily converse with nothing but Dirt and Clay, cannot here behold the Glory that shines above you; yonder glorious Sun! Alas we cannot so much as begin to look upon it, but our Eyes are immediately dazzled! How then shall we be able to give a full Description of it? No: That is more than can be expected from any one that was never there: That was never there did I say? Nay I much question whether it be possible for them that are there, to express it to our Capacities; or rather, I believe it altogether impossible, though they feel it in themselves, they cannot tell it unto others. How much less can we who never yet enjoyed it, be able to declare it fully unto others? Howsoever, that I may give you what Light I can into it, I shall endeavour to intimate unto you what Conceptions myself do, and you may entertain of it, that so you may be the more excited

excited to look after it with all your might and main, and by Consequence to walk in the narrow Path that leads unto it. Serm. III.

First, Therefore, so soon as ever any of you shall be got to Heaven, you will be immediately freed from whatsoever is Evil.

1. You shall there be freed from the Evil of Sin, which is indeed the Evil of all other Evils; and if ye be true Penitents, it cannot but be the greatest Trouble you have in the World that you are guilty, and still subject unto Sin. But if you be once acquitted from your Sins before Christ's Judgment Seat, and declared Righteous by God himself, you shall be no more grieved at the Remembrance of your former Sins; nor groan under the insupportable Weight and Burden of them; but shall be as if you had never sinned at all. Here it cannot but make your Hearts even sink within you to consider how ungrateful you have been to him that made you, and how hainously you have transgressed those righteous Laws which he hath been pleased to enjoin you; the Remembrance whereof cannot but sometimes make you cry out in the bitterness of your Souls, woe unto us that we have sinned. But when once you are got to Heaven, all Tears even of Repentance itself shall be wiped from your Eyes;

Vol. VIII.  Eyes; for your Sins shall all be blotted out, and your Transgressions remembered no more, neither by God, so as to punish you, nor yet by yourselves, so as to be troubled for them: But you shall be as perfectly freed from them both in the Court of Heaven, as also of your own Consciences, as if you had never been guilty of them, nor defiled with them.

And yet this is not all neither; for you will not only be there freed from the Guilt, but also from the Strength and Filth of Sin. As no Transgression shall be imputed to you, so neither shall any Corruption remain in you, so long as you are in the Flesh, the Flesh will be in you, *there being not a just Man upon Earth that doth good, and sinneth not*, Eccles. vii. 20. And if your Hearts be truly converted and inclined to God, it cannot but be an exceeding Grief and Trouble to you, that you cannot obey and serve him with such a perfect Heart, and a willing Mind, as you ought and desire to do. But our Comfort is, that when we come to Heaven, as all Tears shall be wiped from our Eyes, so shall all Sin be banished from our Souls too. There will be no Darkness in your Minds, nor Error in your Judgments; no Distraction in your Thoughts, nor Corruption in your Consciences; no Perverseness
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in your Wills, nor Disorder in your Passions; Serm. III.
no spot, no blot, no blemish, nor Imperfection in your whole Souls: But your Souls will be all made *the Spirits of just Men made perfect*, Heb. xii. 23. And he that thinks not this an extraordinary Happiness indeed, it is because he knows not as yet what true Happiness is. For this is certainly the Ground and Foundation of all the Happiness that we either are or can be capable of. For until our Souls be thus freed from their Infirmities, and reduced to their primitive and perfect Frame and Constitution, they are not in a Capacity of enjoying the chiefest Good, nor by Consequence of being Happy. Neither doth this, our Freedom from Sin, qualify us only for the Enjoyment of Happiness; but it is itself too one great Part of the Happiness we desire to enjoy. It being no small Part of Happiness to be free from Misery; which none can be that is not void of Sin. But he that is void of Sin, cannot but be upon that very account free from Misery; Sin being the only Cause of all the Misery in the World. And therefore it must needs rejoice our Hearts to think of Heaven, when we consider that we shall there ride triumphant over all those Sins, which we are here so continually molested, and fre-



frequently foiled by. The Consideration whereof, should make us methinks, if it were lawful, even to Envy the blessed Estate of the glorified Saints in Heaven, or at least it should make us think the Time long till we come to them, that as they now are, so we may be rid of all our Lusts, freed from the Tyranny of our headstrong Corruptions, and made in our Capacity holy as God is Holy, and perfect as he is Perfect. Oh! Who can but long and thirst after such transcendent Happiness as this is? Especially considering that being freed from the Evil of Sin, we cannot but be freed from the Evil of Punishment too; for these Two are inseparable Companions; for no Man is punished for any thing but Sin. And therefore he that is absolved from all Sin; must needs be discharged from bearing any Punishment whatsoever. And yet this is the happy and blessed Condition of all such as are in Heaven. Whither, if any of you shall go, as I hope you all will; as you will not be guilty of any Sin, so neither will you be obnoxious to any Punishment or Misery whatsoever. And so,

1. You will be there free from care and fear about the Things of this World. For you will be no sooner got up to
Heaven,

Heaven, but you will presently trample Serm. III.
upon all things here below, and look upon them as below you to look upon. I need not tell you what care you have all upon you for the Concernments of this Life; how desirous you are about the getting, how solicitious about the keeping; how fearful of losing the impertinent Trifles of this transient World; what pains you take about them, running too and fro, from one Place to another, in order either to get more, or else to keep what you have got already; you cannot but be all sensible of it, being, I fear, for the most Part too subject to this Misery of your own creating. But when once you arrive at the Haven of eternal Happiness, all this stir and bustle about such fading Varieties, will immediately cease and dis-appear. You will then trouble your Heads no more about such low and pitiful Toys as these are, which perish in the using. For you will then see yourselves so fully provided for, that you need not concern yourselves, nor take care for the future; for you will have as much as you can desire. As much did I say? Yea, and infinitely more too. And how great an Happiness it will be to be freed from such Cares and Fears as you now have upon you, I need not tell you.

Vol. VIII. you. I fear many of you know it but too well by your own Experience, what Miseries the Men of this World undergo for the Concerns of it; wracking their Brains, distempering their Bodies, hazarding their Lives, breaking their Sleep, and oftentimes distracting their Minds about them. And therefore they may well be called Misers: Such Persons being certainly as miserable Creatures as any upon Earth. But there are no such in Heaven.

2. As you will be there freed from the carking and perplexing Cares of this World; so you will be freed too from all the Temptations of the Devil. He here goes about like a *roaring Lyon, seeking daily whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. v. 8. But he is confined only to these lower Regions of the World; and being once cast down from Heaven, he can never come there again. And therefore, if you be once got thither, you will then contemn his Malice, and deride his Power, as being infinitely too short to reach so high as you are got; so that as you shall have no Corruptions within, so neither will you have any Temptations from without you to Sin or Vanity.

3. Hence also you will be freed from the Gnawings and Disturbances of a guilty Conscience; which none can tell how
great

of the Gospel-Dispensation.

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great a Torture it is, but such as have it. They can acquaint you from their own Experience, that no sorrow is like to theirs; who being made as *Job* was, to possess the Sins of their Youth, their own Consciences are armed against them; so that they have an intestine War carried on within their own Bowels, and that too with such violence and heat, that it bears down all before it: Insomuch that such Persons at such a Time as this, have a kind of an Hell upon Earth, and real Misery in the Midst of all their seeming Jollity. And though you all may not as yet have undergone the Anguish of a fretted Conscience in its height and fury, yet I believe there is none of you, but sometimes or other have had some Intimations of it; and every one is continually obnoxious to its severest Torments. But this lasts only while we are upon Earth. In Heaven there is no such thing as Guilt; and therefore there can be no guilty Conscience there. No, could you look into the Breasts of all the glorified Saints which are now in Heaven, you would not see so much as a Cloud or Mist there; much less any Storm or Tempest. No, there is nothing there but Calmness, Serenity and Peace.

H

4. As



4. As you will there be at Peace within yourselves, so will you be at Peace with God too; so as to have his Wrath and Anger towards you perfectly appeased. He never frowns upon any one that is once admitted into his Court. It is true, he *is angry with the wicked every day*, Psal. vii. 11. But there are no wicked Persons there; and by Consequence none that he will be angry at. And verily, how light soever you may make of this at present, if ever any of you shall come to Heaven, you will then find that to have God reconciled to you, and well pleased with you, is indeed the principal Jewel in the Crown of Glory; there being no Joy or Pleasure, no Comfort or Happiness in the World like that of apprehending God's special Love and Favour to us. To see the Supreme Being of the World well pleased with us, to see him smiling upon us, to see him, meaning himself, as rejoicing over us, and delighting in us. Oh! Who is able to express the Joy that must needs transport the Hearts of such as behold this blessed Sight?

5. As you shall be thus freed from all Care, freed from all Temptations, from Satan, from the Torment of a guilty Conscience, and the Wrath of an incensed God; so you shall be freed likewise
from

from the Fear of ever being troubled with these things, or any thing else more. For the Immunities and Privileges granted to the New *Jerusalem*, the City that is above, are for ever; so as never to be revoked, infringed or violated. And that when you come to Heaven, you will not only know, but be perfectly assured of; which will add a great Lustre to them. For otherwise, the very Fear of losing them would damp your Comfort in the enjoying of them. But being always possessed with a firm Belief and sure Confidence that you shall never know what Sin, or Trouble, or Fear is more; though this was all that Heaven could afford you, yet it could not but be acknowledged to be a Place that deserves to be earnestly desired and sought by all.

But if you consider in the next Place that the Blessedness you hope for in the World to come, doth not only consist in Freedom from all Evil, but likewise in the Enjoyment of whatsoever is Good; this must needs enhance your Esteem and Desire of it. Forasmuch as there is nothing that you can desire to make you Happy, but in Heaven you shall have it in its Beauty and Perfection: For there you shall have; What shall you have?

Holiness the great Design

Vol. VIII. *More than Eye ever saw, or Ear heard, or the Heart of Man is able to conceive;*

1 Cor. ii. 9. And if no Heart be able to conceive it, I am sure no Mortal's Tongue can be able to express it fully to you. And, therefore, I could heartily wish, methinks, that an Angel would come down for a while, and acquaint you with the Glories that are above. But seeing we have no ground to expect that, I shall endeavour to stammer out my Conceptions of them as well as I can.

First, Therefore so soon as ever you arrive at Heaven, you will be immediately admitted into the Society of the most glorious and perfect Creatures that were ever made. Angels, Archangels, Cherubims, Seraphims, with all the Powers of Heaven, as well as glorified Saints, receiving you into their Friendship and Company; so that instead of conversing with poor sinful Mortals as you do upon Earth, you will there keep Company with pure and perfect, blessed and immortal Spirits, whose innocent, pious and heavenly Conversation cannot but be an exceeding Pleasure and Delight to you, who then will be like unto them.

2. Neither will you only have the Happiness of enjoying the Society of the best and purest Creatures; but even of
Christ

Christ himself. For you shall be where he is, and behold the Glory which God hath given him, according as himself prayed you might, *Joh. xvii. 24.* And verily, if you Love the Lord Jesus Christ above all things else, as you must do before you can get to Heaven; when you come there, it cannot surely but rejoice your Hearts to live with him whom your Souls love. Serm. III.

3. You shall not only behold Christ cloathed with your own Nature, but you shall likewise behold God himself unvail- ing his Face, and discovering his Glory and Perfections to you. For here we see but as through a Glass darkly; but there Face to Face. Now we know but in part; but then we shall know, even as we are known, *1 Cor. xiii. 12.* The Meaning whereof is, That we shall then know, behold and contemplate the eternal God himself, the Center of all Perfections, as clearly, as fully, as perfectly as our Natures either are, or can be made capable of. But here I must confess myself at a Nonplus, not able to find out Words whereby to express my own Thoughts concerning the Greatness of that Happiness which we hope to enjoy in beholding God, and in dwelling perpetually upon the Contemplation of his Divine

Vol. VIII. Perfections. Only this I may say in general, that this is certainly the only Happiness that we were at first designed and fitted for. All the Faculties of our Souls being so composed, that this, the clear Vision of God, will fill and satisfy them altogether; so that our whole Souls will be every way as full of Joy and Delight as they are able to contain. For our Understandings being thus wholly taken up with the Contemplation of God, our Wills cannot but be fully bent and inclined to him, and our Love and Affections so enflamed towards him, that our whole Souls shall be transported into nothing else but Joy and Pleasure, Comfort and Delight in the Enjoyment of him.

This, this is the great, the exceeding great and transcendent Happiness which the glorified Saints and Angels do now enjoy above yonders glorious Sun. And this is that blessed Hope, or the Blessedness we hope for, when the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ shall appear in Glory. And need I now tell you what I promised to shew in the last Place, even that the Consideration and Expectation of such Happiness as this is, should encourage and excite you all to the Practice of true Grace and Vertue, to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.

World. Will it not be superfluous to Serm. III.
prove this now? Surely it will. For how
is it possible to hear so much of Heaven,
and not desire to come thither? And
how is it possible to desire to go to Hea-
ven in good Earnest, and not to walk
in the way that leads thither? Certainly
it cannot but be impossible: Inasmuch
that say what you please, plead what
you can for yourselves, you can never
persuade me that you have any real De-
sire to go to Heaven, unless you use
the utmost of your Power to deny *Un-
godliness and worldly Lusts, and to live
soberly, righteously and godly in this
present World.* For you cannot but all
know that without this you can never
go to Heaven; seeing that that very Grace
whereby alone it is possible for you to
be saved, so expressly and plainly teach-
eth and obligeth all Men to do these
things in order to their being saved.

Let me therefore ask you seriously in
the Presence of Almighty God. Do you
desire in good Earnest to partake of the
Happiness we have now been speaking
of, even to be all glorified Saints in Hea-
ven, or do you not? If you do not: To
what purpose do you come to Church to
learn how to get to Heaven, when in
the mean time you care not whether



you ever come there or no? But if you seriously desire to go thither, What mean you to continue still in the broad Path that leads directly from it? Why is it that you do not follow your Saviour's Counsel, even to deny yourselves, take up your Crosses and follow Christ, through all the Duties and Precepts which he hath been pleased to enjoin you? What do you think to go to Heaven any other way than that which Christ hath chalked out for you? Or do you expect to be saved any other way but by him? But what, hath not he told you as plainly as he could speak, *That except ye repent you must all perish?* Luke xiii. 3. Hath not he told you with his own Mouth, *That except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven?* Matt. v. 20. Hath not he told you by his Apostle, *That without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord?* Heb. xiv. 12. And is it not here expressly said likewise, *That the same Grace of God that bringeth Salvation to Mankind, teacheth us likewise to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World?* With what Confidence then can any of you expect to be saved hereafter without

out being Holy here? What do you think to dis-annul the Counsels, and revoke the Decrees of Heaven? To make Christ himself a Lyar, and his Words of none Effect? No mistake not yourselves, whatsoever becomes of you, be sure his Word shall stand, and be made good. And by Consequence in plain terms, you will all be damned and ruined to Eternity, unless you repent and believe the Gospel, so as to Practice what *the Grace of God* here teacheth, there is no help for it. For as Men or Angels cannot, so Christ will never save you upon any other terms; he hath told you so before-hand, and therefore you may believe him.

Serm. III.
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I speak not this to frighten or discourage any of you; but so long as I am amongst you, you must give me leave to deal plainly with you. It is my hearty Desire that every Soul here present may be saved, and partake of those celestial Joys which you have now been hearing of. But that, I am confident you can never do, unless you perform real, sincere and universal Obedience to all the Commands of God to the utmost of your Power and Knowledge. I should be a false Prophet and Deceiver should I tell you otherwise. And, therefore, if you have



have any desire to go to Heaven, if you have any love for your own precious and immortal Souls, be advised at length to dally no longer with Eternity, nor make a Mock of Sin, or Sport of Holiness; but devote yourselves in good Earnest to the Practice of whatsoever is required of you. You know every Man the Sins you have hitherto been addicted to, avoid them for the future as deadly Poyson and Venom. You know the Duties that are incumbent upon, perform them all as for your Lives; trusting in the Merits of Christ for God's Acceptance of them: For assure yourselves your eternal Welfare depends upon these things. For *the Grace of God, &c.*

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Holiness the great Design of  
the Gospel-Dispensation.

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## S E R M O N IV.

On TIT. II. 14.

*Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

**T**H E S E Words are Part of the Argument which the Apostle here brings, why we should *live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world*, and it adds a great deal of Force and Strength to it: For having minded us of the *blessed hope which we look for at the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, that so he might excite and encourage us the more  
to



Vol. VIII. to the Practice of what the Grace of God here teacheth. He adds moreover for our better Encouragement, what this Great God, who then will appear in Glory, hath done for us, in order to our Attainment of the Blessedness we hope for, when he shall thus appear who gave himself for us that he might redeem us, &c.

Which Words containing the whole Mystery of our Salvation by Jesus Christ, we who hope to be saved by him, cannot but look upon our selves as highly concerned to understand the full Meaning and Intent of them, which that I may explain unto you as clearly as possibly I can, without taking them in pieces, I shall give you the true Sense and Purport of the Words as they lie in order; for indeed every Word in the Text is very emphatical and significant, and by consequence much to be observed by all that set themselves in good earnest to look after Heaven and Eternal Glory.

As for the first Word, *Who*, it needs not much explaining; for you cannot but all understand whom he means, or which is the Antecedent to this Relative, even *the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. Only it is to be observed, that for the right apprehending the Mystery of our Redemption by him, it is necessary that  
we

we understand those Words conjunctly, Serm. IV. not conceiving of Christ as only God, or only Man, but as God-Man? or as it is here more fully expressed, as *the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; as one who being begotten of the Father from Eternity, was therefore *the great God*; and being born of his Mother in time, thereby became Man, and being thus both God and Man is likewise our Saviour.

2. *Who gave himself*; that is, who being *the great God, gave himself to be made man*, Phil. ii. 6, 7. and being God and Man, he gave himself to be betrayed, apprehended, accused, condemned, crucified, not only in Appearance, but really and truly, ἀληθῶς ἀπέθανε, ἔδοκίμοι, ἔφαντασία. *Ignat.* And he gave himself voluntarily, freely, of his own accord, without any Force, Violence, or Compulsion from any other. *Judas* indeed betrayed him to the *Jews*, but his betraying him had been in vain, unless Christ had given himself, *Job.* xviii. 4, 5. *Pilate* delivered him to the Souldiers, but he could not have had that Power over him, unless himself had given it him from above, *Job.* x. 11. He was derided, scoffed at, accused and condemned as a Malefactor; yet so that none could have spoken one Word against him, had not himself given them breath



to do it. He was crucified by the *Jews*, not because he could not help it, but because he would not. And when he was upon the Cross, he died indeed, not because he could not save his own, but because he had a mind to save our Lives; For they could not force his Soul from his Body, but he voluntarily gave up the Ghost, and that too immediately after he had cried with a loud voice, *Father into thy hands I commend my Spirit*, Luke xxiii. 46. And seeing he had so much Strength still as to cry aloud, he could not have been so near Death but that himself was pleased to die, and that before the two Malefactors that were crucify'd with him, whose Legs were forced to be broken that they might die. When he was already dead, or had yielded up the Ghost; or as it is in the *Greek*, ἀφίκετο πνεῦμα, *emisit Spiritum*, he sent his Spirit from him; so that *emisit Spiritum non amisit*. Ambros. *Spiritum cum verbo sponte demisit*. Tertul. *Non enim deseruit incitus, sed quia voluit, quum voluit & quomodo voluit*. Aug. All was still done with his own Will, as himself also assures us, *Job. x. 17, 18*. And hence it is that he is here said to have given himself. Who gave,

3. Himself. Himself, not Gold, not Silver, not Lambs, not Calves, nor Men, but

*of the Gospel-Dispensation.*

III

but himself, *1 Pet. i. 18.* Sometimes he is said to have given his flesh, *Job. vi. 51.* Sometimes his Body, *Luk. xxii. 19.* Sometimes his Blood, *v. 20.* But here he is said to have given himself, his whole self, not only his Soul or his Body, but himself, Soul and Body, and all he had or was. Himself God-Man, which was certainly the greatest Gift that was ever given, the highest Price that was ever paid for any thing in the World.

Serm. IV.

But what? or whom did he give himself for? for us. Who gave himself for us; not for himself, not for Angels, but for us Men; for us corrupt, sinful, and rebellious Mortals upon Earth; who by Nature are Enemies to God, and to every thing that is good. It was for us that he gave himself, not only dying for our sakes, but in our steads; for which we must know that he is sometimes said to give himself for our Sins, *Gal. i. 4.* that is, to make Satisfaction to Divine Justice for them. But here he is said to have given himself for us; that is, he gave himself to suffer Death in our steads, *1 Pet. iv. 1. Rom. v. 8.*

And that you may know wherefore Christ thus suffered for us; it follows, *who gave himself for us that he might redeem us.* For the opening of which, Consider,

*1. God*




*Holiness the great Design*

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1. *God made Man upright*, Eccl. vii. 29.

2. But upon the Commission of the first Sin all Mankind became obnoxious to Death, which was before threatned against it, *Gen. ii. 17.* And it not standing with the Justice and Honour of God not to make good his Word and do as he hath said, hence the whole race of *Adam* are subject to Death, even eternal as well as temporal, *Rom. v. 17, 18.*

3. Hence Christ having undertaken to save or redeem us from that Death which we are all obliged to suffer, it was necessary that he should undergo it for us, which he accordingly did. And his Death being accepted of by God instead of ours, hence he is here said to have given himself for us, because he deliver'd up himself to suffer that Death which was due to us. Hence also he is said properly to have redeemed us, because *he gave his life a ransom for us*, *Matt. xx. 28.* A Ransom, that is, as the *Greek Word λύτρον* signifies a Price of Redemption. And so it is elsewhere said, *that he gave himself a ransom for all*, *1 Tim. ii. 6. ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων*, a Price of Redemption for all; and so it is the same in effect with this in my Text, *Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us: For laying down his own Life instead of ours,*  
hereby

hereby he hath redeemed us from that **Serm. IV.**  
Obligation to Death which we before lay   
under, he having undergone that Death  
for us, which in the first *Adam* was threat-  
ned against us; so that God's Justice be-  
ing fully satisfied, we may escape that  
Death which before we were subject to.  
Thus therefore it is that Christ hath re-  
deemed us.

*From all iniquity*; which is the next  
Expression to be considered. *That he might  
redeem us from all iniquity*, that is, from the  
Guilt of Sin, and from those Obligations  
to Death and Punishment which our Ini-  
quities had brought upon us; so that  
now our Iniquities shall not be imputed  
to us, nor we obliged to suffer for them,  
for none of them: *For he hath redeemed  
us from all Iniquity*, both original and actu-  
al; from that contracted by our first Pa-  
rents, and from those which our selves  
have committed in our Persons, whether  
they be Sins of Omission or Sins of Com-  
mission; Sins of Ignorance or Sins of Wil-  
fulness; open or secret Sins; Sins of a  
lighter Tincture, or Sins of a deeper Dye.  
*For he gave himself that he might redeem  
us from all iniquity.*

Oh Blessed Jesu! when shall we be able  
to praise and magnifie thy Name, and to  
render thee Thanks sufficient for this thy

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unspeakable Love and Compassion to Fallen Man? that ever thou shouldst regard and pity such worthless and sinful Worms as we are, so far as to lay down thine own Life to ransom ours? Who are we, or what was our Father's House, that thou who inhabitest Eternity, God co-equal with the Father in Glory, Power and Majesty, infinitely happy in the Enjoyment of thine own Perfections; that thou shouldst vouchsafe to condescend so far as take our frail Nature into thine own All-glorious and Divine Person, and in it to suffer for those very Sins which we ungrateful Wretches have committed against thyself; that thou shouldst come down from Heaven to Earth only to raise us up from Earth to Heaven; that thou, the Son of God, shouldst become the Son of Man, that we, the Sons of Men, might become the Sons of God; that thou shouldst be derided, that we might be honoured; thou condemned that we might be absolved; and die that we might live? Oh what Tongue is able to express, what Heart to conceive how infinitely we are all obliged to love and serve thee, to praise and honour thee, to bless and magnify thy Name unto all Eternity? who gavest thyself for us, that thou mightst redeem us from all iniquity; and not only so, but purify to thyself a peculiar

cular People. Indeed this is that which perfecteth our Redemption, and maketh it both full and effectual, and therefore it deserveth to be seriously weighed and considered by us: For we must not think that our Saviour came into the World only to expiate our Sins, and to take off our Obligations to punishment for them; but he came likewise to cleanse us from our Sins, and to make us holy; or as it is here expressed, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and also purify to himself a peculiar people;* where we may observe,

Serm. IV.

1. That one great End why *Christ gave himself for us*, was, *that he might purify us*; that is, make us pure and holy, good and pious Creatures. For the opening of which we must know,

1. We by Nature are all defiled with Sin as well as guilty of it, our Hearts being naturally averse from whatsoever is good, and inclined to Evil; and all the Faculties of our Souls so out of Tune, that we can do nothing as we ought to do it.

2. So long as we are in this Condition we are altogether incapable of enjoying God, and by Consequence of being happy; for our Happiness consisteth only in the Vision and Fruition of the chiefest Good: In order unto which it is indispen-



sably necessary that our Minds be bent,  
 and our Wills and Affections inclined to-  
 wards him, otherwise it is impossible for  
 us to take any Pleasure or Delight in  
 the beholding and enjoying of him;  
 or rather it is impossible for us to behold  
 and enjoy him at all. But so long as we  
 remain in the same Condition wherein we  
 came into the World, without the re-  
 penting or being converted to him, it is  
 plain that we have no Propensity at all,  
 or Inclination towards him; but have ra-  
 ther a strange kind of Averseness from  
 him, if not an absolute Antipathy against  
 him, as one not only unlike but directly  
 contrary to our impure and sinful Tem-  
 per and Disposition. And therefore, un-  
 til our Minds be changed, and their In-  
 clinations taken off from Sin, and turned  
 unto God; that is, in Scripture-Language,  
 until we have repented, and so be made  
 truly holy and like to God, we are no  
 more capable of enjoying any Complacen-  
 cy and Satisfaction in the Contemplation  
 of the Divine Perfections; nor indeed of  
 contemplating aright upon them, than a  
 blind Man is capable of distinguishing  
 Colours, or a deaf Man of being ravish'd  
 with Sounds, no more than a brute Beast  
 is capable of surfeiting himself upon the  
 Pleasures of a Mathematical Demonstra-  
 tion.

tion. This is all our Conditions by Nature; thus it is, and thus it will be with us, until our Minds be altered, and our Souls converted from Sin to God; 'till then, as we shall not enjoy Heaven though we could, so we cannot though we might, not being at all qualified for the Participation of such Pure and Spiritual Joys as those are. Serm. IV.

3. Hence our Blessed Saviour having undertaken to save and bring us to Heaven, it was necessary that he should likewise fit and qualify us for the Enjoyment of the Happiness which is to be there had, which he therefore accordingly undertook to do, by cleansing us from our Sins, and purifying us to himself. And that this was one great and principal end of his taking our Flesh upon him, and dying or giving himself for us, is not only expressly asserted here in my Text, but it is plain likewise from the whole Tenure of the Gospel, which teacheth us all along, that as he came to reconcile God to us, by dying for our Sins, so he came to reconcile us to God, by cleansing us from our Sins and making us truly holy: *For his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness,* 1 Pet. ii. 24. And he was sent

Vol. VIII. to bless us, in turning away every one of us from his iniquities, Acts iii. 26. So that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all Sin, 1 Joh. i. 7. Yea he was therefore called Jesus, that is, a Saviour, because he came to save his people from their sins, Mat. i. 21. that is, from the Filth and Power, as well as from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin. And he therefore gave himself for us, that he might sanctify us throughout, and make us holy and without blemish, Eph. v. 25, 26, 27.

4. Christ thus giving himself for us, not only to redeem us from all iniquity, but also that he might purify us to himself; Hence by his Death and Passions he did not only satisfy God's Justice for our Sins, but likewise merited the Power of bestowing the Spirit upon us, and so of infusing true Grace and Vertue into us, whereby we may be enabled to forsake our former Sins, and for the future to perform Sincere and Evangelical Obedience to all the Moral Law: So that as our Persons are justified only by his Merit imputed, so are our Natures sanctified by his Spirit imparted to us; whereby,

1. He enlightens our Minds and rectifies our Judgments concerning all things that have any reference to our future Estate, cheering up our Apprehensions concerning

cerning God, and possessing our Hearts with a due Sense of his Greatness, Power and Glory; and with a through Belief that he is the chiefest Good, and that Happiness can be had in none but him; convincing us also of the Sinfulness of Sin and the Beauty of Holiness; of the Vanity of all things here below, and of the Glory that is above. And it is a true Saying of St. Austin, *Non minus necessariam esse mentis illuminationem, quam oculis lumen.* Serm. IV.

2. He purifies or mends the Will, inclining it to follow the Dictates of the Practical Understanding, so as to chuse what it represents as truly good, and to refuse what it dictates to be evil. This is the great Blessing which God hath promised under the Notion of *a new heart, and a new Spirit*, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. Whereby such as are in Christ are made new Creatures, 2 Cor. v. 17. For all their Affections are by this means turned into another Channel, and are fixed upon new Objects.

3. Hence our Actions always following the Temper and Inclination of our Minds, they also become pure and holy, or at least such as God for Christ's sake will accept of.



Thus it is that Christ purifieth us to himself, and thus You and I may be purified by him, and shall too, if we do but sincerely endeavour to do what we can ourselves, and trust in him for his Assistance to enable us to do what otherwise we cannot: So that now, if we be not all pure and holy, if we be not all as real and true Saints as ever lived, it is our own fault; for Christ is always present and ready to assist us, if we do but apply ourselves unto him for it. And himself hath told us, that *such as come to him he will in no wise reject*, Joh. vi. 37. Oh what Cause then have we all to praise and to give Thanks unto him, and to say as it is, *Rev. i. 5, 6.*

But it is to be further considered, that as Christ came to purify us, so he purifieth us to himself; for *he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people*: So that one great Reason why he purifies us, is, that we should for the future be his, not Sin's, not Satan's, not the World's, not our own, but wholly his, his real Disciples, his faithful Servants, his peculiar and obedient People. For the better understanding of which we must consider,

1. Man was created in a free Estate, *Serm. IV*,  
subject to none but God, under whom he  
was constituted Lord and Master of all  
Terrestrial Creatures, every thing upon  
Earth being subject to his Power, as his  
Body was to his Soul, his Senses to his  
Will, his Will to his Reason, and his Reason  
unto God.

2. By sinning against his Maker, he  
thereby forfeited all his Power, and be-  
came a mere Slave and Vassal to all things  
which before were subject to him; so  
that now we are all born Slaves, Slaves  
to Sin, Slaves to the World, Slaves to  
Satan, Slaves to our own Lufts and Cor-  
ruptions, *Rom. vi. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 19. 2 Tim.*  
*ii. 26.* And the Reason is, because we are  
*sold under sin. Rom. vii. 14.* and that not  
only by our first Parents, but too appa-  
rently by ourselves; for naturally we are  
all like *Ahab, that sold himself to work evil*  
*in the sight of the Lord, 1 Kings xxi. 20.*

And hence it comes to pass that Sin  
exercises so much Power and Tyranny  
over us; that we are never our own Men,  
being always at the Beck and Command  
of Sin, as you may all find by too sad  
and daily Experience, one Sin drawing  
you this way, and another Sin dragging  
you that way, as itself pleaseth.

3. Christ



## *Holiness the great Design*

3. Christ came to redeem us from this Thralldom, and to assert us into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, by subduing our Sins under us, and so purifying us to himself, that we should no longer be at Sin's, but at his Service and Command, so as not to regard the Dictates of our own carnal Reason, nor yet the Precepts of our own headstrong Corruptions; but devoting our selves wholly to observe those Laws and Commands which he hath laid upon us. For this was one great End why he redeemed us, and it is the only Recompence that we can give him for it. And moreover, there is all the Reason in the World that we should give ourselves to him who gave himself for us, and laid down so great a Price as his own Blood for our Redemption to himself, to himself I say. For it is in the Nature of all Purchases and Redemptions, that they that purchase or redeem a Thing, have it for the future to themselves. How much more in this, the greatest Purchase that was ever made, the Son of God himself having redeemed us with the Price of his own Blood; surely we cannot but be infinitely obliged to live to him that died for us, so as to employ all the Faculties of our Souls, and Members of our Bodies in his

his Service, and for his Glory. As the Serm. IV.  
Apostle argues, 1 Cor. vi. 20.

Neither is it sufficient that we be Christ's People only in general; but we must be too his peculiar People. For so saith the Apostle, *Who gave himself for us, that he might reedeem us from all Iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People; λαὸν περιώσιον, a dear, a precious, an excellent People above all other.* In the *Old Testament* it answers the *Hebrew Word* סגל; which the 70 render by λαὸς περιώσιον, and we by a peculiar People, Deut. xiv. 2. sometimes a special People, Deut. vii. 6. sometimes a peculiar Treasure, Exod. xix. 5. Psa. cxxxv. 4. sometimes his Jewels, Mal. iii. 17. The *Targum* always interprets it by חביבין, *beloved, or a People beloved.* *Symmachus* renders it ἐξαιρετόν, *a special, a singular, an excellent People.*

And verily such as Christ effectually purifies to himself, are indeed a peculiar People from all other People in the World.

1. They are a People of a peculiar Temper and Disposition from all other People. As *Caleb* is said to have been a Man of another Spirit from the rest of the Children of *Israel*, Numb. xiv. 24. So are all such as Christ purifies; they are



Vol. VIII. are quite of another Spirit from the Men of this World, they have other Thoughts, other Affections, other Desires, other Hopes, other Fears, other Designs in the World than other Men use to have; so that although they live and converse in the World without being conceited of themselves, or censuring others, yet they are a singular and peculiar People of themselves, as different from all other People as Light is from Darknes, as Heaven is from Earth, as Holiness is from Sin. For while all the rest of the World lies in Wickedness, these do not only seem to be Holy, and make a shew of Piety; but they really and truly are an holy People, a People set apart and consecrated wholly unto God, and therefore an holy and a peculiar People still go together, *Deut. vii. 6. c. xiv. 2.* And for this it is that God avoucheth them to be his peculiar People, that so they may *keep all his Commandments, Deut. xxvi. 18.* This is that which makes them so beloved of God, that he reckons them his Treasure, his Jewels, his special and peculiar People; because they have his Image enstamped upon them, and so are like to him, Holy as he is Holy. Christ himself having purified them to himself, and

and so made them his pure, and by Sermon. IV.  
Consequence his peculiar People.

2. Such may justly be called peculiar People, also because they have peculiar Names and Titles given to them in the Holy Scriptures. God having a peculiar Propriety in them, he is therefore pleased to call them by peculiar Names whereby they may be distinguished from the rest of Mankind. For they are called in Scripture Kings and Priests, and asserted to be made so by Christ who purifies them to himself *a peculiar People*, Apoc. i. 6. Neither are they called only Kings and Priests; but in the very Abstract, *a kingly or royal Priesthood*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. So that as they are made new Creatures, so are they called by new Names, *Isa. lx. 2, 3, 4.*

3. They are honoured likewise with peculiar Relations. For they who before might say to *Corruption thou art our Father, and to the Worm thou art our Mother and our Sister*, Job. xvii. 14. may now say to the eternal God, Thou art our Father; to the Church thou art our Mother; and to Christ himself thou art our Brother. For God himself vouchsafeth to call himself their Father, *Luke xii. 32.* Yea, and their Husband too, *Isa. liv. 5. Hos. ii. 16.* The Church is  
their

their Mother, *Gal. 4. 26. Eph. v. 32.*  
 And Christ calls them his Brethren, *Joh. xx. 17. Rom. viii. 29.*

4. They are invested with peculiar Privileges, such as all other Persons have no right or title to at all. For they have free Admittance into God's Presence, and his Ear is always open to their Prayer, *Mat. xxi. 22.* Yea, and whatsoever God himself doth that hath any relation to them, it shall some way or other conduce to their Good and Comfort, *Rom. viii. 28.* Πάντα συνεργεῖ, all things work together; all things that God doth by his ordinary Providence, and if our Necessity require, all things which he can do by his extraordinary Power.


5. They are endowed with peculiar Interests, though they may have little or nothing of this World's Goods, yet they are worth more than all the World besides. As our Saviour said, *His Kingdom was not of this World*; so neither doth their Estate lie here, but it lies in Christ's Kingdom, that is, in the other World. They are interested in all his Merits, and whatsoever he hath purchased by his Death and Sufferings. Interested in all the Promises of the Gospel sealed unto them in the Blood of Christ. Interested in all the Properties of God; his Wisdom,  
 Power

Power and Goodness being all engaged for them. Interested in the Prayers of all the Saints upon Earth: And interested in all the Influences of the Holy Spirit to guide and direct them in all their ways. Serm. IV.

6, They are instated in a peculiar Inheritance, being Heirs of God, and Co-heirs with Jesus Christ, and so they are entitled to, and enstated in a Kingdom, *James ii. 5.* In the City of God, *Heb. xii. 22.* And eternal Life, *Tit. iii. 7.* So that they shall be picked out of the rest of all Mankind at the End of the World, to live with God, to behold his Glory, admire his Perfections, and enjoy his Presence for ever.

This honour have all the Saints, who may well be termed a peculiar People, seeing they have a peculiar Temper, Names, Relations, Privileges, Interests and Inheritance, all different from other People, and peculiar to themselves; whom Christ is therefore here asserted *to have purified to himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.* *Zealous of good Works*; that is the great Reason why they are Christ's peculiar People, because they serve him in a peculiar manner: Being *zealous of good Works*; not zealous for needless Opinions; not zealous for Idolatry and Superstitions;



Vol. VIII.  stitutions; not zealous for Parties and Factions in the Church; but zealous of good Works. They are the proper Objects of our Zeal, as having an immediate respect to the Glory of God, the ultimate End of all our Actions, *Gal. iv. 18.* And whatsoever Zeal we have, unless it be for good Works, it is both useless and dangerous. Before it is not the Zeal of Christ's peculiar People; for those he purifies to himself to be zealous of good Works, to prosecute and practice them with all the Life and Vigour, with all the Zeal and Fervency that they can. But here we shall consider briefly Two Things:

1. What we are here to understand by good Works; for which we must know that there are Three Things required to the making up of good Works. It is necessary that the Matter we do be good: That the End for which we do it be good: And, that the Manner of our doing it be good too. The Matter must be such as God hath commanded, or at least allows of. For if it be any way contrary to the revealed Will of God, whatsoever pretences Men may make, before it cannot be good. And be the Matter of an Action never so good, yet it is no good Work, unless the End be so too. For though a good End cannot  
make

make a bad Action good; yet a bad End will always make a good Action bad. And therefore, whatsoever we do, we must be sure to avoid all bad and sinister Ends and Aims in the doing of it, as carnal Interest, popular Applause, Vain-glory, and the like; but our Eye must be fixed principally upon *the Glory of God*, 1 Cor. x. 31. Neither must we only regard the Matter and End of our Actions; but we must have a care how we perform them too, even with Humility, Faith and Obedience unto God. For no Man can do a good Work, that doth not therefore do it because it is good, and so obey God in the doing of it. Where all these things concur the Work is good; where any one of them is wanting the whole is bad and sinful.

2. What is it to be zealous of good Works? It implies,

1. That their Minds are bent and inclined to the doing of good Works, so as to be willing and ready upon all occasions to *do good*, 1 Tim. vi. 18. That they be desirous of, and take pleasure in the doing of them; that they rejoice to *do good*, Eccles. iii. 12. And *delight greatly in God's Commands*, Psal. cxii. 1. Psal. cxix. 143.

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2. That

*Holiness the great Design*

2. That they study, contrive and endeavour all ways imaginable to do all the Good they can in their Generation, so as to be always employed with Zeal and Earnestness in doing not only some, but all sorts of good Works whatsoever; whether Works of Piety towards God, Works of Charity to the Poor, or Works of Justice and Equity towards all, pressing with undaunted Courage and Resolution through all Difficulties whatsoever, to obey God and keep his Commandments, so as never to be discouraged from doing good by any danger which we may seem to incur by it. Thus the Apostles manifested themselves to be Christ's peculiar People, zealous of good Works, by their Care and Diligence, by their Zeal and Constancy in propagating the Gospel, maugre all the Opposition that was made against them, nothing being able to deterr them from it. And this we may lay down as a most certain Truth, that as no Man can get any good by doing ill; so neither can any Man get harm by doing good.

3. They that would be zealous of good Works, do not only do good Works themselves, but stir up others likewise to the doing of them. For he that is truly zealous himself cannot but endeavour to make others as zealous as himself is; and there-

therefore to manifest ourselves to be zealous of good Works, we must follow the Apostle's Counsel, *Heb. x. 24.*

Serm. IV.

Thus I have endeavoured to explain unto you the great Ends of our Saviour's coming into the World, who gave himself for us, &c. Now from what you have heard, none of you but may observe, that as Christ came to save you from Hell, and to bring you unto Heaven; so in order thereunto, he came to save you from your Sins, and to make you Holy. And therefore he expects that all you who hope to be saved by him, should be a *peculiar People, zealous of good Works.* He expects that you be eminent for Piety and Religion towards God, as also for Charity and Righteousness towards Men, that you shine as Lights in the World, *Mat. v. 16.* He expects that you do not content yourselves with the bare Profession of his Religion, nor yet with Reading the Scriptures, Hearing of Sermons, and Praying now and then; but that you strive and study to excel the Heathenish Moralists, the Jewish and Christian Pharisees, yea, and your former selves too in all true Grace and Vertue, in Humility, in Meekness, in Temperance, Impatience, in Self-denial, in Contempt of the World, in Justice, in Charity, in hea-



Vol. VIII. *venly Mindedness, in Faith, in Praying, in Fasting, in denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and in living soberly, righteously and godly in this present World, 2 Pet. i. 5, 6.*

What now remains but that knowing your Master's Will, you should all do it: You see Christ came into the World to make you his *peculiar People, zealous of good Works.* And such you must be before ever you come to Heaven. Let me therefore solícite and beseech you in Christ's stead to abandon and forsake all your former Practices which you know to be contrary to his Pleasure and Command; and for the future live like Christians indeed, like Christ's own proper and peculiar People; devote every thing you have, every thing you are, every thing you can do wholly to his Service and Honour; make now Religion both your Business and Recreation; esteem it as it is, your highest Honour to Honour him; and your chiefest Pleasure to please him. Do not only do good Works, but be zealous in the doing of them; never thinking that you can do enough for him that hath done and suffered so much as Christ hath done for you. Still trusting on the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, both for the Pardon of your Defects, and for the Acceptance both of  
your

your Persons and Performances before God. Do this and your Souls shall live. Leave this undone, and yourselves will be undone for ever. And think not to say within yourselves, that this is more than you can do; and that you being conscious of your own Infirmities, fear that you can never attain to so high a Pitch of Grace and Vertue as Christ requireth of you. For whosoever thou art that thinkest so with thyself, I dare assure thee in the Name of Christ, that if thou dost but endeavour after it as well as thou canst, he himself will enable thee to attain fully unto it. Though thou beest weak, he is strong; and if thou dost but apply thyself aright to him, he will purifie thee to himself one of his *peculiar People, zealous of good Works*. This was the great End of his coming into the World, and therefore you need not fear either his Willingness, or his Power to do it. Why therefore dost thou complain of the Power of Sin, and labour under the Burden of it? Go to Christ and he *will give thee rest*, Mat. xi. 28. Do you therefore but sincerely endeavour to do what possibly you can yourselves, and trust in him for the Assistance of his Grace and Spirit as well as for Pardon and Forgiveness, and then you

cannot miss of either. By this means every Soul here present may be so purified as to be admitted into the Number of God's *peculiar People*, *zealous of good Works*; and by Consequence be admitted e'er long to Heaven, there to praise him who gave himself, &c.

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Christ's

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Christ's Life a Pattern of Ho-  
liness to Christians.

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IN TWO

SERMONS

ON 2 P E T. I. 15.

*But as he which hath called you  
is holy, so be ye holy in all  
manner of conversation.*

**N**othing being more certain then  
that *without Holiness no Man shall  
see the Lord.* Nothing surely  
can be more necessary than to  
know what this Holiness is, and how to  
attain unto it. A Question which all  
Mankind of whatsoever Estate or Condi-  
tion they be, are equally concerned to  
understand, in order to their being happy.  
For as it is impossible for any one to be  
K 4 happy





happy that is not first holy ; so it is impossible likewise for any one to be holy that doth not first know what it is to be so. Neither is this so easie a matter to know as it is generally thought to be ; as is plain from the various Opinions there are in the World concerning it. For if we consult the Lives and Actions of Men, especially of those that make the greatest Pretences to Holiness, we may easily observe how strangely they differ in their Notions about Holiness. For some place Holiness only in external Rites and Ceremonies, in saying a great many *Ave-Maria's* and *Pater-Noster's*, in living a Monastical Life, in going in Pilgrimage to some Monument or Relick of a canonized Saint, in bowing to Images, in hearing Mass whether they understand it or no, and especially in falling down before a consecrated Wafer when it is carried triumphantly in Procession. Others are of a quite contrary Opinion, placing their holiness in opposing all manner of Rites and Ceremonies, in expressing no reverence at all in the Service and Worship of Almighty God, in long *extempore* Prayers, in frequent Hearing of Sermons, and receiving the Sacrament without kneeling, and in separating themselves from other People as to religious Matters. Nay there have been, and I  
fear

fear still are, too many that abuse the sacred Name of Holiness to palliate their most atrocious Crimes, and barbarous Impieties. Some running into Schism and Sedition, others practising Treason and Rebellion, and all under the Pretence of Holiness. But Holiness is unquestionably a thing of another Nature than such deluded Mortals would make it. For before it is the greatest Excellency, that it is possible for Creatures to be endowed with; and therefore to mistake in that, is certainly the most dangerous and pernicious Error that any of us can fall into, especially considering that it is absolutely impossible for any of us either to attain to Happiness, or to avoid everlasting Ruine and Destruction, unless we be really and truly Holy, in that sense as we are required to be in the Holy Scriptures.

Fearing therefore that many of you may be mistaken in a Matter of such Consequence as this is, so as to think yourselves Holy when you are not, and heartily desiring that you should all be so truly Holy here as to be perfectly happy hereafter; I have chosen these Words, from whence to explain unto you the true Nature of Holiness; of that Holiness *without which you can never see God, nor be*

Vol. VIII. be happy neither in this World, nor yet  
 in that which is to come. And to understand this, I know no Text in all the Scriptures more proper and apposite than the Words I have now read. But, *as he which hath called you is holy, &c.*

From whence we might first observe, that something of the Nature of Holiness may be gathered from what it is here opposed too; even to the Lusts which Men in their ignorant and unregenerate Estate are addicted to, *ver. 14.* Whence it is plain that Holiness is contrary to all manner of base, carnal, and earthly Lusts or Desires, *ταῖς πρὸς τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν;* such Lusts as sinful and worldly-minded Men, are fashioned and conformed to, before they come to the Knowledge of the Truth. Which the Apostle comprehends under Three Heads: *The Lusts of the Flesh; The Lusts of the Eye; And, The Pride of Life,* 1 Joh. ii. 16. When *the Lusts of the Flesh*, denote the Desire of carnal Pleasures; *The Lusts of the Eye*, the Desire of worldly Riches; *The Pride of Life*, the Desire of popular Applause and Vain-glory: Which kind of Desires argue a strange Degeneracy and Impurity in the Soul, and therefore Holiness here is directly opposed to them, as taking off our Desires and Inclinations from such low, unwor-

unworthy, and impure Objects, and raising them up to Objects suitable and proper for them. From whence we may conclude that so long as a Man indulgeth such vain and sinful Desires as these are, he is no holy Man. So long as your Minds are set upon either the Pleasures, the Profits, or the Honours of this present Life, whatsoever Pretences you make to Holiness, you are not holy in that sense wherein you are here commanded to be so, as is plain from the Antithesis or Opposition which the Apostle here makes betwixt such Desires and being Holy. But, &c.

Serm. V.  
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But I shall not insist any longer upon that now: Because my principal Design is to search out, and by the Blessing of God, to explain unto you the true Nature of Holiness in itself from these Words; wherein I desire you to observe Three Things:

I. **The Pattern of Holiness:** *As he who hath called ye is holy.*

II. **The Command that is here laid upon us:** *So be ye holy.*

III. **The Extent and Latitude of this Holiness:** *In all manner of Conversation.*

The

The First Thing to be considered, is that which is here first placed, even the Pattern of Holiness, even God himself, whose Holiness is here asserted to be the Pattern and Example of ours. And therefore, we can never understand what it is for our selves to be holy, unless we first know in what Sense God is said to be holy; for our Holiness is to be in its Capacity conformable and like to his: For as he is holy, so are we bound to be holy too, for nothing can be more plain, than that by him who is here said to have called us, we are to understand God: For it is he, and he alone, who hath called us from Darkness to Light, from Errour to Truth, from Sin to Holiness, and from Idolatry to the true Religion. And yet you see it is here expressly said, *As he, that is, as God who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy.*

But now for the Holiness of God, we must first know, that Holiness is such an essential Attribute or Property in God, that he is not only often said to be Holy, but he is frequently termed in a peculiar manner, *the holy one of Israel*, Psal. lxxxix. 18. Isa. xvii. 7. Isa. xxx. 12. and simply or absolutely, *the holy one*, Isa. xl. 25. Hab. i. 12. Hence as he is sometimes said to Swear by himself, so elsewhere he is

is said to have *sworn by his holiness*, P^{sal.} Serm. V. lxxxix. 35. Amos iv. 2. From whence it appears that Holiness is that Perfection whereby God delighteth to express his Essence, and to distinguish himself from all other Beings. And therefore, although the Idols of the Heathens are often in Scripture termed Gods, yet they are never as I remember called holy ones, as the Lord is, for indeed they were not holy: *For there is none holy as the Lord*, 1 Sam. ii. 2.

These things being considered, it is easy to observe in the next place, that Holiness as attributed unto God, denotes his Peerless or Super-eminent Excellency, above all things else, his Infinite and Supreme Majesty and Glory, in Comparison whereof there is no such thing as Glory or Greatness in the World: So that to say that God is Holy, or the Holy One, is as much as to say, that He is a Majesty of incomparable Goodness, of incomparable Wisdom, of incomparable Power, of incomparable Glory, infinitely beyond whatsoever else can be called good or wise, or powerful or glorious. Hence when the Quire of Heaven would express the unparallel'd Excellency of his Nature, and so give him the Glory due unto his Name, they sing out that *Trisagium* so often used
by




by the Primitive Church, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and Earth are full of the Majesty of thy Glory*, Isa. vi. 3. Rev. iv. 8. This is the Sum and Substance of all that the Glorified Saints and Angels do in Heaven, even to Agnize and Celebrate the Holiness of God; or to do that which we continually pray may be done, when we say, *Hallowed, or Sanctified, be thy Name*; that is, let all the World acknowledge thee to be the Holy One, the Supreme and Super-eminent Being in the World, far exalted above all things else, and therefore to be admired, adored, and worshipped by whatsoever is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, according to the Song of the Seven Angels, *Rev. 15. 3, 4.* This therefore is our God, whom we and all the World are bound to Worship; and this is his Holiness, essential and peculiar to him alone, and incommunicable to any Creature.

Having thus discovered what we are to understand by the Holiness of God, we are now in the Second Place to consider in what Sense we are here commanded to be holy as he is holy. For which end there are two things to be searched into.

1. What is the true Nature of Holiness in general, as attributed in Scripture unto Creatures, and as we are here enjoyned

to

to be holy. 2. In what Sense we are Serm. V.
commanded to be holy as God is holy. 

First, I say, we must consider what is the true Nature and Property of Holiness or Sanctity in Creatures, according to its Notion in the Sacred Scriptures. For which we must know First in General, That as Holiness when attributed to God, denotes his most Excellent Majesty and Super-eminency above all things, so likewise when it is attributed to Creatures, it denotes their Exaltation and Pre-eminence above other things, and their Separation to something more excellent and divine; so that as *R. D. Kimchi*, a Learned Rabbi, rightly observes, in the Scripture, All Words of Sanctity or Holiness import a thing separated from other things by way of Excellency or Preheminence, as is plain from *Deut. xix. 2, 7.* compared with *Josh. xx. 7.* ויקדש *And they Sanctified.* The same appears from *Exod. xxx. 31, 32, 33, and 35, &c.* From whence it is plain, That this Oyl and this Perfume was a peculiar Oyl and Perfume, set apart and distinguished from others both as to its Use and Composition, and upon that Account it is here called an Holy Oyl, and an Holy Perfume, though not in its own Nature, yet by reason of its Distinction and Separation from other things of the same Nature, to higher and
more

Vol. VIII. more excellent Uses. The same Notion of Holiness may be still further illustrated from the several Descriptions that God himself maketh of an holy People, by which we may clearly understand in what Sense we are here commanded to be holy. This you may see, *Levit. xx. 24, 25, 26. Deut. xiv. 2. Ch. xxvi. 18, 19.* From whence it is easy to observe that to be an holy People in the Idiom of the Scriptures, is to be a singular and peculiar People; a People distinguished from others by way of Excellency; a People advanced above the common Estate and Condition of others: From which Premises duly considered, we may gather both what it is not and what it is to be holy, so as we are here commanded to be. First what it is not to be holy; for,

1. It is plain that Holiness doth not consist only in External Rites, Duties or Performances, not in Antick Habits or long Prayers; not in talking demurely, or running into Corners to hear Sermons; for these things a Man may do, and yet be unholy and sinful still. Nor yet doth Holiness consist either in the using or abstaining from Ceremonies and things indifferent in the Worship of God. For a Man may use them, and a Man may abstain from them; a Man may be for

for them; and a Man be against them, Serm. V.

and yet be unholy and sinful still, much less doth Holiness consist in opposing Government, in raising Rebellion, or in sowing Sedition either in Church or State; for he that doth these things whatsoever he pretends, is an unholy and sinful Man. Nay, to go further still, A Man may be very zealous for the Religion he is of, and spend and be spent in the Defence of it; he may dispute, and write, yea and fight too for it, and yet be as far from Holiness as if he was of no Religion at all: For although Holiness may, and ought to express itself in our Actions, yet it is not seated in them. And therefore, although he that is holy cannot but do all manner of good works, yet a Man may do a great many good works and yet not be an holy Man; for Holiness doth not only advance some of a Man's Actions, but his whole self too above the common Estate of Mankind.

2. It is plain also that Holiness, as it doth not consist in the Performance of External Duties only, so neither doth it consist in the Exercise only of some particular Internal Graces and Vertues, how specious and plausible soever they may appear in the Eyes of Men: For as Holiness is not any particular Act, or Grace
L itself,


Vol. VII. itself, but the Truth, and Grace, as I may
 ~~~~~ so speak, of all Graces; so neither can  
 any particular Acts or Graces whatsoever  
 denominate a Man to be truly holy; for  
 verily a Man may go a great way, and  
 yet not be an holy Man, *Ex Gr.* Thou  
 mayst come to Church and hear Sermons  
 with a great deal of seeming Reverence  
 and Attention, and yet not be an holy  
 Man, *Ezek. xxxiii. 31.* Thou mayst pray  
 with a great deal of Earnestness and De-  
 votion, and yet be no holy Man, *Isa. i.*  
*15.* Thou mayst *Prophecy in Christ's Name,*  
*and in his Name cast out devils,* and  
 yet not be an holy Man, *Matt. vii. 22.*  
 Thou mayst *give all thy goods to feed*  
*the poor, and thy body to be burned* for thy  
 Religion, and yet not be an holy Man,  
*1 Cor. xiii. 3.* Thou mayst be very nice  
 and scrupulous in matters of Religion and  
 Holiness, and yet not be a truly religious  
 and holy Man, *Col. ii. 21. Mat. xxiii. 23,*  
*25.* What shall I say more? Thou mayst  
 have some kind of Fear and Dread of  
 God, some kind of Love and Affection  
 for him, some faint Wishes and Desires to  
 serve him, some kind of Pleasure and De-  
 light in the Performance of holy Duties,  
 some Sorrow for thy Sins, and Resolutions  
 against them, some Esteem for Holiness  
 and Value for it, and yet not be truly an  
 holy

holy Man. If Holiness consisted only in the Performance of some Duties, or in the Exercise only of some Vertues, we should have a great many more Saints upon Earth than I fear there are. Neither would it be so hard a matter to be holy, as be sure it is. But Holiness certainly is a larger and more comprehensive thing than to be confined within the narrow Compass of any particular Acts, or Vertues whatsoever: For to be holy as I have shewn in general, implies a Man to be advanced above the ordinary rank of Men, set apart and dedicated wholly to more excellent Acts and Uses than other Men; so that the true Nature of Holiness consisteth especially in Two Things,

1. In being taken off or separated from whatsoever debaseth or pollutes the Soul; for Holiness, as it imports Excellency, must needs be contrary to whatsoever is *unclean or filthy*, as it is opposed to it, 1 Cor. vii. 14. as also to common, *unholy thing*, κοινον, Heb. x. 29. For *common and unclean* are both opposed to Holiness, Acts x. 14. because what is unclean defiles the Soul, and what is common debaseth it. And therefore, in order to your being holy, it is necessary; First, That your Souls be not tainted or defiled with Sin, which is the only Uncleanness that the

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Soul

Vol. VIII.  Soul is capable of, and that which makes it loathsome and abominable in the Sight of God. Hence *David*, when he would express his Desires of being holy, he pray'd *to be washed and cleansed from his Sins*, *Psalm* li. 2, 7. And therefore till your Souls be thus washed and purged from your Lusts and Corruptions, whatsoever outward Shews you make of Piety, you are still but unclean and sinful Creatures. Neither are you truly holy until you are cleansed from all your Defilements, and also advanced above what is common, that is, above the things of this World, the Desires whereof lower and debase the Soul, and by Consequence make it profane or unholy. Hence *Esau* is said to be a *profane Person*, only because he preferred earthly before heavenly things, *Heb. xii.* 16. And so, whosoever amongst you have any real Love for this World, and value it so far as to make it your great Business to get Riches, Honours, or the like; whatsoever Pretences you make of Holiness, you are like *Esau*, unholy and profane Persons: For true Holiness always implies the Soul's Freedom from, and Advancement above whatsoever is unclean or common.

2. Hence, if you would understand clearly what true Holiness is, take it in few

**few Terms :** It is nothing else but the Re-  
ctitude, or the right Frame and Disposi-  
tion of the whole Man, consisting in no-  
thing less than a due Temperance of all  
the Faculties of the Soul and Members  
of the Body, such as each of them had  
at their first Creation, whereby every Fa-  
culty of the Soul and Member of the Body  
confines itself within those Limits, and dis-  
chargeth those Offices which he that made  
them did at first enjoyn them. The Un-  
derstanding, Will and Affections being all  
placed upon their proper Objects, such as  
at first were designed for them: So that  
Holiness is no particular Grace or healing  
of some Diseases in the Soul, but it is a  
Cathelicon, an universal Medicine, that  
cures the Soul of all its Maladies, and re-  
duceth all its Powers and Faculties to their  
proper Temper, to a sound Frame and  
Constitution, which though it be not per-  
fectly effected in this Life, yet it is for  
the most part; so that no Distemper is  
any longer predominant in it. This it  
is to be truly holy indeed, when the  
Soul hath attained such an excellent Frame  
and Disposition, that it is wholly carried  
out to God and Goodness.

But that you may still more clearly  
apprehend the true Notion of Holiness, I  
shall endeavour to explain more particu-



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larly unto you, what kind of Frame and Disposition it is, which can properly be termed Holiness, whereby the Souls of some Men are advanced to so high a Degree of Excellency above others: For which we must know there are Three Things especially to be considered in the Souls of Men, their Understanding, Will and Affections, in the right Disposition whereof true Holiness doth principally consist.

*First* therefore, he that is truly holy hath his Understanding rightly informed, and his Apprehensions cleared concerning God, so as to have an Experimental Knowledge of him: I call it an Experimental Knowledge to distinguish it from those abstruse Notions and metaphysical Speculations which a Man may have concerning God, and yet not be an holy Man. And by it I mean such a Knowledge of God, as none can rightly apprehend but they that have it, consisting in a due Sense of his Greatness, Goodness, and Glory upon one's own Heart, whereby we have such enlarged, and as I may so say, sensible Conceptions of him as to apprehend him infinitely great and good, wise and powerful, yea so as to apprehend him infinitely beyond our highest Apprehensions of him. And whosoever thus knows God, cannot but be so ravished with his Beauty and Glory as to be always



ways taken up with the Contemplations Serm. V.  
of him: So that his Soul is in a manner always fixed upon God, where it ought continually to be, still admiring and adoring the vast Confluence of Perfections which are concentrated in him. This it is to be holy indeed, and without such a Sense and Knowledge of God as this is, you can never pretend to be holy; and therefore *David* first adviseth to know God, before it is possible to be so holy as to serve him, 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Neither is it possible thus to know God, but you must of necessity be often thinking and meditating upon him, as *David* was, *Psal.* cxxxix. 18. And therefore, so long as you can go Day after Day without ever thinking seriously upon God, you may be confident you do not know him, and by Consequence are sinful and unholy Creatures; for so *David* describes a wicked Man, *Psal.* x. 4. But when the Soul is possessed with such a Sense of God, as will draw all its Thoughts towards him, and fix them mostly if not always upon him, that is certainly so far an holy Soul.


2. The Understanding being thus restored to its proper Habit, the Will too of such as are holy cannot but act accordingly: For the Will always following the ultimate Dictates of the Practical Under-  
L 4 standing,

Vol. VIII standing, if that be so found as to present  
 ~~~~~ God as the chiefest Good, the Will cannot but embrace and chuse him under the same Notion. And herein indeed it is that the true Nature of Holiness doth especially consist, even in chusing and preferring God before all things in the World besides, *Lam. iii. 24. Psal. cxix. 57.* Thus it is with every one that is holy; his Will is so inclined to the Living God, that he accounts him his only Stay and Strength, his only Comfort and Support, his only Wealth and Riches, his only Portion and Inheritance, that he either hath, or is capable of; this argues a Man's Mind to be in a right Frame, when his Will thus performeth the Office it was made for.

3. The Will being thus rectify'd, the several Motions of it, which we call Affections, cannot but move in a right Line to this the Center of all Perfections, which they always do in them that are holy.
 For,

1. If you be holy, your Love will be placed only upon God, or be sure upon him before all things else, so as to love nothing above him, nothing before him, nothing besides him, nothing in Comparison of him. This is that you are all commanded to do, *Deut. vi. 5. Mat. xxii. 37.*

Luk.

Luk. xiv. 26. And therefore so long as Serm. V.
you love Riches, Honours, Pleasures, or 
any thing in Comparison of God, you
may pretend what you please, but you
are not holy Persons, for you have *no*
true Love for God, 1 Joh. ii. 15. For he
that loves God, must needs love him as
God, that is, as the chiefest Good, and
by Consequence with all his Heart, which
no Man can do that spends his Affections
upon the Toys and Trifles of this lower
World. And therefore, so long as your
Affections are entangled among the Briars
and Thorns, the Cares and Troubles of
this lower World, you may conclude your
Minds are much distempered, and your
Souls utterly void and destitute of all
true Holiness.

2. This Sacred Fire of Divine Love
burning upon the Altar of an holy Heart,
cannot but flame out into very ardent
Desires after him whom the Soul loves.
Infomuch that a Soul that is truly holy,
is always panting and breathing after God,
crying out with *David*, Psal. lxxiii. 25.
Psal. xlii. 1, 2. And indeed, I know no-
thing that more clearly argues a Soul
to be unholy and out of Tune, than
when it hankers after the low and im-
pertinent Trash of this transient World,
more than after him that made and go-
vern

Christ's Life a Pattern

verns all things ; and who hath made our Souls too of that Temper, that their Desires can never be satisfied with any thing but him ; and therefore he hath made nothing to make our Souls happy, intending himself and his own Perfections for the only Object of Happiness. And therefore it is in vain for us to desire any thing besides him, seeing nothing but himself can satisfy our Desires. But this profane and wicked Men will never be persuaded of, which also is an undeniable Argument of their Profaneness and Impiety : For it shews their Minds and Affections to be strangely disordered, which they never are in those who are truly holy.

3. The Desires of a real Saint being thus continually carried out towards God, he cannot but rejoice in the Enjoyment of his Presence, the Apprehensions of his Favour, and in every thing that any ways relates unto him ; for our Joy is always acted according to our Love and Desire. What we love and desire most we cannot but take most Pleasure and Delight in ; and he that is truly holy, loving, and desiring nothing in Comparison of God, his Affection of Joy must needs be streamed into the same Channel, so as *always to rejoice in the Lord*, Phil. iv. 4. Hab. iii. 17. This demonstrates a Man to be of an excellent
Temper

Temper indeed, when he hath got that Command over himself, and that Mastery over the World, that he can still rejoice in the Lord both when he hath and when he hath not any thing else to rejoice in ; for this argues a Man's Mind to be so strong and sound, and so firmly fixed upon God, that nothing is able to disturb or move it.

Serm. V.

4. Hence also it follows, that such a Person makes God his only Stay and Confidence, *trusting on him*, as well as rejoicing in him, *with all his heart*, Prov. iii. 5. Yea whatsoever happens, such a one will never let go his Hold, but still keep fast to him, as knowing him to be both willing and able to deliver and protect him, and hath promised *never to leave him nor forsake him*, Heb. xiii. 5. Hence it is that he that is truly pious, as he looks not for any good from this World, so neither doth he fear any evil that may happen in it ; whatsoever Storms and Tempests arise without him, his Hope is still anchored upon the Rock of Ages, which makes him always to have Peace and Tranquility within, *Isa. xxvi. 3, 4.* Oh what an excellent Temper is every Saint then of ? What an happy Condition is he in, when nothing in the World is able to molest or affright him, but in the various
Changes

Vol. VIII. Changes of this unconstant World, his Heart is always fixed trusting upon God.

5. I shall instance only in one more Passion, and that is Fear, which though it be ordinarily opposed to trusting, yet in those who are truly pious, it is so rarely tempered, that as they trust in nothing but God, so neither do they fear any thing in the World but him. They trust in none but him, because they know that none but he can do them good; and they fear none but him, because they know that none but he can bring any evil upon them. This therefore makes them so much to desire his Favour, and to dread nothing in the World but his Displeasure, so as to make him their only fear and their only dread, Isa. viii. 13. And whosoever is thus possessed with the true Fear of God, he cannot but express it both by a seemly Reverence in his Presence, and likewise by an universal Obedience to all his Precepts. And hence it comes to pass, that they who are truly holy, as they do not, so they dare not do any thing which God hath forbidden, nor yet leave any thing undone which he hath been pleased to command, as knowing that by this means they would offend and displease him.

Thus

Thus now you see what it is to be holy **Serm. V.**
indeed, even to have all the Faculties of your Souls, your Understanding, Will, Affections, all reduced to such an excellent Temper and Disposition, as to be inclined to God, and meet together in him as their proper Center. And if your Souls be once made thus sound and whole, your Bodies will be soon brought into Subjection; so that your outward Actions will be as good as your inward Disposition is, and your Behaviour towards Men as excellent in its kind as your Carriage towards God; so that *you'll be holy*, as the Apostle here saith, *in all manner of conversation.*

But before we come to that, we must in the next place consider in what Sense you are he commanded *to be holy as God is holy*: For it is plain, that you are not only enjoined here to be of that Excellent and Divine Temper wherein true Holiness doth consist; but the very Holiness of God himself is here propounded as a Pattern and Example for you to walk by. *As he who hath called you is holy*, not as he is Omniscient, not as he is Almighty, not as he is Eternal, but, *As he is holy, so be ye holy*; that is, do you follow after and practise the same kind of Holiness which is in God, so far as you are capable of it. Now by the Holiness of God,

Vol. VIII. as I have shewn the Scripture understands his Supreme Excellency, Majesty, and Super-eminency above all things, and by Consequence above whatsoever you are able to attain to. And therefore it cannot be expected; neither is it here commanded that you should be holy in the same degree as he is, but that your Holiness should be of the same Nature that he is of, consisting in the Excellency of your Temper and Disposition as his doth; so as to be and live as like to him as possibly you can. Hence Holiness in Scripture is called the Image of God, because by it we imitate and resemble him; yea it is called *the divine nature* too, *2 Pet. i. 4.* because his Nature is not only holy, but Holiness itself; and therefore, if we be truly holy as he is, we may well be said to partake of his Divine Nature.

And verily, he that is truly holy must needs *be holy as God is holy*, so as to come as near him in all Acts of Holiness as his Nature is capable of: For as God loves and rejoiceth in himself, so doth every one that is holy love and rejoice in none but him, as we have seen already, But besides that, this Command, *to be holy as God is*, implies that we ought to imitate him in all such Acts of Holiness wherein he hath manifested the Excellency of his Nature to
us

us as far as our Natures or Faculties can possibly reach. *Ex Gr.* Serm. V.

1. One great Excellency we apprehend in God, is, That he is just and righteous, rendering to every one according to their deserts, without respect of Persons; so ought we to be, we must *render to every one their due*, Rom. xiii. 7. You must not *defraud or over-reach each other*, 1 Theff. iv. 6. But still square all our Actions according to our Saviour's-Rule, *Mat. vii. 12.* And whosoever doth not so, is not holy as God is holy; *for the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*, Psal. cxlv. 17.

2. He is a God infinitely gracious and merciful, as he is so infinitely just as to punish every Sin that is committed, so is he so infinitely merciful too as to pardon every Sinner that repenteth: And they that do not repent too he still spares them, and doth not presently execute the Rigour of his Law upon them; but gives them time to consider that they may at length repent and turn unto him. Neither is there any of his Perfections that he hath more clearly unveiled to us than this, both with his own Mouth proclaiming it to us, *Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.* and by all his Prophets and Apostles in all Ages, particularly *Psal. ciii. 7, 8, 9, 10.* Now as he is to you, if
you

Vol. VIII. you would be like to him, you must be so to one another; not peevish and froward, not revengeful and malicious, but slow to anger, merciful and gracious unto all. Though you every Day transgress God's Laws, and so incurr his Displeasure, yet you see by Experience he hath not yet revenged himself as he might do of you; but you are still in the Land of the Living Monuments of his infinite Mercy and Compassion towards you. And so ought you to be to all others, passing by all Wrongs and Injuries which you either do or think you do receive from others, so as not to suffer your Minds to be disturbed, or your Passions discomposed, by any thing that Men can do, as knowing that in this respect you are to be like to God himself, *merciful as he is merciful, and perfect as he is perfect*, Mat. v. 48. Luk. vi. 36.

3. The great God, he is good and loving, kind and liberal unto all, yea to his very Enemies themselves. And so must you be too if you would be like to him, as your Saviour himself hath taught you, *Mat. v. 44, 45*. And verily, if you be holy as God is holy, you cannot but be thus loving as he is loving unto all: So as to extend your Love and Charity to all that you converse with, who have any occasion for it; loving not only these of your Acquaintance

quaintance, Kindred, Party or Religion in the World, but all Mankind that you can any way manifest your Love unto. 'This is to be like God indeed. And whosoever comes short of this, hath not as yet the Image and Portraiture of God enstamped upon him. And therefore tell me not of your being holy so long as you confine your Love or Charity to Sects and Factions, as to any particular Persons in the World; give me a Man whose Love can find no bounds, but that reacheth as high as to the Eternal God, and as far as to all the Creatures in the World that bear his Image and Likeness. Of such a one I would say as our Saviour did of *Nathaniel*, *Behold an Israelite indeed, one in whom there is no guile*; Behold a real Saint, a truly pious and holy Person, one holy as God is holy. For this our Saviour himself maketh an infallible Sign or Character of his Disciples, that is, of true Saints; *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one for another*, Joh. xiii. 35.

Lastly, God is so holy as to be *holy*, not only in some, but *all his works*, Psal. cxlv. 17. Every thing he speaks, every thing he wills, every thing he doth is holy, and just, and good; and so ought you to be holy too, not only in some, or

M many,

Vol. VIII. many, or most of your Actions, but as
 ~~~~~ it is here expressed in all manner of Con-  
 versation; of which hereafter.

In the mean while, from what we have already discoursed upon this Subject, you may observe what great Mistakes there are in the World concerning Holiness, and how fearfully they are deceived who fancy and boast themselves to be the Saints of God, an holy People, merely upon the Account of the separate Congregations and new Modes of Church-Government and Discipline. As if such things as these are, could be any Argument of real Sanctity; I bless God for it I heartily wish they were all as holy as they pretend to be: But verily, whilst they place Holiness in such things as these are, they must give me leave to say, that I fear they do not know as yet what true Holiness is; for it is certainly a thing quite of another, and of a much higher Nature than they would make it; consisting in nothing less than the right Disposition of all the Faculties of our Souls, and in the due Regulation of all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, both towards God and Men. This is the Holiness that I would have you to follow after, as that without which you can never see God. And therefore, let me advise you not to take up, or content  
 your-

yourselves with any other Holiness but **Serm. V.**  
this. Do not think yourselves to be holy  
Persons, because you profess the Christian  
Religion, because you come to Church,  
hear Sermons, pray now and then, or the  
like. For all this you may do, and yet  
be unholy here and unhappy for ever:  
For I tell you again, Holiness doth not  
consist in any particular Acts or Duties;  
but in the Rectitude or right Disposition  
of the whole Man, so that it runs through  
and rectifies all the Faculties of the Soul  
and Members of the Body; yea all the  
Thoughts and Affections, all the Words  
and Actions of your whole Life. This is  
true Holiness indeed, and whatsoever else  
comes under that Notion, is nothing but  
Hypocrisy and Deceit, wherewith Millions  
have been cheated into Eternal Flames.  
And that you might not follow after them,  
I have endeavoured to explain unto you  
the true Notion of Holiness, which I there-  
fore beg of you to labour after, so as to  
make it your only Design in this World  
to attain unto it.

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Christ's Life a Pattern of Holiness to Christians.

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S E R M O N II.

ON I P E T. I. 15.

*But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.*

**H**A V I N G thus consider'd the Pattern and the Command of Holiness, how God is said to be holy, and how we are commanded to *be holy as he is holy*; we are now come to the Extent and Latitude of this Holiness, it is to be *in all manner of Conversation*. And it is in this wherein our Holiness is to resemble God's, as well as in the Nature of it: For as God is *holy in all his works*, so are we too to be holy in all our works, *Psal. cxlv. 17.* or  
as

as it is here expressed, *in all manner of* Sermon VI.  
*Conversation.*

Where first by Conversation, we are to understand the whole Course of our Life in this World, which is therefore call'd *ἑνασπορῆ*, *Conversation*, because we are still conversant about something or other, winding and turning our selves, as the Word signifies, first to one thing, then to another. As where the Apostle saith, *Only let your Conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ*, Phil. i. 27. that is, live and carry yourselves in this World according to the Precepts of the Gospel, as becometh those who profess so excellent a Religion as Christ hath established in the World; So here, where we are commanded *to be holy in our Conversation*, the Meaning is, That we should be holy, not only in some few Acts, but in the whole Course and Tenure of our Lives; so that Holiness should be our main Business, our principal Care and Study in this Life. We must not be holy by Fits only, or now and then, as Occasion serves, or Humour and Interest lead us; but Holiness must be our constant Business, our daily Employment, the way we always walk in. Oh this is much to be considered; for many Men can make a shift to carry themselves after an holy manner




Vol. VIII. at some times, and upon some Occasions; but that will not serve their turn; your Conversations, your constant way of living and conversing in the World must *be holy*.  
 Yea,

In the next place you must *be holy in all manner of Conversation*, ἐν παντι ἀνασεφῆ, *in all Conversation*; whithersoever you turn your selves, whatsoever you converse with, you are still to be holy: So that not to be holy in all things, is to be holy in nothing as you ought to be. Nothing less than all Holiness will serve your turn, it must be Holiness *in all manner of Conversation*.

I. You must be all holy, subjective in respect of your selves: You must be all over holy: All the Faculties of your Souls must be holy, and so must all the Members of your Bodies be holy too: Your Understandings should be holy, your Judgments holy, your Consciences holy, your Wills holy, your Memories holy, your Affections all holy: You should have holy Loves and holy Hatreds, holy Joys and holy Griefs, holy Hopes and holy Fears, holy Desires and holy Detestations. Thus that Soul that is holy at all, it is all holy; it is like that Part of the Temple that was called *Sanctum Sanctorum*, the Holy of Holies, where there was nothing but what  
 was

was holy in an eminent and peculiar manner. Sermon VI.  
And as the Soul of a true Saint is thus like the Holy of Holies, so is his Body like the other Parts of the Temple, where all the Instruments and Utensils in their several kinds were sacred and holy. There was the holy Oyl, the holy Perfume, the holy Garments, every thing was holy; nothing unclean, nothing common or profane was to come thither. Thus it is with every true Saint; his Body is *the Temple of God, for the Spirit of God dwelleth in him*, 1 Cor. iii. 16. And therefore all the Members or Instruments of it should be holy, the Eyes holy, the Ears holy, the Tongue, the Hands, the Feet, and every thing else holy, all reduced to an holy Temper, and employed always about holy Designs and Projects, devoted wholly and solely *to the Honour and Glory of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. Hence the Apostle prays the *Thessalonians might be sanctified wholly in Spirit, and Soul, and Body*, 1 Thess. v. 23. Where by the Spirit we are to understand as the Ancient Fathers did, the highest Part of Man, his Reason and Understanding; by the Soul we are to understand the Elective Part, the Will, which in Scripture is frequently called the Soul; by the Body we are to understand the Brutish or Sensitive Part; so that these

Vol. VIII.  Three Parts make up the *ἁλόκληρον ἄνθρωπος*, *the whole of a Man*; and therefore the Apostle desires that all Three *might be sanctified*, that so the whole Man might be made holy. From whence it is plain, that Sanctification is of the whole Man, not only of any Part of Parcel of it. If the whole be not holy the whole it is sinful: If a Man be not thoroughly sanctified, so as to have all the Powers of his Soul restored to their proper Temper and Constitution, he can be holy in nothing, much less *in all manner of Conversation*.

2. True Holiness is universal also in respect of the Object: *It hath respect unto all the Commands of God*, Psal. cxix. 6. It equally respecteth the Commands of both Tables, and every Command that is in either of them, in exercising whatsoever Graces, performing whatsoever Duties we owe either to God or Man. This is *to be holy in all manner of Conversation* indeed, when we carry our selves after an holy and godly manner towards all Persons whatsoever that we converse with, as the Apostle did, *Acts 24. 16.*

1. He that is truly pious hath before a great Care to pay that Homage and Worship which he oweth to Almighty God, not only loving of him, longing for him, rejoicing in him, trusting on him, and  
fearing

fearing him above all things in the World besides, as I have shewn already; but likewise performing all such external Worship which is due unto him, with that Reverence and Devotion as becometh so great a Work as that is. For he that is not holy in his Conversation towards God, before can never be holy in his Conversation towards Men. But in performing our Duties unto Almighty God, we do in our Capacity converse with himself, and therefore ought to have a special regard to our outward as well as inward Department before him. As our Thoughts are all the while to be fixed upon him, and our Affections moved suitably unto him, so are our outward Gestures also to be seemly and reverend towards him, such as may testify our Acknowledgment of his supreme Authority over us, and our constant Dependance upon him. Hence *Solomon* Commands, *Eccl. v. 1.* where the Part is put for the Whole, the Feet for all the Body. And if we must take care of our very Feet, the lowest Part of our Body, much more of our Hands and Eyes, and Heads, and all other Members of our Body, to see that they deport themselves so as to express and manifest our fear and dread of him, before whom we are.

Thus



Thus *Moses* was commanded to uncover his Feet when he drew near to God, *Exod. iii. 5.* and so was *Joshua*, *Josh. v. 15.* Whence *Discalceation* or *Uncovering the Feet* was always used as an Expression of Reverence to God in the *Eastern Churches*, especially among the *Jews*; as uncovering the Head is still among us. And whosoever dare presume to offer up his Prayers, or to perform any religious Duty to the most High God in an unseemly or irreverent Manner, he thereby manifesteth himself to be an unholy and prophane Person, one that hath not any true Sense of God's Power and Majesty upon his Heart; for if he had, he could not but abhor himself, and repent in Dust and Ashes, and so carry himself with all Humility and Reverence imaginable before him. As indeed we are all commanded to do, *Levit. x. 3.* For to sanctifie the Lord is nothing else but to agnize and express our Acknowledgment of his Sanctity or Holiness, that is, of his supreme Excellency, Power and Supereminency over us and all the World. But how can we possibly do this if we behave ourselves no otherwise in his Presence than as if he was our fellow Creature? Is this to Worship him? Is this to celebrate his Praise and Glory? Is this to sanctifie him when we draw nigh unto him? How can that



that Man be said to sanctifie the Lord of Serms. VI.  
Hosts in praying to him, who dares at  
the same time to sit as confidently be-  
fore him, and talk as malapertly to him  
as if he was but his fellow Worm? How  
can that Man be said to sanctifie the Lord  
of Hosts, in hearing of his Word, who  
at the same time thinks scorn to veil his  
Bonnet, or uncover his Head before him?  
How can that Man be said to sanctifie the  
Lord of Hosts, in receiving the Blessed Bo-  
dy and Blood of his only Son, who at  
the same time will not vouchsafe him so  
much as his Knee in Honour of so great a  
Mercy as this is? Is this to sanctifie the  
Lord of Hosts? Or rather, what is, if this  
be not to confront his Majesty, to profane  
his Ordinances, to villifie his Word, to  
despise his Presence, and to disparage the  
greatest of his Mercies as nothing worth?  
And yet, how many have we among us,  
who would therefore be accounted more  
holy than others; because they are so un-  
holy themselves as to express no Rever-  
ence or Solemnity at all in the holy  
Presence of the most holy God? But as  
for you; if ever you desire to manifest  
yourselves to be holy indeed, whensoever  
you converse with the most High God in  
his sacred Ordinances, you must be sure  
to behave yourselves with that Shamefac'd-  
ness

Vol. VIII.

ness and Modesty, with that Reverence and Humility, as becometh those who believe themselves to be in the special Presence of the supreme Being of the World. For otherwise, whatsoever Pretences you make to Holiness, you may be confident you are not holy as you are here commanded to be, *in all manner of Conversation*. For you are not holy in your Conversation towards God. And if you be not holy in this, be sure you are holy in nothing. And, therefore, above all things you must have an especial care of this even to perform your Devoyers to the most High God after an holy and solemn Manner.

2. Your Holiness must also shew forth itself in your Conversation towards Men. For although all Holiness be referred immediately unto God as its proper and adequate Object, yet seeing our Conversation towards Men is to be regulated by the Laws of God, and grounded upon Obedience to him, that also both may and ought to be holy: So that your just and righteous Actions towards Men, ought likewise to be holy and pious Actions towards God, as being sincerely performed out of Love to his Person, and Obedience to his Precepts. And verily, Holiness being the Rectitude or right Disposition of  
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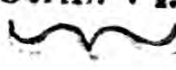
the whole Man, wheresoever it is it cannot but exert and put forth itself in all the **Actions** of a Man's Life, conforming all and every one of them to the Laws and Commands of God. Where by **Actions**, I mean whatsoever a Man doth wherein his Neighbour is concerned, inwardly in his Thoughts and Affections, or outwardly in his Words and Actions, properly so called, towards him. For he that would be truly holy, must make Conscience of ordering every one of them according to the Rules laid down in the Holy Scriptures.

1. As for the Thoughts: Although they fall not under the Cognizance of Men, unless they break forth into Words or Actions, yet he that is truly holy hath an especial care of them to keep them also within their proper Bounds and Limits; so that as he never thinks too highly of himself, so neither doth he think too lowly of his Neighbours, he knowing himself better than others, and being thoroughly acquainted with his own Failures and Imperfections, cannot but look upon himself as worse than all others, *1 Tim. i. 15.* and by Consequence think all others better than himself, *Phil. ii. 3.* And therefore he dares not judge or censure any Man living but himself, as being always  
mindful

Serm. VI.


Vol. VIII. mindful of his Saviour's Words, *Matt. vii.*  
 1, 2, 3, 4. This is the proper Effect of  
 Holiness wheresoever it comes; thus to  
 keep a Man humble in his own Eyes,  
 and to make him think well of all Men,  
 ill of none; yea, though he sees a Man  
 fall before his Eyes, yet he doth not  
 think him worse than himself, as still  
 knowing more ill by himself than he  
 doth by him.

2. His Thoughts running thus regularly  
 concerning his Neighbour; his Affections  
 cannot but move accordingly. And there-  
 fore thinking well of all Men, he cannot  
 but love and honour all Men, *1 Pet. ii. 17.*  
 yea even his very Enemies, *Matt. v. 44.*  
 Though they be Enemies unto him, he  
 dares not be so to them; so that what-  
 soever evil he receiveth from them, he still  
 endeavours to do them all the good he  
 can, according to the Command that is  
 laid upon him, *Rom. xii. 20, 21.* This is  
 a true Saint indeed. When a Man's Affe-  
 ctions are kept in that excellent Order  
 and Discipline, that Affronts and Injuries  
 themselves are not able to trouble or dis-  
 compose them; but whatsoever others do  
 or speak against him, his Love is still the  
 same, his Affections all unchangeable to-  
 wards them. This is that which true  
 Holiness requires and acts, wheresoever it  
 is.

is. And therefore wheresoever you see Serm. VI.  
Envy or Malice, Feuds or Animosities,   
Strife or Contention allowed and practi-  
ced, you may conclude there is no such  
thing as Holiness there; for that is always  
accompanied with Love and Amity, with  
Peace and Concord, and with all other  
Vertues whatsoever that spring from the  
right Disposition of Men's Affections,  
wherein true Holiness doth principally  
consist; and therefore it can never be se-  
parated from a meek and quiet, a loving  
and peaceable Spirit, *Heb. xii. 14.*

3. The Thoughts and Affections of a  
truly pious Man towards others being thus  
rarely tempered, his Words cannot but be  
framed suitably unto them: *For out of the  
Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh,*  
*Matt. xii. 34.* that is, as a Man's Heart is,  
so will his Words be. If a Man thinks no  
ill of his Neighbour, he will much less  
speak ill of him; nay he cannot do it;  
for if he should, his Tongue would con-  
tradict his Heart, he would speak what he  
doth not think; which be sure no Man  
that is truly holy e're doth. And besides  
that to speak evil of any Man is expressly  
contrary to the Command of God, *Tit.*  
*iii. 2.* And therefore Holiness disposing  
and modelling the whole Man according  
to the Word of God; if he that is holy  
should




Vol. VIII.  should speak ill of any Man, he would act contrary to his Temper and Disposition. Hence therefore if you would manifest yourselves to be Saints indeed, as you must not lye, nor swear, nor curse, nor blaspheme God, nor deride Religion, and the like; so neither must you slander or backbite your Neighbour; but as you ought to speak of other Men's Vertues only behind their Backs, so must you speak of their Vices only before their Faces, and that too, not with Rancour, Malice or Passion, but with the Spirit of Meekness and Sobriety, that the Calmness and Gravity of your Words may shew forth the excellent Disposition which Holiness hath reduced your Hearts into.

4. As Holiness thus refines a Man's Thoughts, regulates his Affections, and bridles his Tongue, so doth it likewise rectifie all his Actions, as to those he converseth with; so that he cannot, he dare not but fulfil all the Relations, discharge all the Trusts, and perform all the Duties that he stands any ways obliged to do; whatsoever Company he is in, whatsoever Employment he is about, whatsoever he doth or doth not, he hath still a Care of the main Chance, even to keep his Conscience void of Offence both towards God and Men. For Holiness where-  
soever

soever it is, as it is always sincere, so is it universal too. It admits of no Ifs and Ands, no Buts and Exceptions, but carries a Man with an even and steady Course through his whole Duty. It will not suffer a Man to swear any more than to lye; nor yet to lye any more than to swear. It makes a Man as afraid to cheat privately in his Shop, as he is to rob publickly in the Roads; and as cautious to wrong none, as he is desirous that none should wrong him. He dares no more deal unjustly or fraudulently with his Neighbour, than he dares to neglect his daily Prayers and Praises unto God. Infomuch that as *Zachariah* prophesied, that in the latter Days after the coming of Christ, *there should be Holiness to the Lord written upon the very Bells of the Horses*, Zach. xiv. 20. So is it with every true Saint, *Holiness to the Lord* may be written upon all his Actions; yea, upon every thing he thinks or speaks, or doth. And verily it is such an universal Holiness as this is that will stand you in stead another Day; you had as good be holy in nothing as not in all things. A partial Holiness never yet did, nor ever will do any Man good; but it hath occasioned the Ruin and Destruction of Thousands, who being more nice and scrupulous in




Vol. VIII.  some things than their Neighbours are, have therefore thought themselves to be truly holy. But this is a great and dangerous Mistake; which I desire you in an especial manner to beware that you be not overtaken with it. Never think yourselves to be holy at all, unless you be holy in all manner of Conversation, holy in your Thoughts, holy in your Affections, holy in your Words, and holy in all your Actions, both to God and Men. Neither must you think that you may be holy at one time and not at another. No: He that is ever holy is holy ever, in all places, upon all occasions, at all times and seasons, all his life long, *Luke i. 74, 75.* For Holiness is an universal Principle that runs through the whole Course of a Man's Life; yea, and wheresoever it is once sown it always comes up, grows higher and higher, and still brings forth more and more Fruit, so that it still adds one Grace to another, *2 Pet. i. 5, 6.* yea, and it is always adding too one degree of Grace to another, until at length every Spark of Grace be blown up into a Flame of Glory. Insomuch that they who are truly holy never think themselves to be holy enough; but the more holy they are, the more holy they desire to be, still aspiring higher and higher, till at length they com-  
mence

mence perfect and glorified Saints in Heaven. Serm. VI.

But then you may say, if this be the Nature of true Holiness, who then can be holy? Or, how is it possible for us to attain to such an excellent Spirit as to be thus holy *in all manner of Conversation?* To which I Answer; First, It is true indeed, that it is a very hard and difficult matter to be truly holy, whatsoever the great Pretenders to it may fancy or boast. For, questionless, as Holiness is the highest Excellency that we can ever attain unto; so is it the hardest matter in the World to attain unto it. Howsoever in the second Place I answer, that how hard soever it be, yet it is possible for any or every one of us to be holy. For as our Saviour said in the like Case, *Matt. xix. 23, 24, 25, 26.* so say I. Though it be impossible for Men ever to make themselves holy; yet with God all things are possible, and by Consequence this too. There is no Mind so dark, but he can illuminate it: No Heart so hard, but he can soften it. No Will so crooked, but he can streighten it: No Affection so disorderly, but he can regulate it: No Soul so foul, but he can cleanse it: No Man so great a Sinner, but he is able to make him as great a Saint.



Vol VIII.  Neither is he less willing than able to do it for us, if we will but make use of the Means which himself hath prescribed in order thereunto. So that if any of you be not as holy as I have shewn you ought to be, it is most certainly your own Faults; neither can you blame any one but yourselves for it.

But I hope that what you have heard already concerning the Excellency of Holiness, hath wrought so far upon you, that you are now really desirous to be holy indeed, and long to know how you may come to be so. And to satisfy your desires, I shall endeavour to acquaint you with the ready way to do it. But you must give me leave to tell you, that I fear there are but few among you that will mind it; and that my pains will be in vain to many of you. For I know your Hearts are generally so much taken up with the Affairs of this Life, that you will hardly be persuaded to observe these Rules exactly which I shall shew you to be necessary in order to your being holy. Howsoever, it will be worth my while to declare them to you, if but any one of you shall be prevailed upon to observe them. And who knows but that whilst I am speaking to your Ears, the great God himself may speak so effectually to  
your



your Hearts, that many of you may at this time be converted from Sin to Holiness, and from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God, so as for the future to become real and true Saints: Or howsoever whether you hear, or whether you forbear, I must do my Duty, and leave the Issue unto God.

Serm. VI.

*First*, Therefore if you would be holy indeed, you must resolve before-hand to make it your great Care and principal Business in this World to endeavour after it. You must not think that it is so easie a matter to be holy that you need not much concern yourselves, nor take any great Pains about it. For I verily believe one of the principal Reasons why there are so few holy Persons in the World, is, because most Persons think it is so easie a matter to be holy, that if they do but read good Books, and come to Church now and then, they cannot miss of it. But do not mistake yourselves. For I dare assure you, that if ever any of you shall be made holy, as I hope many of you will, you'll find there is a great deal of Care and Pains to be taken before you can arrive at so high and excellent a Disposition as that is; you must not only seek it, but you must seek it in the first Place, or else you are never likely to find

Vol. VIII. *it, Matt. vi. 33.* Holiness is the strait Gate which you must strive to enter in at, *Luke xiii. 24.* And, therefore, if you really desire to be holy, you must set yourselves in good Earnest upon the Prosecution of it, before all things in the World besides, still projecting and contriving how to get your Lusts rooted up, and true Grace and Piety planted in your Souls. You must not make it only your Business by the bye, but your only Business; or else you'll never be able to effect it. And let me tell you this for your Comfort and Encouragement, that although none ever yet did or ever can attain to Holiness, that sought it only after a careless, indifferent and perfunctory Manner; so none that sincerely seek and endeavour after it before all things else, ever did, or ever can fail of attaining to it. And whatsoever Pains it costs you, it cannot but be worth your while as knowing that Holiness is not only the highest, but the only Excellency that your Souls are capable of; and therefore no Care, no Pains, no Cost, can be too much in order to it. Well then: If you cordially desire, as you pretend to be holy, as you are here commanded in all manner of Conversation, let this be the first step you take in order to it. Halt no longer

ger between Two Opinions: But resolve Serm. VI.  
fully and stedfastly with yourselves, by  
the Blessing and Assistance of Almighty  
God, that from this Day forward you will  
make Holiness your only Aim and Design  
in this World; and by Consequence, that  
you will leave no Stone unturn'd, but  
use all Means imaginable that may any  
ways conduce to your being and living  
holy. Do this, and your Work will be  
half done.

2. Your Minds being thus enflamed  
with the Desire of Holiness, and armed  
with Resolutions to pursue it, as humble  
Supplicants, in a reverent and solemn Man-  
ner betake yourselves to Almighty God,  
the only Fountain of all true Grace and  
Vertue, implore his Mercy, and beseech  
him for his Son's sake to enstamp his  
Image once more upon you, and to make  
you holy as he is holy. Say with *Da-  
vid*, *Psal. li. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10.* And with  
*Ephraim* in the Prophet, *Turn thou me, and  
I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my  
God, Jer. xxxi. 18. c. xvii. 14.* Let this be  
your daily, your constant Prayer, uttered  
not only with your Mouths, but from the  
very Bottom of your Hearts, earnestly de-  
siring nothing in the World so much as  
this. This is the Way; and the only Way  
that the Apostle directs us to for the get-

Vol. VIII ting of Wisdom, or true Piety, *Jam. i. 5.*  
 But for the better Understanding of this,  
 consider,

1. None but God can make you holy; it is not in your own Strength and Power to do it. When Man stood, it was in his Power to throw himself down; but now he is down, it is not in his Power to raise himself up again. He that was holy could make himself sinful; but we that are sinful cannot make ourselves holy. And, therefore, never expect to be made holy by yourselves, by the Strength of your Reasons, or the feigned Power of your own Wills. For I know *that the way of Man is not in himself: It is not in Man that walketh to direct his steps, Jer. x. 23.* You can and ought to use all Means that conduce to your being holy; but it is God alone that can make them effectual. For every good thing comes from him, *Jam. i. 17.* And that Faith whereby we are saved from our Sins, and made truly pious, is expressly said *to be the Gift of God, Eph. ii. 8.* It is God's Gift; and therefore we can neither work it in ourselves, nor yet do any thing whereby to Merit it from him. But when we have done all we can, we must acknowledge it to come only from his free Grace and Mercy; for it is *his Gift.* And it is well it is so: For, for  
 mine



mine own part, had I nothing else to trust Serm. VI.  
to but my own Powers and Faculties, I  
should despair of ever being so happy as  
to be truly holy. But our Comfort is,  
that what is wanting in ourselves, Omni-  
potence itself is ready to supply us with  
it.

2. As none but God can make us holy,  
so we can never expect that he should do  
it for us, unless we beg it of him. For  
all the Promises that he hath made us to  
this purpose have this Proviso or Condition  
annexed to them, that we still pray to  
him for what he hath promised to us,  
*Ezek. xxxvi. 37.*

3. But if we earnestly desire, and sin-  
cerely pray for true Grace and Holiness,  
we may be confident that he will be-  
stow it upon us. For we have his ex-  
press Word for it, *Matt. vii. 7. c. xxi. 22.*  
*John xvi. 24.* But you must remember  
this Caution, that it is not praying only  
now and then will do the Business; but  
you must continue instant in Prayer, as  
*St. Paul* did, *2 Cor. xii. 8.* and as our Sa-  
viour himself teacheth us to do, *Luke*  
*xviii. 1, 2.* And questionless, we may lay  
this down as an undoubted Truth, that  
never any yet did, nor ever shall fail of  
being made really and truly holy that  
made it his constant Business sincerely to  
pray



pray to Almighty God, that he might be made so; and therefore, as ever you desire Holiness, never leave off praying for it.

3. In order to your being holy, it is necessary also that you often read and hear the Word of God both read and preached: For *Faith comes by hearing*, Rom. x. 17. where under Faith all true Graces whatsoever are comprehended, which God doth ordinarily infuse into us by the Ministry of the Word. And therefore, although we both may and ought to beg this unspeakable Mercy from him, even to be made holy, yet we must not expect that he should come down and give it us as it were with his own hands; but we must wait upon him for it in his Publick Ordinances, there expecting his Holy Spirit to accompany his Word into our Hearts, and by it reduce them into their proper Frame and Constitution again, so as to make us like itself, holy.

4. Having made this Progress in the way to Holiness, stay not here, but still go on to exercise your selves continually in Divine and Heavenly Meditations. Accustom yourselves frequently to abstract and draw off your Thoughts from the World, and all things here below; and to raise them up to God, and those Glories

ries that are above, so as often to be con-  
templating upon the Vanity of the World,  
the Sinfulness of Sin, the Perfections of  
God, the Excellency of Religion, the Me-  
rits of Christ, the Beauty of Holiness, and  
the Transcendency of that Happiness which  
attends it in the World to come. For such  
Contemplations as these are, will very  
much conduce to the refining your  
Thoughts, the reforming your Judgments,  
and so to the reducing your Affections  
into their proper Order again, and so to  
the making of you sincerely holy. By  
this means it was that *St. Paul* became  
so eminent a Saint because *his Conversation*  
*was always in heaven*, Phil. iii. 20. This  
is the way to be *holy in all manner of Con-*  
*versation upon Earth, even by having our*  
*Conversation always in heaven.*

5. The Last and Principal Thing of all  
to be done, in order to your being holy,  
is to believe in Jesus Christ; where by  
believing in Christ I mean, trusting or  
confiding in his Merits and Mediation,  
for Two Things especially.

1. For such Influences of God's Grace  
and Spirit as may make us holy accord-  
ing to his Promises: For it is certain  
that none can make us holy but God;  
and it is certain that we have no Ground  
to expect that he should do it for us,  
but

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but his own Promise; and it is as certain still, that *all his Promises* are made and confirmed to us only in the Blood of Christ, 2 Cor. i. 20. Here therefore is the great Duty that is incumbent upon all that desire to be holy, even to trust in the Merits of Christ for God's Performance of his Promises to us, such especially wherein he hath promised to make us holy, such as *Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. Jer. xxxi. 33.* These and such like are the Promises of the New Covenant Sealed to us in the Blood of Christ. And that which is required on our Parts, is firmly to believe that God for Christ's sake will perform those his gracious Promises to us: That he will be as good as his Word, and Crown our sincere Endeavours after Holiness with that Success, that we shall be made really and sincerely holy. And when we earnestly desire, and sincerely pray for Grace and Holiness, we are stedfastly to believe that God for Christ's sake will hear and answer us; for that he will do so Christ himself hath told us, and we are bound to believe him, *Job. xvi. 23.* And that it is not only lawful but necessary for us, thus to believe that for Christ's sake we *shall receive what we pray for*, Christ himself hath likewise assur'd us, *Mark xi. 14.* which is principally




pally to be understood of the Prayers Serm. VI.  
which we make for the Assistance of God's  
Grace and Spirit, in order to the making  
us holy ; which whosoever sincerely prays  
for, and at the same time truly believes  
that his Request for Christ's sake shall be  
granted to him, he cannot miss of, for  
Christ hath said *he shall receive it.* And  
therefore, as you hope and believe in  
Christ, for the Pardon of your Sins and  
the Justification of your Persons, so you  
must trust and depend upon him likewise  
for the subduing of your Lusts, and the San-  
ctification of your Natures ; that is, for the  
making of you really and sincerely holy.

2. The other thing which you are to  
trust in Christ for, is the Acceptance of  
your sincere instead of perfect Holiness ;  
for the Command is here expressed, *to be  
holy as God is holy, in all manner of Con-  
versation ;* but this you can never perfect-  
ly be, so long as you are in this World.  
But after your highest Attainments there  
will be still something of Irregularity and  
Disorder in you, both in Natures, and  
also in your Actions. Howsoever, in the  
Use of the Means which we already dis-  
coursed of, none of you, but even in this  
Life, by the Assistance of God's Grace,  
may reach so far as to be sincerely holy ;  
that is, to have all the Faculties of your  
Souls

Vol. VIII. Souls reduced, though not into a perfect, yet into a very good Order and excellent Disposition, so as to carry your-selves for the main, very well and regularly both towards God and Man, all the Days of your Life, neither wilfully committing any Sin, nor neglecting any Duty which is required of you, but still endeavouring to the utmost of your Knowledge and Power to perform universal and constant Obedience to all the Commands of God. And this you are bound to believe, that God for Christ's sake will accept of, in Lieu of that perfect Holiness which is required of you : For this is that the Scripture doth plainly assert, *Eph. i. 6.* & *Pet. ii. 5.* And indeed, this is the great Privilege that is offered to us in the Gospel Covenant, or the Covenant of Graces, that God will now accept of our sincere, instead of perfect Holiness, by reason of that absolutely perfect Obedience which Christ hath performed in our steads, or howsoever by the vertue of his Merit and Mediation for us : By which means, whosoever among you shall perform sincere Obedience to Almighty God to the utmost of your Power, it shall be as acceptable to him in Jesus Christ, as the very Praises and Services of the Holy Angels and Glorified Saints in Heaven are. And therefore, although

in



in this Life you cannot be so perfectly **Serm. VI.**  
holy as they are, yet you may be so *holy*   
*in all manner of Conversation*, that God  
will accept of you as well as if ye were  
holy in all manner of Perfection; though  
not for any intrinsic Vertue or Value in  
yourselves or Works, yet by reason of  
Christ's Merits and Righteousness imputed  
to you, and to all those that truly believe  
in him: For this is that unspeakable Be-  
nefit which we receive by Christ, that  
he helps our Weaknesses by his own Al-  
mighty Spirit implanted in us, and sup-  
plies our Defects by his All-sufficient Me-  
rit imputed to us.

Thus now you see how you may all be-  
come holy, *holy as God is, in all manner of Con-  
versation*: I intended in the next Place to  
have presented you with some Considera-  
tions which might have excited and stir'd  
you up to the Use of the said means, and  
to the serious Prosecution of the Holiness we  
have now been speaking of; but I hope that  
Labour may be now spared: For now you  
know how to become holy; how to have  
your headstrong Corruptions bridled, and  
your unruly Passions tamed; how to have  
your Understandings clear'd, and your Judg-  
ments rectified; how to have your Consci-  
ences cleansed, and your Thoughts refined;  
how to have your Wills sanctified, your Af-  
fections

Vol. VIII. fections regulated, and your whole Souls reduced into an Angelick, yea a Divine Frame and Constitution, so as to be like, not only to the best of Creatures, but to your most Holy Creator himself. Now, I say, you know this, methinks you should not need any other Arguments to move you to put it into Execution; but should be more ready to labour after Holiness than I can be to perswade you to it. Howsoever, you shall give me Leave to mind you only of Two Things, which I hope, if seriously weighed, will do the work.

1. Consider, There is no other way imaginable for you to be happy either in this Life or that which is to come, but by being holy. Though God hath blessed you with large Estates, with great Natural Parts, and with a Confluence of all Earthly Enjoyments, What will all these Things signifie when you go into the other World, and leave them behind you for others to be cheated and ensnared by them as yourselves have been? What Advantage will you then receive from all those Things which you here take so much Care and Pains about? Surely none at all; nothing but Holiness will then stand you in any stead, without which you neither shall nor can see God; for you will not be qualified for the Contem-  
tion



tion and Enjoyment of his Divine Perfections, unless you be first made *holy as he is holy*. Do not therefore fool and deceive yourselves with groundless and vain Conceits of Heaven; for I dare assure you, you'll never come there, unless you be first made holy, and sanctified throughout.

2. Consider, As there is none can be happy but he that is first holy, so none can be holy but he shall be happy too; this many Thousands have experienced already, who once were upon Earth as we now are, but now they are Glorified Saints in Heaven. But how came they thither but by being Saints upon Earth first? They were first holy, and so they became happy; and this is the way that you must take if ever you desire to go to them. Let me therefore beseech you to dally no longer in a matter of such Importance as this is; but set your selves in good earnest upon the Use of all those means whereby you may become *holy as God is holy*, which if ye would all do, how happy would you be? How certainly would you then become all Glorified Saints in Heaven, and be as really happy in all manner of Perfection hereafter, as you are *holy here in all manner of Conversation*.

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The Holiness of Christians  
ought to be Eminent.

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I N A

S E R M O N

On M A T T. V. 20.

*For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

**W**Hatsoever other Things we may differ in, I am sure there is one Thing wherein we all agree, and that is, we all desire to be happy: We would all be preserved or freed from all Grief

Grief and Trouble, from all Care and Fear, Sermon.VII.  
from whatsoever can either discompose  
our Minds, or disturb our Rest and Quiet:  
Yea we all desire to have our Desires  
completely satisfied, which seeing we can-  
not have whilst we are upon Earth, hence  
we all desire to go to Heaven, the Place  
fitted and appointed to make Men happy.  
And therefore, I am willing to persuade  
myself that the next to your performing  
your Homage and Devotions to Almighty  
God, the great End of your coming hi-  
ther this Day, is to learn how to get to  
Heaven, that so you may live and be hap-  
py for ever. But let me tell you, it is  
no easie matter to come thither; for *the  
way is streight, and the gate narrow that  
leadeth unto everlasting life, and there be  
but few that find it.* But give me leave  
to acquaint you withal, to your unspeak-  
able Comfort, that though it be diffi-  
cult, it is not impossible for every Soul  
here present to be advanced to Eternal  
Glory; and it will be your own Faults  
if you miss of it; which that you may  
not do, I shall endeavour to do my Duty in  
directing you in the way to Heaven,  
shewing you by what means you may all  
e'er long partake of the greatest Happiness  
that it is possible for your Natures to be  
capable of.



Now for this End, I must first mind you of that which I suppose you all know and believe already, even that it is only by Jesus Christ that you can be saved; and that he is able to save to the utmost all those that come unto God by him: For this is the Fundamental Article of that Religion which you all profess; and he deserves not the Name of a Christian that doth not believe it. And although I dare not assert, that it is indispensably necessary for every one thoroughly to understand the mysterious Way and Method of Man's Salvation by Jesus Christ, yet this is a certain and undoubted Truth, that none can, that doth not believe he may be saved by him; And therefore it highly concerns us all to believe that Jesus Christ, the only Son of the Living God, is the only Saviour of Mankind: That he came from Heaven to Earth on purpose to make way for us to go from Earth to Heaven: That all his Sufferings were only upon our Account; and that he by them hath made such a Satisfaction to God's Justice for Man's Sins, that all that truly repent and believe the Gospel, may be pardoned and accepted of, in and through him who *was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,* 2 Cor. v. 21.

This



This being premised concerning the Possibility of our Salvation only by Jesus Christ; it follows in Course, that if ever we desire to be saved, we must of necessity observe the Rules which he hath prescribed in order thereunto: For seeing it is he alone that can bring us unto Heaven, we must needs acknowledge, that he knew best what we must do that we may come thither. And seeing he came into the World on purpose to save us, it cannot be imagined that he should impose any thing upon us, but what is absolutely necessary for our Salvation; and therefore it behoves us very much, frequently to consult the Gospels, and consider seriously with our selves, what he there saith we must or must not do in order to our being saved. And we are to look upon all his Sayings as so many Oracles of God, not only because he was sent from God to speak them, but because he himself too who spake them, was really and truly God; so that every thing that he spake was therefore the Word of God because he spake it: And therefore we must not think that so much as an idle or impertinent Expression ever fell from him whilst he was upon Earth; but every thing that he said was of extraordinary Weight, of absolute Necessity to be known,

observed, believed, and practised, by all those who would be saved from their Sin and Misery by his Merit and Mediation. And hence it was that God of his Infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, was pleased so to order it, that the Divine Sentences which proceeded from our Saviour's Mouth should be left upon Record for all future Ages, not only by the Testimony of them which were Ear-Witnesses of them, but by the infallible Assistance of the Holy Ghost himself, inspiring of them; by which means we are, or may be as certain of what he said, as if we had heard it with our own Ears; and every thing that we read that he said, ought to have the same Impressions upon us, when we read or hear it read; as if we had been just by him when he spake it, and had heard the Words proceeding out of his Sacred and Divine Mouth, that so we may receive the same Benefit from every thing he spake, as they did or ought to have done that heard it. And it is our unspeakable Happiness, that though not every particular Expression, yet the Sum and Substance of whatsoever he said is so faithfully transmitted to us, that we may all be thoroughly instructed in his whole Will and Pleasure, and easily understand what he would have us do in order to our partaking of the Merits of his Death and Passions. I

I have insisted the longer upon this Discourse concerning the Heavenly and Divine Sayings of our Blessed Saviour in general, that you might be the better prepared to understand the Words which I have now read unto you, and receive what I shall suggest unto you from them, with that due Attention and Affection, as becometh those who believe them to be the Words of their only Saviour and Redeemer; and Part of that Divine Sermon which he Preached upon the Mount, wherein there is never an Expression or Word, but what deserves to be seriously considered and weighed by us; the Scope of the whole Sermon in general being to acquaint us with what is necessary for us to do, if we desire to go to Heaven: For which end he tells us in express Terms, *v. 17. That he came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them; that is, That notwithstanding he came with an Intention to offer up himself as a Propitiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of Mankind, and for the Transgression of the Moral Law, yet he would not have them think that he came to abrogate and disannul that Law, but rather to establish and confirm it; not to take off our Obligations to it, but to make them stronger than they were before: And therefore he*



tells them that the Moral Law is and shall be of perpetual force and vertue; so that not the least jot or tittle should ever perish, so as to be made void and of none effect, v. 18. but the breakers of this Law shall always have condign Punishment laid upon them; and they that keep it, shall be graciously rewarded with eternal Life, v. 19. and then he adds, *For I say unto you, &c.* As if he should have said, Do not think ever to come to Heaven, without performing sincere Obedience to all the Moral Law: For whatsoever others may think or teach, I the Son of God say unto you, I that am come into the World on purpose to save you, I say unto you, I assure you, that for all the great Pretences which the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* make to Righteousness, unless your Righteousness exceed theirs, you shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

In speaking to which Words, that you may clearly understand the full meaning and intent of our Blessed Saviour in them, I shall shew,

I. What Righteousness in General is to be understood here.

II. What was the Righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*.

III. Where-



*ought to be Eminent.*

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III. Wherein ours should exceed theirs. *Serm. VII.*

IV. That *unless our Righteousness doth exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

As for the *First*, What that Righteousness in General is which our Saviour here speaks of; we must know that he is here treating of the Moral Law, and of that Obedience which we ought to perform unto it. And therefore the Righteousness which he here speaks of cannot be understood of that Evangelical Righteousness which we have in him; that which the Apostle calls *the righteousness of God by faith*, Phil. iii. 9. but of that Righteousness which the Moral Law commands and requires of us: In which Sense, although we commonly use the Word Righteousness only to denote just and equitable Dealings between Man and Man; yet, in Scripture, Righteousness is a general Term, whereby the Holy Ghost is pleased to express our whole Duty both to God and Man: So that every particular Act which we are bound to do by the Law of God, is but a branch or part of Righteousness. And if we take the Words in their fullest Latitude, the very definition which Civilians give of Justice or Righteousness will

Vol. VIII. will bear this Sense. They say, *Justitia est constans & perpetua voluntas, jus suum cuique tribuendi*; Justice is a constant and perpetual will, to give to every one their due. I know they restrain it only unto Men; but it may in the same sense be referred to God too: For whatsoever he command us to perform immediately to himself, is really his due from us; we owe it him: and unless we perform it, we wrong him, and detain from him that which he hath an eternal Right to and Propriety in.

As for Example, God hath commanded us to Love and Honour him, to Fear and Reverence, to Praise and Worship him; All which are but as so many Acts of that Homage which we owe him for his Creation and Preservation of us. And whosoever refuseth or neglects to pay them, he is therein unjust to God; he doth not give him his due: But as the Prophet saith, that the People *robbed God in Tithes and Offerings*, because they kept them back from him, and did not bring them to his Priests and *Levites*, *Mal. iii. 8*. So may we be properly said to rob him too, by with-holding our Affections from him, by not giving him that Honour and Respect, that Praise and Worship which is due unto his Name: So that every Act of Impiety towards God, is a kind of Sacrilege, and  
by



by consequence the highest Injustice imaginable; because it is committed against God himself. Serm. VII.

And then as for the Duties which we owe to one another, upon that very account because we owe them to one another, they cannot but all come under the proper notion of Righteousness or Justice: So that whatsoever we are bound to do either to or for each other, that every Man hath a right to; and whosoever doth not do it, is as really unjust as he is that takes away any thing from him. As for Example, we are all obliged by the Law of God and Nature to relieve such as are poor and indigent: And therefore he that doth not do it, is not only uncharitable, but unrighteous: For he wrongs the Poor, by with-holding that from him which God hath given him a right to. For the Poor hath as much right to your Alms as you have to your Estates. Alms being but as a Rent-Charge which God hath reserved for the Poor out of the Estates which he hath put into your Hands. Hence the same Word צדקה which in *Hebrew* signifies *Righteousness*; in other Oriental Languages, especially *Syriack* and *Arabick*, it is commonly used for *Alms*; and the *Hebrew* Word itself is ordinarily Translated by the LXX, ελεημοσύνη, *Almsgiving*, or *Charity*; and so  
it

Vol. VIII. it is plainly used, *Dan.* iv. 27. And thus I might instance in all other Duties which we owe to our Neighbours, which are therefore called Duties because we owe them; and you'll all acknowledge him to be an unrighteous or unjust Man, that doth not pay what he owes to all Men. And therefore it is a great Mistake to think that Justice consists only in buying and selling, and paying the Money which we owe to others, without defrauding or over-reaching them: For there are many other Debts which we are obliged to pay to all Men, as the Apostle intimates, *Rom.* 13. 7. And whosoever doth not perform his whole Duty unto all Men, in loving of them, in having a good Opinion of them, in speaking well of them, in forgiving the Injuries he receives from them, in being as helpful as he can in all things to them, and the like, is an unrighteous Man as well as he that cheateth or robs another of what he hath; for he really robs his Neighbour of what he hath a just Right to, and Propriety in, by the Laws of God himself.

And thus we see how Righteousness in its general Notion comprehends under it all manner of Grace and Vertue whatsoever: In which Sense the Word *δικαιοσύνη*, which we here translate *Righteousness*,  
was



was anciently used by the Heathens themselves. *Plato* observeth there are Three Parts of Righteousness, in that it respects both God, Men, and the Dead, and so signifies whatsoever Duties we owe to any of them. *Aristotle* also frequently useth it in the same Sense, and quotes for it, that ancient Verse made long before his Days,

Serm. VII.

Ἐν δὲ δικαιοσύνῃ συλλήβδην πᾶσ' ἀρετῶν ἔστιν,  
In Justice or Righteousness all Vertue is contained.

And in this Sense it is that our Saviour himself useth this Word in my Text, as denoting that Habit of the Mind whereby we are willing and ready to perform our whole Duty both to God and Man, and to carry ourselves towards both, according to the Moral Law, so as to make that the Rule and Square of all our Thoughts, Words and Actions whatsoever, and that is properly Righteousness.

The *Second* Thing to be considered is, What was that Righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* which our Blessed Saviour here speaks of.

*First*, As for the Righteousness of the *Scribes*. We must know that the *Scribes* were



were only an Order or Degree of Men among the *Jews* that gave themselves to the studying of the Law, and so took upon them to write out, and to read the Scriptures of the Old Testament publickly, in the Temple and in the Synagogues; and to interpret and expound them to the People, to resolve all dubious Questions about the Law, and to answer Objections made against it, and to preserve the Genealogies of every Tribe, especially of the Royal Family, and to give the true Sense and Meaning of any doubtful Place either in the Law or the Prophets. Thus *Shaphan the Scribe* is said to have read the Law to King *Josiah*, 2 Kings xxii. 9, 10. And *Ezra was a ready Scribe in the Law of Moses*, Ezra vii. 6, 10. In the New Testament there is frequent Mention made of them, It was them, together with the Chief Priests, whom *Herod* consulted to know where *Christ* should be born, Mat. ii. 4. They told the People that *Elias* must first come before the *Messiah*, Mat. xvii. 10. They sat together with the *Pharisees* in *Moses's* Seat, Mat. xxiii. 10. And taught the People, Mat. vii. 29. So that it was by those that *Moses* was preached in every City, and read in the Synagogues every Sabbath Day, as the Apostle speaketh, Acts xv. 21. Hence they being very conversant in the Scriptures, they

they were still had in a great Esteem by the People: Which that they might not only preserve but encrease, they were so cunning and subtle as still to be finding out new Notions to please the People with; for which end they were forced to lay aside the plain literal Meaning of the Scriptures, as a thing much below them to mind, and to invent spiritual and mystical Senses for every Place of Scripture; which at length swelled to that Number, that by reason of their new and cabbalistical Interpretations, the Word of God was so corrupted, and the true Meaning of it so miserably perverted, that our Saviour himself tells them, *they had made it of none effect*, Matt. xv. 6. And herein it was that all the Righteousness which they pretended to, consisted even in having the Scriptures at their Tongues-end, and being able to bring it in upon all occasions, in understanding the high and mystical Meaning of it, so as to be able to explain it unto others, in performing outward Obedience to the Law; not according to the true and literal, but the new and mystical Sense, which themselves had put upon it. In frequenting the Synagogues, and for a pretence making long Prayers, *Mark xii. 38, 39, 40.* So that the *Scribes* were much like to those whom they

Vol. VIII. they call mystical Divines in the Popish Religion, and to such among ourselves as turn the Scripture into Allegories, and invent new Notions and Speculations in Divinity, and so make a greater Shew of Piety, but neglect the Power and Substance of it.

Thus much of the *Scribes*. As for the *Pharisees*, we must know there were in our Saviour's time Three principal Sects among the *Jews*: The *Essenes*; The *Sadduces*; and, the *Pharisees*. Whereof, the *Essenes* are never, the *Sadduces* seldom, the *Pharisees* very often mentioned in the New Testament, and reprov'd by our Saviour: Not but that the others were as bad or worse than those; but because these were more numerous, and their Errors were more specious and plausible than the others were. This being the strictest Sect, in all the *Jewish* Religion, as *St. Paul* himself, who was brought up in it, testifieth, *Acts* xxvi. 4, 5. And therefore they were called *Pharisees*, from the *Hebrew* Word פָּרָשׁ to separate, because they separated themselves from other People, as being more pure and holy in their own Esteem, than they; as we may see by the *Pharisee's* Prayer, when he said, *I thank thee O God that I am not as other People*, *Luke* xviii. 11. So  
that



that the Word *Pharisee* properly signifies Serm. VII. a Separatist, one that separateth himself from the Society and Fellowship of others upon the account of Religion, as pretending greater Purity and Holiness than others do. Hence this Name properly belongs not only to many among ourselves, but likewise to very many in the Popish Religion, even to the Monks and Fryars, yea, and Nuns to: For there were Women *Pharisees*, as well as Men, as I could easily shew was it necessary or pertinent to my Purpose. Hence the Jews to this Day commonly call Monks in *Hebrew*, פרושים *Pharisees*, and Nuns פלושות *be Pharisees*; yea, the very Word *Monachus*, a Monk, signifies much the same thing as *Pharisee* doth, even one that lives alone, separate from all Commerce with other People. And the Exposition which *R. D. Rimbi* gives of the Word *Pharisee*, plainly agrees with the Temper of the Monks, and their Manner of Life; for they were called *Pharisees*, saith he, because they made shew to the World, שהם פרושים זמנים עדיקים that they are singular and separate Persons, and righteous Men. And if we compare the one with the other, we shall easily conclude that the *Pharisees* were just such Persons in the *Jewish*, as the Monks are in the

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Vol. VIII. Christian Religion, and so that they may properly be termed *Pharisees*. For the *Pharisees* pretended to follow a double Law, the one Written, and the other Unwritten; the one which they received from *Moses*, the other by Tradition from their Fore-fathers, as *Josephus*, a *Jew*, tells us: And how exactly the Fryars agree with them in this you all know. Yea, the *Pharisees* preferred their Traditions before the Written Law, *Matt. xv. 3.* as you all know the Papists in general do at this time. The *Pharisees* had a different Habit from other People, as the Fryars of the several Orders now have. The *Pharisees* were very much noted for their running over a great many Prayers each Day, in the same manner as the Papists do their *Ave-Mary's*, and *Pater-Noster's*. The *Pharisees* preferred their Vows before the Works of Justice and Charity, *Matt. xv. 4, 5.* wherein they are exactly imitated by the Fryars and Nuns. Moreover, had the *Pharisees* their Phylacteries, or Pieces of Parchment with Sentences of the Law written in them, fastned to their Fore-heads and Hands to preserve them, as they thought, from Witchcraft and all Evil? So have the Fryars Pieces of Wood which they fancy to be Parts of the Cross, the Virgin's Hair-lace, or some holy Relicks

licks or other which they carry about as Amulets and Preservatives against Distempers, Mischiefs and Dangers. Did the *Pharisees*, under a Pretence of long Prayers, devour Widow's Houses? So have the Fryars devoured the Houses and Estates too both of Widows, and many others, under a Pretence that they shall be prayed for a long while after they are dead: Were the *Pharisees* very zealous in getting Profelites? *Matt. xxiii. 15.* So are all the Papists in propagating their Religion. Did the *Pharisees* adorn the Sepulchres of the Prophets? So do the Papists those of their Saints. In a Word, were the *Pharisees* more earnest for their superstitious Rites and Ceremonies, than for the solid and substantial Worship of Almighty God? It would be well if the Monks and Fryars were not too much their Apes in this particular. And thus I might shew how they who profess and call themselves the Religious, in the Christian Religion, exactly agree almost in every thing with those which our Blessed Saviour here calleth *Pharisees*. From whence it is easie to observe what the Righteousness of the *Pharisees* was, even a mere outward shew of Piety and Religion, a specious Profession of Righteousness without the Practice of it; or at the best but an external Ob-

Serm.VII.  
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Vol. VIII. servance of some things only with the neglect, if not contempt of others.

Thus we have considered the Righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* distinctly and apart. But we must further know, that in many things they agreed: Not as if the *Scribes* were any Part or Sect of the *Pharisees*, as *Baronius* and others have falsely conjectur'd from *Acts* xxiii. 9. where mention is made of the *Scribes* which were of the *Pharisee's* Part; for the Meaning is not that the *Scribes* were any Part of the *Pharisees*, but that some of the *Scribes* took Part with the *Pharisees*, as it is plain they did; many of the *Scribes* espousing the same Opinions, and being guilty of the same Errors as the *Pharisees* were. Hence they are often joined and condemned together by our Blessed Saviour for their Hypocrisie and Deceit, *Matt.* xxiii. 13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27, 29. so in my Text the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* are put together, as having only such a partial, external and hypocritical Righteousness, which can never bring a Soul to Heaven.

The next thing to be considered is, wherein *our Righteousness should exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.*

To

To understand which, we must know *Serm. VII.*
 that the Righteousness of the *Scribes*, and especially that of the *Pharisees*, was in very great Repute and Esteem among the *Jews*; so that *St. Paul* himself calleth it, *ἐξ ἧ ἀκριβοτάτην ἀρεσιν Ἰουδαίας*, the strictest Sect of their Religion, *Acts xxvi. 5.* and elsewhere, *ἀκριβειαν τῆ πατρῶς νόμου*, the perfect Manner of the Law of the Fathers, *Acts xxii. 3.* And the Reason was because the *Pharisees* were exceeding strict and precise in the scrupulous Observation of all the outward Rites and Ceremonies which were either prescribed in the Law, or received by Tradition from their Fore-fathers; so that rather than do less, they would do a great deal more than was commanded them in the Ceremonial Law, by which means they were thought not only by themselves, but by others too, to be exceeding Righteous, and to abound in the Observance of the Mosaick Law. But our Saviour was quite of another Mind; and tells us in plain terms, that although the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* seemed to be exceeding Righteous, and were accounted so by others, yet unless our Righteousness exceeds theirs, we shall never go to Heaven. But Heaven is a Place which I am confident we all desire to go to: And therefore it con-

cerns us highly to understand wherein it is that our Blessed Saviour would have us to be more Righteous than the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* were in order to our going thither. For, it seems, we must not only be Righteous, but our Righteousness must exceed the very exceeding Righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; otherwise, our Saviour himself tells us in plain terms, *that we shall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* And therefore, as it behoves me to be cautious in expressing, it behoves you to be as serious in considering wherein you are to excel and exceed the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* so as to be more Just and Righteous than they were; which that you may all be, and so meet together again in Heaven, I desire you to resolve before-hand to practice what I shall prove to be your Duty and Interest in this particular. And do not fancy to yourselves that your coming hither to hear and learn how to be truly Righteous, will make you so: But assure yourselves the knowing what I shall tell you without the doing of it, will be so far from advancing you to Happiness, that it will but sink you deeper into Misery and Torment: Insomuch, that did I think you would not sincerely endeavour to be as Righteous as I shall prove you ought to be, I should be loath to tell
you,

you of it. But what do I speak of that? Serm. VII.
It is God's Command, and my Duty to tell you of it; and therefore, whether you hear, or whether you forbear, be it known unto you, there are Three Things especially wherein *your Righteousness ought to exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, in being internal as well as external, universal, not partial and sincere, not hypocritical. In speaking to which, expect not any new Notions, fine Words, or quaint Phrases from me; for it is a matter that concerns your everlasting Salvation, and therefore in treating of it, you must give me leave to speak as plain and home unto all as possibly I can.

I. In the first Place, therefore, I say, *that your Righteousness ought to exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, in the internal as well as external Performance of your whole Duty both to God and Man. I say as well as external; because I would not have you think that your Righteousness should be so altogether spiritual and internal, that you need not, or ought not, to make any external Expression of it; for you having Bodies as well as Souls, both made by God, you are equally bound in both to worship and obey him that made them; yea, you are expressly commanded to *glor*

Vol. VIII *rife God both in your Body, and in your Spirits, because both are his, 1 Cor. vi. 20. And therefore it is a fond and foolish thing to imagine that because you are commanded in one place to worship God in Spirit, therefore you need not worship him in your Bodies, when elsewhere you are plainly commanded to worship him in both. Wherefore supposing that you are not so ignorant of your Duty and Obligations to the great Creator of the World, as not to perform at least external Worship and Obedience to him, I must farther tell you that this is not enough; this is no more than what the Scribes and Pharisees did. They made clean the outside of the Platter and the Cup; but within they were full of Extortion and Excess, Matt. xxiii. 25. Whereas, the Inside and Outside ought to have been both clean. Thou blind Pharisee, saith he, cleanse first that which is within the Cup and Platter, that the Outside of them may be clean also, ver. 26. And because they were altogether for outside Righteousness. Hence it was that our Saviour denounced that dreadful woe against them, Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye are like unto whited Sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward; but within are full of dead Men's Bones, and of all*

Uncleanness. Even so, saith he, ye also Serm. VII.
outwardly appear righteous unto Men; but
within ye are full of Hypocrisie and Iniquity,
 ver. 27, 28.

In this therefore it is that your Righteousness ought to exceed theirs. They constantly prayed, went to their Churches or Synagogues, kept their Sabbaths, heard the Word of God, pay'd their Tythes and Offerings, gave much Alms to the Poor, and the like, as you may do; but their Fault was, they did then, as the Papists now generally do, they looked only to the *opus operatum*, they minded no more than to do the Work, it was no matter how, so the matter they performed was but good they never regarded in what manner they performed it. And herein it is that your Righteousness and Obedience ought to excel theirs. You must not think it is enough to come to Church to hear the Prayers read, or a Sermon preached, to give something now and then to the Poor, and the like. If this was all that is required of you, it would be easie enough to get to Heaven, and none but Fools and Madmen would be shut out. But mistake not yourselves; there is a great deal more than this required to the due Performance of every Duty that is required of you: For it is
 the



The Holiness of Christians

the Heart which the All-seeing God, the Searcher of Hearts, principally observes in every Act which you do perform; and howsoever plausible your Profession is, how specious soever your Pretences to Religion be, unless your Hearts be united, and your whole Souls employed in every Act you undertake, you are no better than the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, meer formal Professors, outside Christians, and that is the best that can be said of you.

But to come still closer to you: You are all assembled at this time in the Presence of Almighty God: You have been hearing very solemn Prayers, together with the Scriptures read, and something from the Word of God Preached to you: Yea some of you have this Day received the Consecrated Bread and Wine, the Mystical Body and Blood of Christ. But let me tell you, never a Soul of you hath done so much as one good Work, or righteous Act this Day, unless your Hearts as well as Bodies have been engaged and taken up in the Performance of it. What do ye think to pray with the Tongue without the Heart; to hear with your Ears without the Heart; to receive Sacraments at the Mouth without the Heart? No, it is impossible; for there is nothing of Goodness, nothing of Righteousness in any thing

thing you do, any farther than as it proceeds from your Hearts ; so that you cannot be properly said to pray, unless your Hearts be possessed at the same time with a due Sense of God's Greatness and Glory ; and of your own Wants and Unworthiness to have them supplied. You cannot be properly said to partake of the Mystical Body and Blood of Christ, unless you receive it with humble, penitent and believing Hearts ; You cannot be properly said to hear the Word of God, although you be now hearkening to it, unless your Hearts and Affections be moved suitably to what you hear ; and unless you be resolved by the Blessing and Assistance of Almighty God, to observe and practise it. The same may be said of all other Duties whatsoever, whether they have Relation to God or Man : For you can never be properly said to perform your Duty to either, any further than as your Hearts and Hands, yea all the Faculties of your Souls and Members of your Bodies always go together. And therefore, as ever you desire that your *Righteousness should exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, so as to be true Righteousness indeed, you must be sure that your Hearts as well as Bodies be employed in the Performance of it.

2. Your



2. Your Righteousness should exceed theirs likewise in the Universality of it, in respect of the Object as well as of the Subject, so as to obey all the Commands of God, as well as every one of them, with all your Hearts: For herein it was that the Righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* was so defective, even in being only Partial: They did some things but not all that was required of them: They were very precise and scrupulous in keeping the Sabbath, in paying their Tithes and Offerings, in all the External Rites of Divine Worship, and so in observing the Duties of the First Table: But as for those of the Second, their Duties to their Neighbour, they regarded them no more than as if they were not at all concerned in them. This our Blessed Saviour observed both in the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and rebuked them sharply for it. *Wo, saith he, unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye pay tithe of mint and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone,* Matt. xxiii. 23. As if he should have said, You ought to perform your Duty, not only to God but your Neighbour too, and to your Neighbour for God's sake:

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As you pretend to worship and obey God, Serm. VII.
you ought to be merciful, just and faithful unto Men; where we may observe how he calls Judgment, Mercy, and Faith, or Fidelity, the weightier matters of the Law, because without them, whatsoever else we do will stand us in no stead, these being the great and necessary Duties which God requires of us to one another.

Herein therefore it is *that your Righteousness ought to exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, even in its Extent and Latitude, every way corresponding with the Laws and Commands of God: For this is the Righteousness which God requires, even an Universal Conformity both of our Will and Actions, of our whole Man, to those Eternal Rules of Piety and Justice, which are revealed to us in Holy Scripture; so that the Foundation of it must be laid in true and universal Piety towards God, which doth not consist only in praying, hearing, and the like; but especially in loving and fearing, in worshipping and adoring, in honouring and serving the Eternal God with a perfect Heart and a willing Mind. And howsoever exact and critical you may be in performing your Duty unto God, it will avail you nothing unless you be likewise just and equitable, kind and merciful,

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ful, loving and charitable to one another, yea to your very Enemies. Nay more than that, you cannot be righteous to God but you must of Necessity be so to Men too: For as you are his Creatures, you owe universal Obedience to all the Laws of God; and if you neglect any, you are unjust towards him. But you all know that Justice and Charity are commanded by God as well as Praying and Hearing; and therefore, every Act of Injustice against your Neighbour is likewise an Act of Impiety towards God: so that true Piety cannot possibly consist with Envy, Malice, Hatred, Fraud, Oppression, Censoriousness, or with the wilful Neglect of any Duty whatsoever which we owe to one another. And therefore nothing can be more absurd and ridiculous, than to fancy yourselves to be good and righteous, holy and pious Men, because you come to Church and hear a Sermon, and the like, upon the Lord's Day; if in the mean while you make no Conscience of cheating, backbiting and wronging others. And so also on the other side, What if you pay every one their own; What though we live quietly and civilly with your Neighbours? Yea, What though you relieve the Poor, feed the hungry, cloath the naked, and the like, are you therefore Righteous? No,

No, be not deceived ; altho' these be great Serm. VII
 things in themselves, they are nothing by
 themselves; nothing unless they be accom-
 panied with, and proceed from an universal
 Obedience to all the Laws of God: For as we
 say of Good and Evil, *Malum fit ex quolibet*
defectu, bonum ex integris causis, the same
 may be applied to Righteous and Unright-
 eous Men. Though a Man punctually
 observeth all the rest, and yet wilfully o-
 mits any one Duty either to God or Man,
 he is upon that Account an unrighteous
 Man. Neither can any one be truly deno-
 minated righteous, but he that *bath respect*
unto all the Commandments, as *David* had,
 Psal. cxix. 6. which if any here present
 have not, as I fear there are too many,
 What do you do more than the *Scribes*
 and *Pharisees*? They were as precise and
 exact in many things, as any of you can
 be for your Hearts. And yet for all that,
 your Saviour here tells you in plain
 Terms, *That unless your Righteousness ex-*
ceed theirs, you can never enter into the
Kingdom of Heaven. And therefore, as
 ever you desire to come thither, you must
 be sure to do, not only some, or many, or
 most of the Things which are enjoined you,
 but all and every particular Duty which
 you know yourselves to be obliged to per-
 form either to God or Man, otherwise
 you'll

Vol. VIII. you'll be no better than the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and so never likely to go to Heaven.

3. Your Righteousness should exceed theirs also in Integrity and Sincerity of Heart : For this was one of the principal Things wherein the Righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* failed, and came short of what it ought in Truth to be, even because though they did many things in themselves good, yet they did them for a bad end, to be seen of Men, and so reputed and applauded as righteous by them, *Mat. vi. 2, 5, 16.* Hence our Saviour so often calls them Hypocrites, *Wo to you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, Mat. xxiii. 23.* because they studied more to seem, than to be righteous ; and so in all they did, they aimed not at God's Glory but their own, by which means all the Religion which they so much boasted of, degenerated into base Hypocrisy and Deceit. And therefore, if we would be righteous and religious indeed, we must needs exceed them in this Particular, so as to have no bye End, or sinister Designs in what we do ; not to pray, or fast, or perform any other religious Act whatsoever, out of any such low, and pitiful Design, as to advance our Temporal Interest, or to get Applause and Credit among Men ; but our only Aim and

and Design must be to *please and glorifie* Serm. VII.
God, Mat. v. 16. and so to work out our
Salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. ii.
12. Or at least we must sincerely endeavour unto the utmost of our Power to do it; and then our Righteousness, though it be not so much applauded by Men, be sure it will be accepted of by God, through Jesus Christ our Lord: For this Sincerity is indeed our Evangelical Perfection; that which will be accepted by the Gospel in Lieu of that absolute Perfection which the Law of God requires; and by this it is, that our *Righteousness may not only exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, but we may all become really and truly righteous in ourselves, such as the Gospel would have us to be, in order to our being happy for ever.

Thus we see wherein our *Righteousness ought to exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, in being internal, universal, and sincere. The Last Thing to be considered is, How it appears, *That unless our Righteousness thus exceeds theirs, we can never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* But this we need not stand long upon, it being so expressly asserted by Christ himself, and I hope there is none here present but will take his Word for any thing, especially for what concerns your Salva-
Q tion,


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tion, seeing it is by him only that you can be saved. But if you would know the Reason why *your Righteousness should exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, in order to your going to Heaven, in few Terms it is only this; Because it is necessary that you should be righteous, which it is plain that the *Scribes and Pharisees* were not: For if theirs had been true Righteousness, yours needed not to exceed it. But the Truth is, no Man deserves the Name of a righteous Man, but he that exceeds the *Scribes and Pharisees* in all the fore-mentioned Particulars: For he is truly righteous in nothing that is not sincerely righteous in all things; and he that is not truly righteous, you'll all grant he can never go to Heaven, as being a Person not only unworthy, but incapable of those Celestial Joys.

Which being seriously considered, I hope I need not use any Arguments to persuade you to exceed the *Scribes and Pharisees* in being truly righteous: For if your Saviour's own Words will not prevail upon you, I am sure nothing that I can say will do it. Howsoever, give me Leave in your Saviour's Name to call upon you, to advise, exhort, and beseech you to labour after that Righteousness which Christ in his Gospel requires of you; not such a
Righte-

Righteousness as the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* Serm. VII.
had, not such a Righteousness as many among us so much pretend to, consisting only in the outward Performance of some religious Duties; such a Righteousness as this, you may be confident will never carry you to Heaven; for Christ himself hath told in plain terms it will not. And therefore it is quite another Righteousness which you must endeavour after, even such a Righteousness as consists in nothing less than in a sincere Devotion of yourselves wholly to the Service of Almighty God, and in the Performance of Universal Obedience to all his Laws and Commands, for nothing less than this will serve your turn. And do not say within yourselves that this is more than you can do: For there is never a one of you but as yet is in a Capacity of attaining to it; for if you do but as much as you are able, God is ready to enable you to do, what otherwise you cannot, and for Christ's sake to accept of your sincere, instead of perfect Righteousness. And therefore, do but you do what you can, and I dare assure you no more will be required of your Parts: But if you would but all do as much as every one is able, what holy, what righteous Creatures would you soon become? especially considering that the Almighty
Q 2 God

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 God himself is always at hand to assist your weak Endeavours with his own Grace and Spirit. And therefore let me beg of you to make no more vain Excuses, nor *halt* any longer *between two Opinions*. If you care not whether you go to Heaven or no, what do you here? If you do desire in good earnest to live with God and Christ for ever, and to partake of that Glory which is prepared for the righteous in the World to come, Why do not you endeavour to be such righteous Persons, as that Glory is prepared for? What, Do you think to go to Heaven whether you be righteous or no? Hath not Christ told you you shall not? And would you make him a Liar, and his Word void and of none effect? No, mistake not yourselves, whatsoever becomes of you, Christ's Word must stand: So that if you be not truly, universally, and sincerely righteous here, you must of necessity be miserable hereafter, there is no help for it. If you could have been saved without being righteous, he that came to save you would never have required it of you. But you see he hath and doth require it of you, yea so as to assure you, that you can never go to Heaven without it; and therefore it is in vain for you ever to think of coming there, *except your Righteousness exceed* *the*

ought to be Eminent.

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the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. Sermon VII.

But methinks you should not stand out any longer against such plain and express Words as these are of our Blessed Lord himself: And therefore I hope you will not content yourselves any longer with the bare Profession of that most excellent Religion you are all of, but are resolved by God's Assistance to set upon the Practice of whatsoever you know to be required in it, which if you do, you will not only exceed the ancient, but the modern *Pharisees* too, whether they be of the Protestant or Popish Religion, so as to be both truly Righteous here, and eternally Blessed hereafter:

*Which God grant that you may all be,
through Jesus Christ our Lord, &c.*

Q 3

The

The Holiness of Christians
ought to be Conspicuous.

I N A

S E R M O N

On M A T T. V. 16.

*Let your Light so shine before
Men, that they may see your
good Works, and glorify your
Father which is in Heaven.*

WHEN it pleased the only
Begotten Son of God to
come down in his own
Person to visit his Crea-
tures upon Earth, and to converse with
Men in their own Likeness, he found that
all Flesh was corrupt, and Mankind in
general addicted either to Idolatry or
Superstition; for all the World then were
either

either *Jews* or *Gentiles*: But the *Gen'iles*, Serm.VIII.
although they had some confused Nations
of a Deity, such as dim-sighted Nature
could direct them to; yet *when they*
knew God they did not glorifie him as God,
but changed the Glory of the incorruptible
God, into an Image made like unto corrup-
tible man, and to birds, and four-footed
beasts, and creeping things, Rom. i. 21, 23.
Wherefore they being guilty of such gross
Idolatry in worshipping the Creature more
than the Creator, God blessed for ever-
more, God was justly pleased to give them
up to Uncleanness and vile Affections,
whereby their moral Actions became as
corrupt and bad as their religious Services;
insomuch that although they still retained
some common and natural Distinctions be-
twixt Good and Evil, Vertue and Vice,
among them; yet it was very rare to find
one so much as striving to square his Life
according to them, so as to chuse the Good
and refuse the Evil, to embrace Vertue
and eschew Vice, according to the Know-
ledge they had of them. And if any did
chance to offer at something like to Ver-
tue and Goodness, yet it was still attend-
ed with so many Failures and Imperfecti-
ons, that there was nothing of real Ver-
tue and Goodness in it,

The Holiness of Christians

And as for the *Jews*, although they had the Law and the Prophets to direct them both in their religious and civil Actions, in the Service of God and Behaviour to one another, yet came they very short of performing their Duty to either ; inso-much that the very *Pharisees* themselves, which were, as the Apostle tells us, *Acts xxvi. 5. the strictest Sect of all the Jewish Religion*, they placed their Religion only in External Rites and Ceremonies ; as in frequent washing of themselves and Vessels ; in often fasting, with sad Countenances and disfigured faces ; in long Prayers and hypocritical giving of Alms to be seen of Men ; in avoiding the Company of such as themselves judged to be Sinners ; and in paying the lesser Tithes which the Law required ; and in the superstitious Observation of all such things as they had received by *Tradition* from their Fore-fathers, whereby they made the Law of none effect, as Christ himself told them, *Mat. xv. 6.* Howsoever by this means they were in great Esteem among the People, being accounted the most devout and religious Sect among them, notwithstanding they neglected the weightier matters of the Law, as our Saviour himself told them to their faces, saying, *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharises, Hypocrites ; for ye pay tithe of*

ought to be Conspicuous.

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of mint, and annise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone, Matt. xxiii. 23. Serm. VIII.

When Christ therefore came into the World finding Mankind, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, so strangely corrupted and debauched both in their Principles and Practices, although his great Design was to offer up himself as a propitiatory Sacrifice for their Sins, yet it was necessary also that he should instil into them better Principles, and acquaint them more clearly with the Nature of true Religion; without the Practice whereof they would not be fitted nor qualified to Partake of that Happiness which he designed to purchase for them with his own Blood. Hence, therefore, it was, that although his Death would have been as meritorious for us as soon as he was born, as it was afterwards, yet he thought good to live about 30 Years, as it was *incognito*, in the World: And after that too, before he would die for us, he continued above Three Years conversing with all that had the Happiness to enjoy his Presence. All which time he spent in working all sorts of real Miracles for the Confirmation of his Doctrine, and in instructing Mankind
more



more perfectly than they had been before instructed, in the Principles of Religion and Morality; how to serve God, and love one another better than they had done before. And intending now to introduce a new Religion into the World, grounded upon clearer Principles, and better Promises, than any before had been; for this purpose he chose out several Persons to be daily Conversant with him, that so having his Doctrine and Discipline frequently inculcated into them, they might fully understand what he would have Mankind both to believe and do, and so might faithfully transmit the same down to Posterity, that all Mankind might afterwards know how to come to Heaven. To these Persons therefore, in a more particular manner, and to all in general that would come unto him, he revealed and explained the whole Mystery of Godliness: Assuring them all along that the strictest Sect of all their Religion, even the *Pharisees* themselves, howsoever specious and plausible they seemed to others, yet they came very short of that which he required. *For, saith he, except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Matt. v. 20.* Whereby he plainly acquainted them,

them, that in order to their attaining *Serm. VIII.*
everlasting Happiness, it was absolutely
necessary, not only that they should be
Righteous, but that they should be more
Righteous than they were; which hitherto
had seemed the most Righteous of all
among them. And therefore, he would
not have them think, that because he
came to die for their Sins, he therefore
came also to destroy the Law and the
Prophets: No, saith he, *I came not to de-*
stroy, but to fulfil, ver. 17. He came not
to revoke the Moral Law; but to esta-
blish and enforce it with stronger Argu-
ments, and with greater Obligations to
Obedience, than ever had been before.
And therefore, he would have all Men
know, that they who would be his Dis-
ciples, so as to be saved by him, must
outvye and excel all others, whether *Jews*
or *Gentiles*, in all manner of Righteous-
ness both to God and Men. And this is
that which he assures us of in my Text,
saying, *Let your Light, &c.*

In speaking to which Words, I shall
not discourage your Attention with put-
ting any superfluous Glosses upon them,
nor yet with forcing any impertinent Ob-
servations from them; but in the same
Order wherein our Saviour spake them
to his Disciples, I shall endeavour so to
explain

explain them unto you, that you may all know the true Intent and Meaning of your Saviour in them; and for the future, I hope, order your Lives and Conversations accordingly.

First, saith he, *Let your Light*: For the Opening of which Words we must look back to *ver. 14.* where our Saviour saith to his Disciples, *ye are the Light of the World*; but elsewhere he saith of himself, *I am the Light of the World*, John viii. 12. And St. John speaking of him saith, *This is the true Light which lighteneth every Man that cometh into the World*, John i. 9. So that Christ and true Christians are equally termed *the Lights of the World*; though in diverse Respects Christ is the Sun, they the Beams that are sent from him, he the Fountain, they the Streams that flow from that Fountain of Light, or he is Light in and from himself; As their's is borrowed or derived from him as the Light of the Moon is from the Sun, so that he giveth Light from himself to them, they reflect it from him to others. Before the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in his Wings, a spiritual Darkness was spread over the Face of the whole Earth; but so soon as he appeared, he presently shined upon his Disciples, first, enlightning them with true

true Knowledge and Understanding of the Serm. VIII. Myſteries of Salvation. And ſo they being firſt enlightened by him, were thereby enabled to enlighten others after the ſame manner. And hence it is that Chriſt, the true Light, calls his Diſciples alſo *the Light of the World*: Whereby he intimated to them, how they ſhould carry and behave themſelves towards the reſt of Mankind. For nothing, you know, is more pure, nothing more piercing, nothing more acceptable, nothing more pleaſant, nothing more advantageous, nothing more apparent than Light: According to all which Qualities of Light our Saviour would have his Diſciples to deport themſelves in this World. Foras-much as they being ſent to open the Eyes of others, the Eyes of others would be ſure to be upon them; as our Saviour intimates in the following Words, *A City that is ſet on an Hill cannot be hid: Neither do Men light a Candle and put it under a Buſhel; but on the Candleſtick, and it giveth light to all that are in the Houſe,* Matt. v. 14, 15. By which Expreſſions he acquaints them that now that he had endowed them with Knowledge and Grace as with Light, they muſt not think to lye hid; but to be as a City upon an Hill, apparent to all that paſs by, and as a
Candle



Candle which being lighted, is not put under a Bushel, but on a Candlestick, that all may see it, and receive Light from it. And therefore he adds,

*Let your Light so shine before Men, that is, the Truth of that Grace and Faith which you have now received, and where-with you are enlightned, let it not be obscured with the Works of Darkness, nor eclipsed by the Interposition of earthly Affections; but let it be so clear, so manifest, so perspicuous and apparent in your Lives and Conversations unto all Men, that they may see your good Works, that is, that all may clearly see how far you excel others in the Performance of all your Duties both to God and Men. For that we are to understand by good Works, not only Works of Charity, but whatsoever Duties God requires of us, either to himself or others: All which are called good Works, not as if they were perfectly good, in every Circumstance and *Punctilio* which the Law requires, as the Papists would have it, producing these Words to prove that all the Works of good Men were always good Works, only because they are called here by that Name: Whereas nothing can be more plain than that the very best Men do many bad Works which are contrary to the Law, and that their*

their best Works come very short of it. Sermon. VIII.
And therefore they are here called good Works only because the matter of them is good, and as to the manner they are as good as he that doth them can make them; who sincerely endeavours to conform them to the Law as near as he can, upon which account God for Christ's sake is pleased to accept of them as good Works, yea, as our good Works too; as our Saviour here intimates, saying, *That they may see your good Works.* Not as if they were or could be performed and made good by our own Strength and Power, as the *Pelagians* would gather from these Words. Whereas our Saviour here saith, *That they may see your good Works*; only in Contra-distinction to the good Works of others, and because they are produced both in us and by us; in us as the Subject, and by us as the Instrument; but still by the Grace of God as the principal efficient Cause: As is plain from the last Words, *That they may see your good Works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* From which Words it is manifest, that all the Glory of good Works is to be ascribed only unto God, not to the Men that do them: Whereas, if they did them by their own Strength,

Vol. VIII. Strength, the Glory would redound to them, and not to God.

But from these last Words we may further observe, that God's Glory should be the ultimate End of all our Actions, according to that of the Apostle, *1 Cor. x. 31.* And therefore, when he Commands, *that our Light so shine before Men, that others may see our good Works;* we are not to end here, but to look further. For no Man can do good Works only to be seen of Men; for he that doth any Works only to be seen of Men, by that very means makes them to be bad Works. For this our Saviour, in this very Sermon, doth expressly forbid, *Matt. vi. 1. 5.* And in these very Words, although he would have *our Light so shine before Men, that they may see our good Works;* yet he doth not say, that we are therefore to do them, that others may see them, and so make that one End of our Actions; but only that we are so to do them that others may see them and glorifie God for them: So that his Glory is to be not only the Ultimate, but the only End of all our good Works. And therefore our Saviour propounds this as the only End *why our Light should shine before Men, even that they seeing our good Works might glorifie our Father which is in Heaven;* so
as

as to give him thanks and praise for his *Serm. VIII.*
assisting Men in the doing of such good Works, and to acknowledge the Truth of that Religion, wherein he is pleased to vouchsafe us such Assistances.

The Words being thus particularly explained, it is easie to discover the true Meaning and Intent of them; which in general amounts to this, That they who embrace the Christian Religion, and profess themselves to be Christ's Disciples, should be eminent in good Works, so as to excel the Professors of all other Religions: That every one that sees and duly weighs a Christian's Life and Conversation, might be thereby convinced of the Excellency of his Religion above all others: Or, That all such as are converted to the Christian Faith should be, as the Apostle words it, *blameless, and harmless, as the Sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation, amongst whom they should shine as Lights in the World, Phil. ii. 15.* This is to have *our Light shine before Men*, indeed, when they can see what we are by what we do, and know us to be Christians by our being better than other Men, and by our setting all others an Example of true Piety and Vertue in our own Lives and Conversations.



Now we being all in the Number of those who profess themselves to be Christians, and by consequence are bound to be such excellent Persons as these Words import, there are Two Things which we are all very highly concerned to understand, in order to our right observing what is here enjoined. The First is, Wherein a Christian should excel all Persons of other Perswasions? and then Secondly, What Reasons he hath to do so?

The First Question, Wherein a Christian should excel others? supposes that Men of other Religions, as *Jews, Heathens* or *Mahometans*, may have some shadow or resemblance of vertue in them, and may do some things like to good Works; but that they that are of the Christian Religion should excel them all in being and in doing Good. And so that is not enough or sufficient for Christians that they be or live like other Men; but they must exceed not only the vulgar sort of Pretenders to Vertue and Morality, but the highest and exactest Moralists too that ever lived without the Pale of the Church; howsoever eminent they have been in the esteem of Men for any Vertue or seeming Goodness; and that in these Three Things especially, in the sincerity, universality and constancy of Good Works.

The

The First Thing wherein Christians *Serm. VIII.*
ought to excel, is Sincerity, where by
Sincerity I mean that act or rather habit
of the Mind whereby we do good Works,
not out of any ends or sinister designs, but
out of pure obedience to the Commands
of God: so as not only to do what God
commandeth, but therefore only to do it
because God hath commanded it. A thing
which the Heathens never dreamt of, or
before were very defective in: Forasmuch
as they neither rightly believed in the true
God, whose Commands they were, nor
knew them to be his Commands: and by
consequence, although they did the thing
which was commanded by God, yet they
could not be said to obey God's Command-
ment, in that they did not reflect upon his
Authority in the doing of it, so as to do
it upon that account because he was pleased
to command it: wherein certainly the ve-
ry essence of true Obedience doth consist;
insomuch that howsoever great and good
our works may seem to Men, they will
not be so esteemed by God, neither are
truly such in themselves, unless we do eye
and respect God and his Commands in
the doing of them; without which brute
Beasts may do good Works as well as Men.
As for Example, You give an Alms to the
Poor, you feed the hungry and cloath the
R 2 naked,



naked, and the like; and it is a good Work if you do it out of Obedience to God: otherwise you do no more than the Ravens did that fed *Elijah*: For their feeding of the Prophet was certainly as good a work as to the matter of it, as your feeding of the Poor can be. But I suppose you'll all grant, that there is more required of us that are rational Creatures, in order to our doing good Works, than what the Fowls of the air can do: and that we being endowed with reason, whereby we are capable of reflecting upon God himself, in doing what he commands, we are bound to do so; or else we cannot be said to obey his Commands.

Now this Obedience to the Commands of God being so absolutely necessary to the very essence and constitution of Good Works, hence we may plainly see the vast difference betwixt Moral Vertues and truly Christian Graces; the one aiming no higher than to do the thing that is good, the other no lower than to do it because it is good. Morality teacheth us no more than to do the thing that is commanded; Christianity no less than to do it because it is commanded. And that is no true Christian Grace that acts from any other Principle than this: neither can it be a good Work that is done upon any other account.

account. And hence it is that we justly Serm.VIII.
assert the Works which the Papists do so
much boast of, to be no good Works:
Forasmuch as they are performed not out
of Obedience to God, but from Self-inter-
est, even out of a design to Merit some-
thing by them for themselves, which over-
throws the very Foundation of good
Works; which can be built upon nothing
but Obedience unto God. And besides, it
is a groundless, absurd and ridiculous thing
to think, that poor finite Creatures should
merit any thing by what they do, from
Almighty God, from whom they re-
ceive whatsoever they have or are, and
so the very Power too by which they
do it: So that whatsoever good Works we
do, we are more beholden to God than
he to us for our doing of them, it be-
ing only by him that we are enabled
to do them. And, therefore, if we would
live and act as Christians indeed, we must
not have any such low and pitiful Designs
as these are in our observing the Commands
of God, neither must we content ourselves
only with doing the thing that is com-
manded; but we must do it from a Prin-
ciple of true Obedience to him that made
and governs us and the whole World: By
which means we shall not only excel all
the Professors of all other Religions, but

the greatest Part of them too that profess themselves to be Christians.

And he that thus observes what God commands, merely because he commands it, he cannot but observe all the Commands of God, there being the same reason for all the Commandments as there is for One. This, therefore, is the next thing wherein a Christian should excel others, even in the Universality of his Obedience, observing not only one or two, nor only many or most, but all the Commands of God. *Then shall I not be ashamed, says David, when I have respect to all thy Commandments;* as it is not enough to do what is commanded without having respect to the Commandment, so neither is it enough to have respect to some, but it must be to all the Commandments of God, even as *Zacharias and Elizabeth* are said to be *righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Law blameless*, Luke i. 6. And, indeed, unless we thus walk in all, we walk in none of the Commandments as we ought to do. *For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offendeth in one point, he is guilty of all*, James ii. 10. And therefore as ever ye desire to obey the Commands of God, ye must not pick and chuse, take some part, and let the rest alone:

alone: No, you must observe either all or none. And by thus performing Universal Obedience to all the Law of God, you will far exceed the strictest of all other Religions; who generally take up with some few particular Duties instead of Universal Piety and Obedience. As some of the Heathen were Eminent for Justice, others for Charity, some for Contempt of the World, others for Humility, and so some were Eminent for one, others for other Vertues; but we read of none that was Eminent for all, or so much as endeavoured to be so. In this therefore we Christians ought to excel them by being holy in all manner of Conversation.

And that at all times too; which is the last thing wherein we ought to excel others even in walking before the Lord, and serving him without fear, *in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our Life,* Luke i. 74. And truly as he that is not holy in all things is not holy at all, so he that is not holy at all times is never holy as he ought to be; especially, unless he sincerely endeavour at least to keep his Heart in an equal Frame of Piety and Charity at one time as well as at another.

Thus, therefore, it is that our Blessed Lord expects, yea commands, that you

Vol. VIII and I should, as we are Christians, excel all other Men, in whatsoever is truly good and vertuous, as much as the Light of the Sun doth that of the Planets which are enlightened by it; especially, we should exceed all in the Sincerity, Universality, and Constancy of our Obedience to all the Laws of God.

Having thus discovered how *our Light should so shine before Men, that others may see our good Works*; or, wherein we who profess to believe in Christ should excel Persons of all other Persuasions whatsoever. We are now to consider what Reasons there are for it; Why Christians should be the best of Men? A Question necessary to be resolved in these days, wherein Christians themselves generally live as if they had no reason to be so good, much less to be better than others, as if Christ so died for their Sins, that they might still live in them, or as if Christ had granted such Indulgences and Licenses for sinning as his pretended Vicar at Rome doth; or, howsoever, as if they were not obliged to obey the Moral Law as other Persons are. For if we seriously survey the Lives of Christians now, with an impartial Eye, we may with Grief and Sadness behold them so far generally from being better than others, that many others are

are

are better than them. The very *Turks* Serm.VIII.
exceeding most Christians in their out-ward Reverence and Devotion towards God, in Zeal for their Religion, in Charity to the Poor, in Faithfulness to their Word, and Uprightness in their Dealings; yea, and the Heathens themselves, who had nothing but the Light of Nature to guide them in their Actions, How famous have many of them been in their Generations for their Justice and Equity, for their Temperance and Sobriety, for their Gratitude and Liberality, for their freedoms from Luxury and Passion, for their Contempt of the World, and Contentedness with their Condition, and for their Love and Honour to Vertue wheresoever they saw it? Far beyond the generality of them that profess themselves to be Christians in these days; which is a Shame to our Religion, and a Reproach to the Gospel of Christ; giving too much occasion to the Enemies of Christ to blaspheme his Sacred Name, and to think that they might learn as much from the Heathen Oracles, or Turkish Alcoran, as from the Gospel itself. Seeing that they that have the Gospel, and read it over and over again, and hear it constantly read and preached among them, are for the most part as much debauched in their Principles and Practices,

Vol. VIII. as they that never heard of it; which is a sad thing to consider, and that which we can never sufficiently lament: Especially, considering that for this God may justly take his Gospel from us, and give it to some Nation that will improve it better than we have done; which all things considered, we have just cause every Moment to expect, especially, unless we make better use of it hereafter, than heretofore we have done; which that you and I may for the future do. I shall now endeavour to shew what extraordinary Advantages we have by the Gospel for the Refining and Reforming of our Lives and Conversation, and what invincible Reasons there are why we who enjoy the Gospel should be better than all other Persons that have it not, so as to exceed them far in all true Vertue and Godliness.

For, *First*, we have clearer Discoveries of God's Will, and our Duty by the Gospel than ever was before; yea, as clear as possibly can be made unto us. The Moral Law as it was at first written upon the Tables of Man's Heart, it was so defaced by the Fall of our first Parents, that by the Light of Reason we can scarce read any one Command aright. And though the same Law was afterwards
tran-

transcribed into Two Tables of Stone, that Serm. VIII.
all might have it before their Eyes, yet there also it was not so legible as it is in the Gospel; as is plain from the strange Mis-constructions which the *Jews* had put upon it before our Saviour's Time. But he now hath given us such clear Interpretations of it, that he which runs may read it, and discern the full Extent and Latitude of it, there being nothing now of Doubt or Difficulty in it. And, therefore, our Saviour doth frequently compare his Gospel to Light; because by its means we may so plainly see the things that belong to our everlasting Peace, and understand our whole Duty both to God and Man. God himself having been pleased to come down in his own Person, and explain it to us; so that now we can have no excuse for indulging ourselves in any one Sin whatsoever. And, therefore, Christ himself saith, *If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had Sin; but now they have no cloak for their Sin*, John xv. 22. implying, that no Man can now in reason expect to palliate and excuse his Sin under the Pretence of Ignorance after that he himself hath so clearly discovered our Duty to us. Hence also it is that he elsewhere saith, *That this is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World,*

Vol. VIII. *World, and Men love Darknes rather than Light, because their Deeds were evil,* John iii. 19. As if he should have said, Although Sin always deserved Death, yet now Mankind deserves much more to be condemned to it; if notwithstanding that the Light of the Gospel is risen upon them, they shall still continue in the Works of Darknes, and so Sin against the Light itself. This is the Reason too that he pronounceth that dreadful woe against the Inhabitants of *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, saying, *Woe to thee Chorazin, woe unto thee Bethsaida; for if the mighty Works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in thee, they had long ago repented sitting in Sackcloth and Ashes: But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, in the Day of Judgment; than for you,* Luke x. 13, 14. And what can you and I expect but that the same woe should be denounced against us, if notwithstanding that more than ordinary Light of the Gospel which hath shined among us, we do not turn to God, and serve him with a perfect Heart, and a willing Mind. Certainly, if we do not, it will be more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon*, for *Turks* and *Heathens*, at the Day of Judgment, than for us. And therefore we had need to have a care of ourselves. For now that God hath spoke unto us,
not

not only by his Prophets and Apostles, *Serm. VIII.*
but by his own Son too; and hath so clearly discovered to us his Will and Pleasure concerning our Behaviour to himself and others. He now expects that we faithfully perform it, otherwise the Gospel itself, the greatest of all Mercies, will one Day rise up in Judgment against us; and unless our Lives be better than others in time, our Condition will be worse than their's to all Eternity.


Especially, considering in the next Place, that we have not only clearer Discoveries of our Duty, but a more perfect Example and Pattern of Piety in the Gospel, than ever was before, or can be any where else. For there we have the Life and Actions of Christ himself recorded, *who did no sin, neither was guile found in his Mouth,* 1 Pet. ii. 23. Yea, whose whole Life was but as one continued Act of perfect Piety towards God, or else of Charity towards Men: For he always *went about doing good,* Acts x. 38. Indeed, nothing that he did but was perfectly good; neither is there any Grace or Vertue whatsoever, but it appeared in him in its highest Beauty and Lustre. How humble was he in his Carriage, how meek in his Expressions, how faithful to his Friends, how loving to his Enemies, how fervent in Prayer,
how

Vol. VIII. how constant in Preaching, how patient under his Sufferings, how contented with whatsoever was laid upon him, how free from Vice, how full of Grace in every thing that he thought, or spake, or did? In all which he left us *an Example that we should follow his steps*, 1 Pet. ii. 21. Yea, himself enjoins all those that would go after him so as to be his Disciples, *to deny themselves, take up their crosses and follow him*, Matt. xvi. 24. And elsewhere, *Learn of me*, saith he, *for I am meek and lowly*, Matt. xi. 29. From whence it is plain that Christ expects that you that profess to believe in him, do come as near him as you can, in all your Duties both to God and Man; and by Consequence, that having so exact a Pattern of true Grace and Vertue before your Eyes, you imitate it far better than it is possible for them to do which never heard of it.

In the Third Place, we have by the Gospel, the Promises of greater Assistances, such as never had been before. Indeed, the great End of the Gospel, and of our Saviour's coming into the World, was to be our Saviour, to save us from our Sins; both from the Guilt and Strength of Sin. The First he did by making Satisfaction for us, by dying in our steads, and so suffering that in our Natures, which
other

otherwise we must have suffered in our **Serm. VIII.**
own Persons. The other he hath done
by procuring such Assistances for us, where-
by we may be enabled sincerely to per-
form whatsoever is required of us. And
that this was one great End of Christ's
both Incarnation and Passion, is plain in
that the Apostle tells us, that he was sent
on purpose to bless us, *by turning every one
of us from our Iniquities*, Acts iii. 26.
And elsewhere it is said, *That he gave him-
self for us, to redeem us from all Iniquity,
and to purifie to himself a peculiar People
zealous of good Works*, Tit. ii. 14. And
many such like Places there are which
plainly shew that though it was not all,
yet it was a great Part of Christ's De-
sign in coming into the World to make
us holy; without which, indeed, the Par-
don of our Sins, which he purchased by
his Death, would avail us nothing. Ho-
liness being indispensably required to the
qualifying us for the Enjoyment of real
and eternal Happiness, and therefore, not-
withstanding, the Pardon of our Sins, we
should be altogether incapable of the Joys
of Heaven, unless our Hearts be renewed,
and our Souls inclined to the Living
God; which can only be done by the
Assistance of the Holy Ghost. And, there-
fore, our Saviour tells us, *that except a
Man*

Vol. VIII. *Man be born again of Water, and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, John iii. 5. But it is only by Christ our Saviour that we can partake of the Graces and Influences of the Holy Spirit: Not by the Works of the Law which we have done, saith the Apostle, 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, Tit. iii. 5, 6. And hence it was, that the Spirit was not given in so visible a manner until Christ was ascended; but immediately before his Ascension he told his Disciples, That he would send the Promise of his Father upon them, Luke xxiv. 49. Which was plainly nothing else but the Holy Ghost, which was before promised, and now fulfilled in Jesus Christ. And, therefore, whosoever would believe in Christ aright, must depend upon him not only for Pardon, but likewise for the Assistance of his Grace and Spirit; for the mortifying of his Lusts, and making him truly holy. And verily, the Promises of the Gospel are so full and clear to this purpose, that it is nothing but the extreme Neglect of ourselves, and the very Height of Obstinacy that can keep us from partaking of them. For if you be but truly sensible of your Sins, and desire to be*

be cleansed from them, and sincerely en- Serm.VIII.
deavour to do what you can yourselves, 
and believe in Christ, or trust on him to
enable you to do what yourselves cannot:
I say, if you do but do this, which none
of you but may easily do, you cannot
miss of receiving such Supplies of Grace,
whereby your strong Sins shall not only
be subdued, but your dark Mind so en-
lightned, your erroneous Judgments so in-
formed, your perverse Wills so rectified,
your inordinate Affections so regulated,
your hard Hearts so softned, your proud
Spirits so humbled, your sleepy Conscien-
ces so awakened, and your whole Souls
so renewed and sanctified as to be truly
holy in all Manner of Conversation. For
God never yet did, nor ever will fail any
Man that sincerely endeavoured to do
what he could to serve him, and trusted
in him for his Assistance in doing what
otherwise he could not. And, therefore,
there is all the Reason in the World that
we, who have such Promises and Over-
tures of Grace and Assistance made unto
us by God himself, by which, if we be
not failing to ourselves, we may be enabled
from above to perform good Works, and
exercise all true Grace and Vertue, all
the Reason in the World, I say, that we
should far exceed all other Persons who
S have

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have nothing but their own Natural Strength and Power to act by, in serving and obeying God, and in doing whatsoever he hath been pleased to require of us.

Especially seeing in the Fourth Place, That we in the Gospel have the greatest Assurances of Acceptance before God, whatsoever Endeavour any others make after Piety and Vertue, they have no Assurance, nor any Grounds to believe that the Supreme Being of the World will accept of their faint Endeavours instead of real Duties, or of their Sincerity, if they had any, instead of Perfection: Or rather, they had just Cause to suspect and believe the contrary, even that whatsoever they did, and how sincere soever they were in doing of it, yet it coming infinitely short of what infinite Justice required, it could never be accepted of by God. But we know and are assured, that if we do but sincerely endeavour unto the utmost of our Power to adjust our Actions unto the Law of God, although at the best they come very short of it; yet in and through Jesus, both our Persons and Performances shall be accepted by him: For this is most clearly held forth to us in the whole Tenure and Oeconomy of the Gospel, which also is confirmed to us by so many and such real Miracles, that there is

no

no Place left for Doubting and Unbelief; Serm.VIII.
but we have stronger Grounds to be assured of it, than we have to believe any thing that we see or hear. The Eternal God himself having not only infallibly attested it, but confirmed that his infallible Testimony, by such Miracles as exceed the greatest Demonstrations in the World, especially by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ; whereby, as the Apostle argues, *Acts xvii. 31. He hath given assurance unto all men,* that Christ is ordained to judge the World in Righteousness; and by Consequence, that whatsoever is asserted by, or concerning him in the Gospel, is infallibly true; and so, that if we believe in him, our former Sins shall not only be pardoned, but our future Duties shall be accepted by God, if they be sincerely performed, notwithstanding the manifold Failures and Imperfections there may be in them, which is the highest Obligation imaginable for us to use the utmost of our Power and Skill, in the performing all vertuous and good Actions that we can; seeing we are so much assured, that tho' they be not absolutely good in themselves, yet God will accept of them as such in Jesus Christ: Which Consideration methinks should have that Power upon us, as to force us all into steadfast Resolutions,


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Vol. VIII. lutions, by the Assistance of God's Grace and Spirit, to leave no Stone unturned, to neglect no Grace, and omit no Duty that is required of us, as knowing that God in Christ will be well-pleas'd with it, and with us too for doing it, which should make us think scorn to be overtopt by those to whom the Gospel is not so clearly revealed, and purpose for the future to surpass and exceed them all in good and pious Works.

And that which adds Weight and Force to all the foregoing Reasons, is, That in the Last Place we have so great an Assurance in the Gospel, not only of our present Acceptance, but future Happiness, in case we practise what the Gospel requires of us. The Heathens by the Light of Nature could discern but very little of a future Life, and therefore were forced to resolve all the Reward of Vertue into Vertue itself, making the Satisfaction which ariseth from the Exercise of it, a sufficient Recompence for our Endeavours after it. The *Mahumetans* speak much of the World to come under the Name of Paradise; but placing all the Happiness which is there to be expected, only in Sensual Pleasures and Delights, they thereby make no real Happiness at all, as being no greater than what brute Beasts may partake of as well
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as we. The *Jews* indeed had some Intimations of an Eternal Happiness as the Consequent of true Holiness in this Life; but it was represented to them for the most part in such obscure Types, and intermingled with so many Temporal Promises, that they generally had but very dark and doubtful Apprehensions of it: Insomuch that many of them, to wit, the *Sadduces*, utterly denied both the Existence of Spirits, and the Resurrection of the Dead; and by Consequence the Existence of the Soul too in the other World, and the Resurrection of the Body to Eternal Life. But now, *By the Gospel*, as the Apostle saith, *our Saviour Jesus Christ hath brought life and immortality to light*, 2 Tim. i. 10. that is, he hath now given us in his Gospel, such clear and infallible Assurances of an Eternal Life and Happiness attending those who repent and believe his Gospel, that none can believe the Gospel, and yet deny that which is so plainly asserted in it. And if we seriously consider the Nature and Excellency of that Happiness, which the Gospel assures us God will graciously bestow upon them that love and obey him, we must needs acknowledge it to be the highest Encouragement imaginable to all manner of Vertue and good Works: For certainly that Hap-

Serm.VIII.
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Vol. VIII.  piness which the Gospel proposeth to them that obey it, is the highest that it is possible for a Creature to be made capable of; so great, that I am altogether as unable to express, as I am desirous to enjoy it, as consisting in nothing less than in the clear Vision and perfect Fruition of the Infinite God, the Chiefest Good himself; the Consideration whereof should make us all methinks throw away the Thoughts of all things else, and trouble our selves about nothing but how to get to Heaven, and by Consequence how to walk in that narrow Path that leads unto it, and never think we can do enough for that, which is not only infinitely more than we can deserve, but infinitely greater too than we are able to conceive. It is an astonishing Mercy that the Most High God should ever accept by any means of what we poor sinful Mortals do, but that he should recompence our transient, weak, and faint Performances, with nothing less than a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory; this is such an Inducement and Encouragement to universal Obedience, that we may justly suspect ourselves to be distracted in our Minds, as well as corrupt in our Affections, unless it prevail upon us to devote ourselves wholly unto the Service of the Living God, and to the  
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the Obedience of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; as knowing that unless we do it, we shall not only be deprived of this transcendent Happiness, but condemned too to the greatest Misery that our Natures can possibly be capable of: Whereas on the other side, if we do it, we shall as certainly not only be freed from that transcendent Misery, but be enstated also in the greatest Happiness that our Souls can possibly be invested with. And therefore I may conclude this with the Words of the Apostle, *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord,* 1 Cor. xv. 53.

Thus I have shewn now what Reasons You and I, who profess our selves to be Christians, have to be eminent for good Works, so as to excel all of other Religions, in true Piety and Vertue; in that we have clearer Discoveries of God's Will and our own Duty, a more perfect Example and Pattern how to do it; Promises of greater Assistance from God himself to do it; and stronger Assurances, not only of Acceptance of what we do in this Life, but likewise of an Eternal Recompence of Reward in the Life to come. And need I now use any more Arguments to perswade

you to endeavour at least to be eminent in all true Grace and Vertue? Will it not be superfluous after so many Reasons as have been produced for it? Verily, one would think it would be so; and I desire to hope the best of you all; and that you will not content yourselves with the bare Profession of that excellent and only true Religion which you are of, nor yet with the Practice of some few particular Duties required in it; but that you will now use the utmost of your Power and Skill to be such as your Religion commands you should be, even far exceeding Men of other Perswasions; that every one may see what Religion you are of, by your being and living better than other Men. And oh that this might be the happy issue of this Discourse, and of your coming hither at this time! Even that from this Day forward you would all strive and contend about nothing else but which should live the most like Christians, and which should most excel others in an universal Obedience both to the Law and Gospel; that all here present might for the future shine as so many Lights in the World. And let me tell you, this would be the way to shame both Jews and Infidels, into the Embracement of the Christian Religion. This would be the way



too, to convince Papists, Hereticks and Schismatics of their Errors, when they shall see you that are sound in the Faith, outstripping and excelling them in your Lives and Conversations: All the Arguments in the World would not prevail so much upon them as this one: And therefore, if you have any Love either for your Religion or your own Souls, halt no longer between two Opinions; but if you be Christians, manifest yourselves to be so by your Eminency in good Works, excelling all others in your Love to God's Person, in your Obedience to his Precepts, in your Fear of his Threatnings, in your trusting on his Promises, in your Faith in his Son, in your Loyalty to your Sovereign, in your Patience under your Sufferings, in your Contempt of the World, in your Faithfulness to your Friends, in your Love to your Enemies, in your Constancy in Praying, in your Seriousness in hearing, in your frequenting the Sacrament, in your Justice in your dealing, in your Charity to the Poor, in your Lowliness in your own Eyes, and in all other, whether Christian Graces or Moral Vertues whatsoever: For this is that which Christ expects and commands from you all, saying, *Let your light so shine, &c.*

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The Wisdom of being Holy.

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IN TWO  
SERMONS

On PSAL. cxi. 10.

*The Fear of the Lord is the  
Beginning of Wisdom.*

**A**S nothing is more ridiculous in itself, nor more odious and detestable both to God and Man, than Hypocrisy, or Counterfeit Religion; so neither is there any thing more excellent in itself, more acceptable to God, nor more advantageous to Mankind, than real and true Piety, which is therefore commended to us in Holy Scripture, under the Name and Notion of whatsoever we can desire to make us happy or do us good. Are we covetous of Riches? The Apostle tells us, *That Godliness with Contentment is great Gain,* 1 Tim. vi. 6.

vi. 6. *Yea, That Godliness is profitable for all things*, c. iv. 6. which I am sure nothing in the World besides is. Are we ambitious of Honours? The truly Pious are certainly invested with the highest Honour that it is possible for a Creature to attain unto: For he is honoured by God himself, the Fountain of all true Honour, 1 Sam. ii. 30. And therefore *the righteous* is said to be *more excellent than his neighbour*, Prov. xii. 26. Are we desirous of Pleasure and Delight? *The ways of Wisdom or true Piety are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace*, Prov. iii. 17. *Yea, Length of Days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour*, ver. 16. Neither is there any thing that is or can be the Object of our Soul's Desire, but it is either contained in, or may be obtained by true Piety and Religion.

But notwithstanding, seeing the Wealth and Honours, the Life and Pleasures, and all the good things else which attend on Godliness, are of another and higher Nature, than the things that go under those Names among the Men of this World; so that none can attain unto them without neglecting, or at least despising all things upon Earth. Hence Piety itself is apt to be branded with the ignominious Name of Folly; and those who are truly religious,

Vol. VIII. ous, are commonly reputed little better than Fools and Ideots, because forsooth, their Minds being always fixed upon higher Objects, they cannot bring them down so low, as to be always employed about the Toys and Trifles of this transient World: So that they let slip many Opportunities of getting or encreasing their Estates, because they will not use such unlawful means as others do about it. They cannot be so plausible in flattering so subtle in projecting, so cunning in equivocating, so confident in lying, so ingenious in cheating, so artificial in cozening as others are, and therefore they are thought to want the Wit wherewith others are endowed by Nature, or have acquired by Art.

But if we consult the Judgment of those which are truly wise, or search into the Oracles of the All-wise God himself, we shall soon find the contrary, even that the wicked and impious, howsoever cunning and witty they may seem, are really the greatest Fools and Mad-men upon Earth; and the truly Pious and Godly, howsoever simple and ignorant they appear, are really the wisest and most knowing Persons in the World; which, were you but throughly convinced of, it would set an extraordinary Edge upon your Desires



fires after Holiness : For I dare say, you Serm. IX.  
 would all willingly be, and shew your-  
 selves to be Wise Men, this being a Mat-  
 ter of real Esteem, and great Reputation  
 in the World. But if it be impossible for  
 you to attain to true Wisdom, until you  
 first attain to true Piety, you must needs  
 follow after Holiness in order to the Ac-  
 complishment of your Desires to be wise :  
 This therefore is that which I shall en-  
 deavour at this time to prove ; and for  
 that end, have chosen these Words, from  
 whence to demonstrate to you, that  
 Sin is indeed the greatest Folly that we  
 can be guilty of, and Holiness the high-  
 est Wisdom that we can ever attain unto.  
*The Fear of the Lord, saith the Psalmist,  
 is the beginning of wisdom : a good under-  
 standing have all they that do his command-  
 ments.*

For the opening of which Words, we  
 must first consider what we are to under-  
 stand here by *the Fear of the Lord* : For  
 the understanding whereof,

*First,* We must know that the Eternal  
 God, as he is the Supreme Being and  
 Governour of the World, is the only Ob-  
 ject of our Fear : For though other irasci-  
 ble Affections be placed only upon Evil,  
 this of Fear is to be placed only upon the  
 chiefest



chiefest Good; not because he hath any thing of evil in him, but because he is above all Evil; for that I am to fear most, from which I may receive the greatest Good, and which by Consequence can withhold the greatest Good from me, and lay the greatest Evil upon me: Now Sin that is the worst of Evils, can do us no hurt unless God pleaseth, who is so infinitely good, that he would not suffer Sin to be, but that he is so infinitely powerful that he can produce good from it: It is only for Sin indeed, but it is only by God that we can be destroyed; and if Sin may not, certainly nothing else ought to be feared in Comparison of God; no, not the Devil himself, who can do no more without God's Permission, than the weakest Creature in the World: His Hands are tied, his Power restrained, his Bounds are set and limited by Omnipotence itself: He could not touch *Job's* Cattle till he had received Commission from God; neither could he come near his Body, 'till his Commission was both renewed and enlarged: So neither he nor any other Creature in the World can bring us into the least Evil, without the Commission, or at least the Permission of the Chiefest good Creator: They may oppress us, they may reproach us, they may wound

us, they may kill us, but they cannot hurt **Serm.IX.**  
 us, without God, who can turn all seem-  
 ing Goods into real Evils, and all such  
 seeming Evils into real Goods. Hence our  
 Saviour enjoins us *not to fear them which  
 can kill the body, but him who can destroy  
 both soul and body in hell, Matth. x. 28.*  
 Others may kill our Bodies but they can-  
 not kill our Souls; and though they may  
 kill our Bodies they cannot destroy them,  
 for God can raise them up again. But if  
 God himself sets himself against us, it is  
 not in the Power of all the Creatures in  
 the World to relieve or help us: So that,  
 as the Apostle saith, *It is a fearful thing  
 indeed to fall into the hands of the living  
 God, Heb. x. 31.* He doth not say it is  
 a fearful thing to fall into Poverty; it is  
 a fearful thing to fall into Disgrace; it  
 is a fearful thing to fall into Sickness;  
 it is a fearful thing to fall into the Jaws  
 of Death, or into the hands of cruel  
 Men; but *it is a fearful thing to fall into  
 the hands of the living God.* It is true, it  
 may seem a fearful thing to fall into the  
 hands of a righteous Judge, and angry  
 King, or a tyrannizing Devil; but woe be  
 to him that *falls into the hands of the liv-  
 ing God,* from whom no Creature is able  
 to rescue or deliver him: So that we have  
 so much Cause to fear God, that we have  
 Cause

Vol. VIII. Cause to fear nothing in the World but him, nothing being able to remove any Evil from us, or to confer any Good upon us; nothing able to lay any Evil upon us, or withhold any Good from us, but only he; who should therefore be not only the chiefest but the only Object of our Fears, so as *to fear and dread no Person or Thing in the World but him.* So *Isa. viii. 13.*

Now this our Fear of God, we ought to express by having high and reverential Apprehensions of him, of his Greatness, Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Justice, Mercy, and all his incomprehensible Perfections, which we are still bethinking of, so as to admire, reverence, and adore them, so as never to take his Sacred Name into our Lips, without lifting up our Hearts unto him, much more when we speak unto him, we must not dare to utter any thing unseemly or irreverently before him, but still follow the Apostle's Rule, *to serve him with reverence and godly fear,* Heb. xii. 28. Yea, our Fear of God should be, and if it be real, will be expressed by our Care to avoid whatsoever is displeasing to him, and to perform whatsoever is commanded or enjoined by him, otherwise we in vain pretend to fear God.

Hence



Hence therefore *the Fear of God*, is ordinarily put in Scripture for the Summ and Substance of true Religion and sincere Piety; the Fear of God and Godliness being equivalent Terms, both signifying one and the same thing. Thus *Job* is said to be *an upright man, one that feared God*, Job i. 8. He that fears God must needs be an upright man; and none can be an upright Man that doth not fear God. Thus *Psal. xxxiv. 11. Prov. xv. 16.* and so all along, especially in the Old Testament, the Fear of the Lord is put for all the Worship and Service which we owe to God for the whole Duty of Man: And therefore, in the New Testament, where the *Greek* useth *εισεβια*, *Godliness*, the *Syriack* always renders it by *ܐܘܪܝܢܐ*, the *Fear of God*. As where we read *having a form of Godliness*, in the Language which our Saviour spake, it is rendered by

*ܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܝܢܐ*

*who have a Form of the Fear of God, that is, of Godliness.*

And the Reason why the Fear of God is thus used to express Universal Holiness or Piety, is, because no Acts of Piety can be performed without it; for we are *to perfect Holiness in the Fear of God. 2 Cor. vii. 1.* Neither are there any Acts of Piety

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but

Vol. VIII. but what proceed from it : For *by the Fear of the Lord men depart from evil*, Prov. xvi. 6. *Yea, the Fear of the Lords is to hate evil*: Prov. viii. 13. it being impossible for a Man to fear God and love Sin at the same time: So that didst thou fear the Great God as thou oughtest to do, thou couldst not but reverence his Presence and dread his Powers; thou couldst not but admire his Wisdom and love his Beauty; thou couldst not but be fearful of his Judgments and thankful for his Mercies; thou couldst not but tremble at his Threatnings and trust on his Promises; thou couldst not but avoid whatsoever he hath forbidden, and perform whatsoever he hath commanded; thou couldst not but serve him with a perfect Heart and a willing Mind, so as never to depart from him. *I will put my fear, saith he, into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me*, Jer. xxxii. 40. The true Fear of God settles and fixes our Minds so, that neither the Allurements of the World can draw us, no the Temptations of Satan can drive us from him; and therefore it is no wonder that true Piety in general is signified by our fearing God.

In the the next Place this *Fear of God*, or true Holiness, that is, the *Universal Conformity of our Natures, Will, and Actions*



Actions to the Commands of the Most High God is here said to be *the Beginning of Wisdom*, ראשית חכמה *the Beginning*, and the *Head or Perfection of Wisdom*; for the Word ראשית signifies both: So that the Meaning of the Words in general is, that true Piety is both the Beginning and the End, the Inchoation and the Perfection of Wisdom; or as St. Chrysostom expounds it, is πηγή ρίζα, ὑπόθεσις, *the Fountain, the Root, the Ground, the All of Wisdom*: So that he that fears God is a wise Man, yea he is therefore a wise Man because he fears God; and he that fears not God is a Fool, therefore a Fool because he doth not fear God.


Serm. IX.  


The First Thing therefore I would have you observe from these Words, is, That he that doth not fear God, but still continues in his Sins, he hath not as yet attained so far as to the Beginning, the very lowest Degree of Wisdom; he hath not so much as begun to be wise, and by Consequence is a very Fool: He may justly be called a *Nabal*, for Folly is with him because Sin is with him, which, all things considered, is the greatest Folly that a Man can possibly be guilty of.

In speaking to which it would be an endless thing to reckon up the many Places of Scripture wherein Sinners are called Fools,

yea and Mad-men too. A notable Example of it we have in the Parable of the Prodigal, who having spent all his Time and Wealth in Rioting, Drunkenness, and such like Sins, our Blessed Saviour saith, *When he came to himself he said, How many hired Servants of my Father have bread enough?* Luk. xv. 17. When he came to himself; it seems the Man had hitherto been besides himself, perfectly distracted, and broken in his Intellectuals: But when he be-thought himself of going to his Father, then he began to come to himself, to be recovered from his former Folly, Madness, and Distraction. Now by the Prodigal our Saviour there means, all manner of Persons that continue in their Sins, and will not return to God; and by his coming to himself, he means his Return or Conversion unto God: So that so long as any of you refuse to fear God and keep his Commandments, and chuse to feed upon Husks with the Swine of this World, rather than upon the Bread of Life, with the Angels and Saints: Whatsoever Thoughts you may have of your Wisdom and Sobriety, in the Judgment of your Blessed Saviour himself, you are no better than distracted Persons, besides yourselves; neither can you come to yourselves but by returning unto God; which Observation,




vation, rightly considered, cannot surely Serm. IX.  
but be very prevalent upon you, to shame   
you out of your Sins, into the Fear and  
Love of God. And, therefore, I shall en-  
deavour to explain and confirm it farther  
to you, shewing you both the *ὅτι* and the  
*διότι* of it, that Sinners are really Fools,  
and why they are so, and wherein especi-  
ally they manifest themselves to be so.

*First*, Therefore that every Sinner is  
a Fool, and by Consequence that your-  
selves are Fools so long as Sinners, you  
cannot but grant and acknowledge if you  
do but consider these things; which are  
clear Demonstrations of this great Truth,  
that every Sinner is a Fool.

1. You know a Fool by his Dulness,  
Stupidity, and Ignorance of what is ne-  
cessary for him to know. The wisest  
Man in the World doth not know all  
things; and the greatest Fool in the World  
may know some things. And therefore  
folly doth not consist so much in being  
altogether ignorant, but in being ignorant  
of such things, the Knowledge whereof  
is necessary to make Men happy. A Na-  
tural Fool may know how to pursue a  
Cloud, and to play with Feathers, and  
yet be a Fool for all that; and so may  
a spiritual Fool too, he may know how  
to catch at a Bubble, and gape after Air,

Vol. VIII. I mean, he may know how to humour the World, and get Riches, But what of all that? He knows nothing of God, nothing of Christ, nothing of true Grace and Vertue, and so nothing that is necessary for him to know: He may have some dark and confused Notions of such Spiritual Things, as the veriest Fool in the World may have of Temporal; but he knows nothing clearly, nothing distinctly, nothing experimentally, nothing practically as he ought to know it. A Fool or Madman may, and ordinarily doth, conceit himself to be very wise and knowing more than others; but his Conceits of himself cannot make others believe so, if his Actions declare the contrary. So you may fancy to yourselves that you have attained to great Knowledge of God, but you may fancy to yourselves what you please; if you do not fear God, I am sure you do not know him; for it is absolutely impossible to know so great and glorious, so wise and powerful, so just and terrible a God as he is, and not to fear and dread him. As *David* saith, *They that know thy Name will put their trust in thee*, Psal. ix. 10. So we may say of all other Duties whatsoever, they that know God, they cannot but love and honour him, they cannot but serve and worship him, they cannot but obey and  
fear



fear him, and by Consequence they can: Serm. IX.  
not but repent and turn unto him; and,   
therefore, so long as you continue in your  
Sins, you may conclude yourselves to be  
Ignorant of God, and so of all things  
that conduce either to your present or fu-  
ture Happiness, and consequently that you  
are very Fools.

2. That every Sinner is a Fool, is plain,  
in that as he knows nothing, so he can do  
nothing as he ought to do it: You'll all  
grant him to be a Fool with a Witness,  
that is not capable of any Art or Employ-  
ment that is necessary for his Livelihood  
and Preservation; just such a Fool is every  
Sinner. He knows not how to set his  
Hand to any Spiritual Work or Employ-  
ment whatsoever. He knows not how to  
pray or hear, to meditate or examine him-  
self. As a Fool can talk to himself, so  
may such a one mutter out some Words  
to himself; but he knows not how to  
pray to God. I do not deny but you  
may be cunning enough at sinning, so  
as to do it very artificially, even as there  
is never a Fool in the World but hath  
wit enough to play the Fool, so there is  
never a Sinner but may know well enough  
how to act the Sinner; but if he sets  
about any thing that is good, he does it  
so simply and awkwardly, that he betrays

Vol. VIII his folly in the doing of it, not being able either to begin, carry on, or finish it as he should do, and therefore for all his subtlety in other things, he is a Fool in the Esteem of God himself, *Jer. iv. 22.*

3. You know a Fool by his setting an high Price upon things of a low Value, and a low Value upon things of the highest Price. As he is a Fool indeed you'll say that thinks a Bead better than a Pearl, and prefers a Cockle-shell before a Crown: Such a Fool is every Sinner. Poor Fool! he prizes a little refined Earth before the Pearl of Price, a little Gold and Silver before eternal Glory, the Onions and Garlick of *Egypt* are better to him than all the Milk and Honey in the Land of *Canaan*. And I fear there are too many such Fools among us, who prefer the Toys and Trifles of this lower World before the Joys and Happiness that is above; who prefer their Bodies before their Souls; their Sins before God; the Worst of Evils before the Best of Goods; Earth, with all its Miseries, before Heaven with all its Bliss and Glory. O desperate madness! Egregious folly! What a strange, sottish, a foolish Creature is Man become? That we who were designed for, and are invited to nothing less than the Enjoyment of God himself, should generally spend our Time,  
our



our Thoughts, our Parts, our whole Life Serm. IX.  
 and Strength in minding and pursuing no-  
 thing else but Dreams and Shadows, even  
 worldly Pelf and Honours, which have no  
 other worth but what the Delusions of our  
 own distracted Fancies confer upon them.

4. It is plain also that every Sinner is  
 a Fool, in that he makes such simple and  
 mad Bargains which naturally follows from  
 the former, you'll all acknowledge him to  
 be an egregious Fool indeed that will sell  
 an Estate for a Feather, and part with a  
 Crown to purchase a Pebble: I know you'll  
 all grant such a Man deserves to be beg-  
 ged for a Fool. And yet whosoever thou  
 art that continuest in thy Sins, thou art the  
 Man; thou art such a Fool as this is; for  
*Esau* like, thou sellest thy Birthright for  
 a Mess of Pottage; a whole Kingdom for a  
 little Piece of Land; God for the World;  
 Heaven for Earth; all things for nothing;  
 for nothing did I say, yea for less than no-  
 thing; for worse than nothing; for Sin  
 and Misery, instead of selling the World to  
 gain thy Soul, thou sellest thy Soul to  
 gain the World. And so dost not only  
 sell Heaven for Earth, but for Hell too  
 into the Bargain, and so partest with the  
 Height of Happiness for the Depth of  
 Misery; with everlasting Bliss for eternal  
 Torments. And worse than all this too,  
 Men



Vol. VIII. Men do not only make such foolish and ridiculous Bargains as these are, but they are apt to applaud their own ingenuity in it, and to think they get a great deal by it; which is a clear Demonstration that they are very much distempered in their Brains, and have lost the true Use of their Sense and Reason.

*Lastly,* A Fool you know cannot betray his folly more than by being secure in the Midst of Danger, so as never to look before him, nor matter any Evil that is falling upon him. Yet this is the plain Case of every Sinner; who though he stands continually upon the Brink of Hell, and wants nothing but God's Push to throw him in, yet he is so fool-hardy, as we use to say, that he fears nothing, but thinks himself secure and safe enough. Thus the rich Man in the Gospel, when his Barns were full of Corn, his Heart was at ease, and his Head unconcerned for any thing that could befall him; so that he sang that pleasing *requiem* to his Soul, *Soul take thy ease, thou hast Goods laid up for many Years:* But you know what he was called for his pains, in plain terms a Fool, *Thou Fool,* saith God, *this night shall thy Soul be taken from thee,* Luke xii. 20. How many such Fools have we among us, who continuing in their Sins, are every  
Moment


Moment subject to the Wrath of this eternal God, and in continual Danger of Hell-fire, and yet can sleep as quietly, and live as merrily, and go on as securely in the Ways of Sin, as free from all Cares and Fears, as if they had never heard of any such thing as Death and Judgment. And if these be not, I am sure there neither is nor can be any such Creatures in the World as Fools or Madmen. Serm. IX.

That Sin, therefore, is the greatest Folly; and every Sinner, as such, a very Fool. These things being considered, none can deny without betraying his own Folly and Want of Reason. The next Thing to be considered is the *Δίβη*; How it comes to pass that Men which were first made in the Likeness of God, and so endowed with Reason, Wisdom, and a clear Understanding of all things necessary to make them happy, that they should become such Fools, so destitute of all true Wisdom and Knowledge, guilty of such egregious Folly, in spiritual Matters, which do so highly concern them? To which we may Answer in brief, Some are spiritual Fools; for the same Reason that others are natural Fools. For why are any natural Fools? But only because their Brains are distempered and out of order; by which means their Fancies or Imaginations being disturbed, they have



**Vol. VIII.** have dark, false and confused Notions and Conceptions of Things. And upon the same Account it is that all Sinners are spiritual Fools; because their Souls are distempered, their Intellectuals distracted, their Consciences corrupted, their Reasons darkened, their Wills perverted, their Hearts hardened, their Affections disorderd, all their Faculties are out of Tune, and so act irregularly, and contrary to their first Institution. For when Man by Sin and Disobedience fell from God his Maker, he fell as far from Heaven to Earth, from the Height of Piety and Happiness, to the Depth of Sin and Misery: And by Consequence, his fall was so great, that it turned his Brains quite upside down, and so he remains in a distracted Condition, and never can come to himself again till the Great God himself becomes his Physician, and undertakes his Cure, and by the Infusion of his Grace and Spirit into him, brings his Soul into order again. And until God thus pours in his Grace into the Heart, the Soul continues thus sottish, stupid, foolish and distracted; as the Fall of our first Parents made it. And all Sinners, so long as such, being still in their natural Condition, the same wherein they were Born, and which the first Sin brought them into; it is no wonder



der that they act like themselves, that is, *Serm. IX.*  
like foolish and distracted Persons. Hence,   
as we usually call a Fool a mere Natural,  
that is, one no wiser than he was Born:  
So may every Sinner be truly termed a Na-  
tural, one still in his natural Condition,  
no better than when he came into the  
World, that is, as bad as bad can be.  
Hence also it is that Christ is said to be  
the Physician of Souls; because it is he  
that Cures us of this sad Distemper, and  
sets our Souls at rights again, reducing our  
Understandings, Wills and Affections to  
their right Order, and to their primitive  
Frame and Constitution.

And until Men be thus renewed and  
recovered to their former Health and  
Strength of Mind they are mere Natu-  
rals, void of all true Wisdom and Under-  
standing; and, therefore, it is no wonder  
that they play so many foolish Tricks as  
generally they do in the World. Which  
being the Last Thing that I promised to  
shew, I shall demonstrate it from several  
Instances, wherein all Sinners, that is, all  
that still continue in Sin, without turning  
to the Living God, do plainly discover  
their natural Folly and Distraction, that  
any one that doth but see them may  
know what they are by what they do.

As

As *First*, There is one Piece of Folly which all Mankind naturally are guilty of, and that is Covetousness or Desire of Riches; whereby Men love and long for fine Houses and Lands, and Silver and Gold, and such like things. Just as we may have sometimes seen a natural Fool or Idiot pleasing himself with having his Pockets full of Stones or Dirt; or rather, as distracted Persons, desire Swords, or such like Weapons, whereby to destroy themselves. So others that have lost their Senses, and the right Use of their Reason, nothing will serve their turn but a great deal of Wealth howsoever they come by it; and therefore go through a thousand Temptations and Dangers to get it. And when they have got it, What then? Then they are in a thousand times worse Condition than they were before: For now they have got a Snake into their Bosoms; which without a great deal of Care indeed will soon eat out their Bowwels, it being so difficult a matter for a rich Man to be Happy, or to escape Misery, that our Saviour himself saith it is impossible without the miraculous Power and Omnipotence of God himself, *Matt. xix. 23, 24, 25.* Hence *Ager*, being cured of his Phrenzy and Distraction, he was afraid of Riches, and prayed that he might




might have no more than Food convenient, Serm. IX.

*Prov.* xx. 8. He was sensible that the Nature of Man is very weak and frail, not able to weild or manage much of this World; and, therefore, very wisely desired no more than what he was able to digest, as knowing that if he had more he might surfeit on it. And yet it is strange to observe how eager Men are in the pursuit of this World, they would have they do not know what, they would willingly be happy, but they do not care for any thing that conduceth to their being so; they do not care to be miserable, and yet they cannot forbear longing and labouring for such things as naturally tend to make them so. They daily pray that God would not lead them into Temptations, and yet they earnestly desire to be tempted, as all rich Men undoubtedly are. It is through many Temptations that they must get to Heaven, if they ever come there. And yet Men are generally as much desirous of Wealth, as if it was all the Heaven and Happiness that they are capable of, yea, so far, that they desire oft-times to have more Riches rather than to enjoy what they have, always plotting and contriving how to get Money; but never considering how to use it, nor knowing who shall enjoy it. This was

one



Vol. VIII.  one of the Follies or Vanities that *Solomon* observed in the World, and speaks of, *Eccles. ii. 18, 19.* And tell me who, but he that is a Fool or Madman, would lye down late, and rise up early, and eat the Bread of Carefulness and Sorrow, and all for that which he never enjoys, nor makes any use of it, when he hath it? Who but a Fool will make such a mad Bargain as to sell Heaven for Earth, and yet will not enjoy, nor take any Comfort in what he hath gotten upon Earth neither; but spend his Time, his Strength, his Parts, his All, for he knows not what, and then leave it to he knows not whom? What a Madness and Folly is this! for Men to be thus busie in running after Shadows, thus eager in the pursuit of Trifles, and when they think they have got them fast, then to let go their hold again, and want them when they have them. I believe there is none here present but have heard and seen several Instances of this kind, and have called such Persons Fools for their pains. But have a care that yourselves be not guilty of the same Folly.

2. Drunkenness is another great Piece of Folly which Men are commonly subject to, having not Reason enough to keep the little Reason which they have; but they



they must needs deprive themselves of Serm. IX.  
 that too, only to indulge their carnal Ap-  
 petite. And as *Solomon* saith of all things,  
*That they are Vanity of Vanities:* So this  
 may justly be termed, *The Folly of Follies.*  
 It being such a Folly, that Men do not only  
 play the Fools in it, but make themselves  
 by it worse Fools than they were before.  
 For as if their Brains were not distempered  
 enough before, they must needs Distem-  
 per them again, and so lay themselves  
 open to all manner of Sin and Folly in the  
 World, by which means they become the  
 Derision of Men, the laughing Stock of  
 Satan, contemned by Angels, abhorred by  
 God himself, as being more like to Brutes  
 than Men.

3. Another clear Instance of the egre-  
 gious Folly and Distraction of sinful Men,  
 may be seen in their murmuring and re-  
 pining at the Providences of God, being  
 discontented, vexing and fretting them-  
 selves at what falls out in the World, as  
 if your fretting could mend the matter,  
 or as if you know better how to order  
 the World than he that made it. Silly  
 Fool, that thou shouldst thus kick against  
 the Pricks, and spurn at Omnipotence it-  
 self. When God chastiseth thee for thy  
 Sins, and lays condign Punishments upon  
 thee for thy transgressing of his righte-

ous Laws, What canst thou get by all thy fretting and tormenting thyself at it? Will he remove his Rod because thou criest under it? No, mistake not thyself, he will rather continue it upon thee until thou holdest thy Peace, and learnest so much wit as to submit thy self to the wise Disposal of him that made thee, and knows what is good and needful for thee, infinitely better than thou either dost or canst.

4. What a foolish Trick also is it, to envy and fret at another's Prosperity; for thee to make thyself miserable, because God hath made thy Neighbour happy; for thee to be cast down because he is lift up; for thee to mourn because another rejoiceth; for thee to be troubled because another is not. As if thou hadst not Misery enough of thine own; but thou must needs create thyself more, and rather than want it, thou wilt suck Misery and Grief out of thy Neighbour's Happiness and Prosperity. And if there be any among you guilty of this Sin, as I fear there are too many, blame me not for calling you Fools for it. It is no more than what *David* called himself; who when he had been fretting to see others in health whilst himself was sick, others at liberty whilst himself was in restraint, others at ease whilst himself had

pain,



pain, others flourishing whilst himself Serm. IX.  
seemed to decay in the World: He did  
no sooner consider with himself what he  
had done, but he presently called himself  
Fool for it; *So foolish was I and ignorant,  
I was as a Brute before thee, Psal. lxxiii. 22.*

5. Swearing also is another great Folly  
which sinful Mortals are commonly ad-  
dicted to: Which must certainly be ac-  
knowledged to be one of the greatest  
Follies in the World; for Men to ruine,  
destroy, and damn themselves for nothing:  
To take the Sacred Name of the Most  
High God in vain, when they can reap  
neither Pleasure, Profit, nor Honour from  
it. And verily, there being so little or  
rather nothing at all gotten by this Sin  
or Folly, I have sometimes wondered with  
myself what should be the reason that  
so many are addicted to it, and guilty of  
it. And all the Reason that I could e'er  
find out why Men allow themselves in  
so unreasonable a Sin as this is, is only  
this, they therefore indulge themselves in  
it because it is a Sin. Had God com-  
manded it, they would have been natu-  
rally averse from it; but seeing God hath  
forbidden it, therefore are they so despe-  
rately inclined to it. So that seeing there  
is no other pleasure to be taken in this  
Sin, they will therefore take pleasure in

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it because it is a Sin. But I wish such profane and foul-mouth'd Ruffians of the World, who never think they speak rhetorically enough unless they back each Word and Emphasis, each Sentence with an Oath; I wish, I say, they would at length bethink themselves what a foolish and ridiculous thing it is thus to offend the Supreme Governor of the World, by taking his Sacred Name into their polluted Lips in vain. But that I know no is Motive to drive them from this Sin, but rather an Encouragement to draw them to it. For was not God so much offended at it, they would not be so much delighted in it. I wish therefore they would consider that they do not only offend God, but accuse and condemn themselves too by every Oath they swear. They condemn themselves, I say, for Men of no Credit; for Persons never to be believed unless they bring God himself to witness what they say, as being conscious to themselves that they have given the World too much cause to suspect that they always equivocate and lye, and so are not worthy to be believed without an Oath. For an Oath, as *St. Chrysostome* observes, is the bringing of a Surety to Witness what we say, ὡς πρώτη κατηγορία αὐτῆ τῆ ὀμνύοντι, so that he that swears first accuseth himself,



self, to be one not worthy to be believed Serm. IX.  
 without a Surety or Witness; yea, so great  
 a one as God himself. Hence it is that  
 St. Basil himself long ago pronounced those  
 which are guilty of this Sin to be very  
 Fools. *Ἄισχρον γὰρ παντοῦς καὶ ἀνόητον*  
*ἑαυτὸ καλῆγορεῖν ὡς ἀνάξις πίστεως καὶ τῶν*  
*τῶν ὅρκων ἀσφάλειαν ἐπιφέρειν.* it is a  
 very foul and foolish thing, saith he, for  
 a Man to accuse himself as one not wor-  
 thy to be believed, as a Man of no Credit,  
 and therefore to confirm what he saith  
 by an Oath. A foolish thing it is in-  
 deed to be ones own Accuser and Con-  
 demner, yet such a Fool is every swearer:  
 Inſomuch, that I do not think myself  
 bound to believe any thing that such a  
 Man ſwears. For he that will ſwear,  
 beſure will lye. He that doth not fear  
 to offend God, will much leſs fear to  
 deceive Men in what he ſaith. And, there-  
 fore, although they may fancy themſelves  
 the Wits of the World, yet not only all  
 ſober Men, but God himſelf, will repute  
 them to be no better than the worſt of  
 Fools.

6. And this ſuggeſts unto me another  
 Piece of Folly, and a great one too, com-  
 mon among Men, and that is Pride,  
 Haughtineſs and Ambition: Even for vain  
 Man to be puffed up with Pride, and  
 high

high towering Conceits of himself, meerly because it pleased the great God to lay a little bigger Burden of Earth upon his Back than his Neighbours have: For sorry Dust and Ashes to pride itself in its own Emptiness and Vanity: For a silly Worm to think himself a Gyant, because he hath got a little larger Hole or House to creep into than his fellow Worms have: Which must needs argue a strange Delirium and Phrenzy in them that do so. For nothing can be more certain than that all pride is both the Symptom and Product of a distempered Brain. And the only Reason that can be alledged, why Men build such Castles in the Air, and erect such Fools Paradises to themselves, conceiting themselves to be such rare accomplished Persons, is meerly because they are besides themselves; and it is ordinary for Madmen and Fools to do so: As we may see by those sad Spectacles in *Bedlam*, how they please and pride themselves in their miserable Condition, conceiting the Holes they lie in to be Palaces, the Irons they are fettered with to be Chains of Gold, and all that come near them to be their Servants, or rather Subjects, themselves being no less than Kings and Princes in their own Conceits. Whereas, when they come to themselves, they find the contrary:



ry: So here, so long as a Man continues in a State of Sin, and so is besides himself, if he hath but a little Land, he fancieth it to be a Kingdom: If Men do but look upon him, he thinks they admire him: If he hath but got a few fine Feathers upon his Back, and a little refined Earth in his Pocket, then he presently reckons all about him to be below him, as if he was the only Person in the World to be admired by all. But when once it pleaseth the Most High God to recover such a Man from his Distemper, to bring him to himself and his Wits again, then he is presently of another Mind, and finds that the former Conceits which he had of himself were nothing but the Delusions of his own distracted Fancy: And, therefore, needs none to tell him that he was before a Fool. As every proud Man must needs be; for if he was not a Fool, it would be impossible for him to be proud. If he had but so much Wit as to know himself, he could not but see enough in every Corner of his Heart, and in every Action of his Life to make him humble. And the wiser any Man is, be sure the more humble he must needs be; Who wiser than our Saviour? Who was Wisdom itself; and yet he was the very Mirrour and Pattern of Humility. *Learn of me, saith he, for I am*

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*meek and lowly*, Matt. xi. 29. And what? Shall the Eternal God himself be humble, and shall vain Man be proud? Shall he that inhabiteth Eternity be lowly, and shall such as dwell in Dirt and Clay be lofty? Shall our great Creator himself vouchsafe to stoop to us, and shall we disdain to stoop to one another? This certainly is the very Top of Folly, the Height of Madness and Distraction, thus to act directly contrary to infinite Wisdom and Prudence itself.

7. And if we should farther consider the many follies that Men commit in Matters of Religion, and in the Things that immediately belong to their eternal Happiness, it would be as hard to reckon how many, as it is to describe how great they are. The wise Man tells us, *That Fools make a Mock of Sin*, Prov. xiv. 9. And so we may say, *That Fools make a Sport of Religion*. As they are the most serious about Trifles, so are they most trifling in serious Things; playing with Religion, and making it a meer Stawling-horse to catch Repute and Credit in the World. Hence it is there are so many Fools among us, that take up with the Form instead of the Power of Godliness, that care not how sinful they are in themselves, so they can but be accounted holy by



by others, and therefore palliate the most atrocious Crimes under the outward Garb and Profession of Religion; which kind of Hypocrisie is certainly the highest Folly imaginable, it having the greatest Woes in the Gospel denounced against it. Serm. IX.

And how many egregious Follies are every day committed in the Popish Religion, where Men Sin against Heaven, and then go to *Rome* for a Pardon; offend Christ, and then ask Forgiveness of the Pope; commit their Sins, and then go and confess them; confess them, then go and commit them again; believe the consecrated Wafer to be the very Body and Blood of Christ, and yet eat it all up at a mouthful, Bones and all. Give a Penny to the Poor, and think to purchase Heaven by it; as if Heaven was worth no more than a Penny, or a Penny-worth as much as Heaven. They say their Prayers; but never pray at all, not knowing what themselves say. They will say an *Ave-Maria* to the Blessed Virgin, and then think they honour God. Bow to an Image, and then conclude they have worshipped him whom no Image can represent. Abstain from Flesh, and surfeit upon Fish: And this they call Fasting. Call any one an Heretick, whom they please, persecute him to death, and then think they have done  
God

Vol. VIII. God good Service. And a Thousand such ridiculous Follies are wrought each Day among them; which plainly argues them to be Phanaticks desperately over-grown with Frenzy and Distraction.

But we need not have gone so far to have found so much folly in Matters of Religion; we have too much of it, I fear, among ourselves. For how many have we among us, who being convinced of the Necessity of Repentance, will repent indeed; but it shall be of some Sins only, not of all. Whereas one Sin unrepented of will destroy us as well as a thousand; and therefore it is a foolish thing to think such a Repentance will stand us in any stead. Others there are among us, who think they ought to repent, and therefore intend to do it hereafter; but still put it off, and adjourn it from Day to Day. Thou canst not repent now; but thou wilt repent to Morrow, or next Day, or next Week, or one of these Days, when thou canst get Time and Leisure. But how well may I say to thee, as it was said to the rich Man in the Gospel, *Thou Fool, this Night may thy Soul be taken from thee.* Thou dost not know but before to Morrow Morning thou may'st be in another World, and there thou will repent indeed; but it will do thee no good. Thou



Thou wert such a Fool, as not to act thy **Serm.IX.**  
Repentance when thou shouldst, and God  
will be so wise as not to accept of it when  
thou dost.

But Time would fail me should I reckon  
up the several Follies that sinful Men are  
guilty of, every one of their Actions be-  
ing nothing else. And, therefore, I shall  
instance only in one more great Folly  
and Vanity, which I have observed to be  
very common among the Sons of Men,  
there being but very few free from it.  
And, that is, that Sin is not accounted  
Folly by us. And howsoever sinful Men  
are, they still conceit themselves to be  
very wise. And, I fear, there are too  
many such among us at this time, who  
are not wise enough to think themselves  
to be Fools. And, therefore, although I  
have shewn what a folly it is to Sin, yet  
you cannot yet believe your Sins to be  
your Follies; but assure yourselves, that  
although it be a great folly to Sin, it is  
a far greater not to think Sin to be a  
Folly. Yea it is, certainly it is, the  
greatest Folly in the World, not to think  
Sin the greatest Folly in the World;  
which the Premises considered, none but  
Fools either will or can deny. And,  
therefore, to conclude,

**Men**

Men and Brethren, I have endeavoured to shew and prove this Day, that every Sinner is a Fool; and every Sin a Folly. I know there are many understanding Persons among you who have heard what hath been said upon this Subject; some, I hope, who are wise towards God, understanding the Things that appertain to their everlasting Peace. And such I am sure cannot but acknowledge the Truth of what they have heard. Others, I fear, may be wise enough for the World, understanding how to manage their Trades to the best Advantage, and how to make a good Bargain as well as the best. And such can hardly be persuaded that they are Fools in any thing; because they think themselves to be wise in somethings. To such my humble Advice is, that you would seriously weigh what ye have heard, and not suffer yourselves to be fooled into a vain Conceit of your own Wisdom. For assure yourselves there is not the ignorantest Person in the Congregation that fears God, but is far wiser than the wisest of you that do not; for such a one's little Knowledge is true Wisdom; your great cunning is your real folly. And, therefore, if you would manifest yourselves for the future to be wise and prudent Persons indeed,

lay



of being Holy.

lay aside your former Follies, and devote **Serm. IX.**  
yourselves wholly to the Fear and Ser-  
vice of Almighty God; for till you do  
so, you have not attained to the very first  
Degree of Wisdom: *For the Fear of God  
is the beginning, &c.*

THE HISTORY

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The Wisdom of being Holy.

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S E R M O N II.

On P S A L. CXI. IO.

*A good Understanding have all  
they that do his Command-  
ments.*

**A**S none can know God and not fear him, so neither can any one fear God aright, but he must needs endeavour at least sincerely to obey him: For he whose Heart is possess'd with such a Sense of God's Greatness, Power, and Glory, as makes him stand in Awe and Fear of him, he will not dare to do any thing wilfully which he knows will offend him, nor yet to omit any thing which he thinks will be pleasing and acceptable unto him. Hence the Fear of the Lord in Scripture is usually put for  
the

the whole Duty of Man, for Holiness or Piety in general, or for the Conformity of our Wills and Actions unto the Laws and Commands of God; because it is impossible that any one should fear God, and yet not serve him with a perfect Heart and a willing Mind.

In this Sense therefore it is that the Fear of the Lord is to be understood in this place, where the Psalmist saith, *That the Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom*; that is, a total Submission of our Wills to God's, and a sincere Endeavour to please and obey him in all things, is the Beginning of Wisdom: So that a Man doth not so much as begin to be wise, and by Consequence is a very Fool, until his Mind be so enlightened, his Will rectified, and his whole Man so sanctified throughout, that he devotes himself wholly to the Service and Honour of Almighty God: For till then he remains a mere Natural, no better than he came into the World, if not much worse, strangely distempered in his Brain, distracted in his Mind, and corrupt in all the Faculties of his Soul, and therefore he cannot but be very disorderly in his Life and Conversation. And hence it is that sinful Men, that is, Men still in their natural and sinful Estate, are guilty of so many egregious Follies as commonly they are,

Vol. VIII. are, not knowing to do any thing aright but Sin; losing Heaven to gain Earth, and selling their Souls to gratifie their Senses; admiring nothing so much as gilded Dirt, and preferring it before the Chiefest Good; gaping after popular Airs, and chusing it rather than Eternal Glory; kicking against the Pricks, and rebelling against Majesty and Omnipotence itself; standing continually upon this very brink of the bottomless Pit, and yet thinking themselves secure; and yet for all this, conceiting themselves to be wise and prudent, noble and gallant Persons, as natural Fools and Mad men usually do; which, together with many such like ridiculous and foolish Acts, so frequently committed by the Sons of Men, are both the clear Symptoms, and ordinary Products of distempered Brains: And therefore it is no wonder that they are so common amongst us, most Men being still besides themselves, yea all that do not truly fear God; for all such have not yet attained to the first Beginning, not to the lowest Degree of Wisdom, and so still remain in their natural Folly and Distraction, as the Psalmist here signifies to us, saying, *That the Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom.*

But



But now when a Man returns to God, Serm. X. then he begins to come to himself, so as to become a wise, prudent, and understanding Person, yea a Man of a good Understanding, as is here in the next place suggested to us; *A good Understanding, saith he, have all they that do his Commandments.*

For the opening of which Words we must first consider what is here meant by a good Understanding: For which we must know that every Man naturally hath an Understanding, without which he could not be a Man: For the Understanding is the Seat and Fountain of all that Reason and Knowledge whereby Men are distinguished from brute Beasts. This being that Faculty of the Soul whereby alone we excel mere Sensitive Creatures, by being capable of apprehending and discerning betwixt Truth and Falshood, Good and Evil, which other Creatures cannot do. But now by Nature every Man's Understanding is very bad and corrupt, that being as much depraved in its Apprehensions, as the Will is in its Affections; so that it ordinarily mistaketh Truth for Falshood, and Falshood for Truth; Good for Evil, and Evil for Good; by which means it comes to pass, that Men may be very subtle and cunning, and yet not

Vol. VIII. *wife and prudent; or as the Prophet saith, they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge, Jer. iv. 22.* And I fear there are many such amongst ourselves, who are very cunning and ingenious at driving on a Bargain, very witty and jocular at censuring and backbiting others, very nimble and ready at over-reaching their Neighbour, that can commit any Sin as dextrously and artificially, as if they had been bred up to it all their Life-time, as really they were; whereas set them about any thing that is truly good, as to repent of their Sins, meditate upon God, examine their own Hearts, or the like; and they know no more how to do it, than as if they had never heard of any such thing before; which plainly shews, that though they have an Understanding, it is but a very bad one: In Contra-distinction to which bad Understanding which they have that do not fear God, the Psalmist here saith, *There is a good Understanding in them that do his Commandments.* They have not only an Understanding as well as others, but it is a good one. Good! not so much in respect of the Act as Object. Others may have a quicker Understanding than they; but theirs is far better than others, because it is placed upon better Objects, and so serves them to better purpose than  
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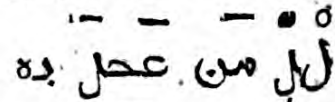
the others do: So that by it they are able to distinguish aright between Good and Evil, so as to apprehend God as truly Good, and Sin as truly Evil, which others cannot, and therefore have that Woe denounced against them, *Isa. v. 20.* Hence therefore it is, That whatsoever Understandings other Persons may have; how great and large soever they may be; howsoever wise, discreet, and learned they may seem in their own or others Eyes, so long as they do not fear God and keep his Commandments, they are no better than Fools and Mad-men in God's Esteem; whereas such as are truly pious and devout, howsoever ignorant and simple they may appear to Men, though they have not so much Wit as to get great Estates, and manage worldly Businessses with that Cunning and Dexterity as others do; if they have but Wisdom enough to serve and obey God, they are truly wise and prudent Persons; others may have greater Understandings, but far worse than theirs; they may have less but better than others; for howsoever little it is, be sure it is good. *A good understanding have all they that do his Commandments: That do his Commandments.* In the Hebrew it is לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְפָנָיו *To all that do them;* and Expositors something differ in assigning the Antecedent

Serm. X.

Vol. VIII.

to the Pronoun *Them*. The *Syriack* Translation makes the Fear of God to be the Antecedent, rendring the Words thus; *The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom; a good Understanding*

*to him that doth it, that is, that feareth the the Lord.* The *Arabick* makes the Wisdom

of God the Antecedent, 


*A good Understanding have all they that act by it; that is, by that Wisdom which is the Fear of the Lord: So the LXX.* *Σύνεσις ἀγαθὴν πᾶσι τοῖς ποιῶσι αὐτήν, A good Understanding have all they that act it; that is, the Wisdom before spoken, upon which St. Chrysostom saith, τοῖς ποιῶσι αὐτήν πιστέα τοῖς ποιῶσι ἢ σοφίαν, ἢ διὰ τῶν ἔργων ἐπιδεικνυμένοις, to such as do it; that is, to such as act that Wisdom, and manifest it by their Works: But if I had a mind to play the Critick, I might easily shew how the *Hebrew* Pronoun being in the Plural Number, cannot so properly be referred to any one as to both those Antecedents, even to the Fear of the Lord, and Wisdom too, that the Sense should be, *A good Understanding have all they that are so wise as to fear the Lord; but which way soever we take them, they will all amount to one and the same Thing and*  
Center,*



Center, in that Exposition which our Serm. X. Translation gives of them, even, *That they only have a good Understanding that keep God's Commandments.* For as he is no wise Man that doth not fear God, so neither can he be said to fear God that doth not keep his Commandments; fearing God and keeping his Commandments being indeed equivalent and convertible Terms: For that Man in vain pretends to fear God that doth not obey his Commandments; where by his Commandments we are to understand whatsoever the Most High God hath enjoined us to do, either in his Law or Gospel; whether it concerns his Glory immediately, or else our Neighbour's Good. And whereas it is said, his Commandments, we are to understand it indefinitely, of one as well as another, and so of all his Commandments.

The Words being thus explained, present us with this plain but great Truth, asserted not only by the Psalmist, but God himself, That every one that truly fears God and keeps his Commandments is a wise Man, a Man of a good Understanding; though not perhaps in the Esteem of silly Mortals upon Earth, yet in the Judgment of the God of Heaven, the Supreme Being, the Sovereign Monarch of the whole World, who doth not only as-

sert it in my Text, but elsewhere, saying, *He that keepeth the Law is a wise Son,* Prov. xxviii. 7. Not he that knoweth but he that keepeth the Law is wise: So that one Man may know more than another, and yet the other be a wiser Man than he. For Wisdom doth not consist so much in Knowledge as in Action: A Man that knows much may be a Fool, and he that knows but little may be a wise Man; for he that knows much and doth little, his Knowledge will do him more hurt than good, and therefore for all his Knowledge he is but a Fool; yea the more he knows the more Fool he is, because he knows what to do that he may be happy, but will not do it; he knows how to escape danger but yet will run into it, which is certainly the highest piece of Folly in the World; whereas on the other side, though a Man knows but little, and yet does what he knows, his little Knowledge will do him much good, as the other's great Knowledge doth him but little good. And this, as St. *Chrystom* observes, is the Wisdom spoken of in my Text, σοφίαν δὲ ἔν ἐν ῥήμασιν ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐν πράγμασι λέγει, *He speaks not, saith he, of Wisdom in Words, but of Wisdom in Works; not of that Wisdom whereby a Man knows what to do, but of that whereby a Man doth*  
 what

what he knows; that is true Wisdom in- Serm. X.  
 deed, and whatsoever comes short of that,   
 deserves not the glorious Name and Title  
 of Wisdom; in which Sense nothing can be  
 more certain than that he is the only  
 wise Man, or hath a good Understanding,  
 that keepeth the Commandments of God.

But Wisdom being a thing which most  
 pretend to, and all desire, a right Under-  
 standing and through Conviction of this  
 great Truth, cannot but be very prevalent  
 with you, to use the utmost of your En-  
 deavour to walk in all the Commandments  
 of God blameless, seeing it is your only  
 Wisdom so to do, I shall further explain  
 and confirm it unto you, by shewing the  
*ἵνα* that it is so, That he that fears God  
 and keeps his Commandments is really a  
 wise Man; and then the *διότι*, or how it  
 comes to be so; and then instancing in  
 some of the particular Acts wherein the  
 Wisdom of those that are truly pious  
 discovers itself, and manifests to the  
 World, that they are the only wise Men  
 in it.

As for the First: To prove that the  
 truly Pious are the only wise Men; or  
 that they have a good Understanding in-  
 deed that keep God's Commandments,  
 these Arguments may be sufficient.

1. He that fears God and keeps his Commandments must needs be a very Wise Man, a Man of a good Understanding; for otherwise as he would not fear God, so he could not keep his Commandments. For he that doth not know God, be sure will never fear him. And, therefore, he that fears him, must needs know him. And to know God is certainly the greatest Piece of Knowledge and Wisdom that we can attain unto; as Ignorance of him is the greatest Folly that we can be guilty of. And further, as a Man will not fear God, so he cannot keep his Commandments, unless he hath a good Understanding; there being a great deal of Wisdom, Discretion and Understanding required to the Adjusting of our Actions aright to the Commands of God. And, therefore, it must needs follow that he is a Wise Man that keeps God's Commandments; because unless he was so, he could not do so, he could not lead so good a Life unless he had first a good Understanding. But if a Man truly fears and obeys God, we cannot question but his Understanding is very good, in that it understands what is truly good, and inclines the Will also into the Embrace-ment and Prosecution of it; which I look upon as the best, and indeed the only  
Sign



Sign of a good Understanding. For though Serm. X.  
a Man hath never such high Notions and Speculations concerning Good and Evil, if his Understanding of it doth not influence and sway his Will, so as to chuse what he knows to be Good, and to avoid what he knows to be Evil, such a Man at the best is but a knowing Fool, or a foolish knowing Man; because though he hath the Knowledge of these Things, it doth him no good at all. But if a Man gives up himself wholly to walk according to the Dictates of his Reason, and by Consequence according to the Commands of God, it is plain that such a Man's Understanding rules and governs his Will and Actions, and so that he doth not live as Brutes and Fools do, according as his Lust and sensual Appetite draw him; but as his Reason and Discretion dictate to him. And, therefore, we cannot but conclude him to be a very Wise Man indeed, a Man of a good Understanding, in that it is such an Understanding as makes him a good Man.

2. You'll all acknowledge that it is a great Part of a Wise Man to do the Business he sets about, and to attain the End he aims at. He is a Fool that never doth what he intends, nor accomplisheth what he desires. But when a Man so  
be.

behaveth himself, and manageth his Affairs that he perfects what he is sent about, and conquers whatsoever he undertakes, that you'll all say is a truly Wise and Prudent Man. And such a one is every pious Man that fears God and keeps his Commandments; for he minds and doth the Business that he came into the World about. For the great Errand we were sent for, the only Work we have here to do, is to glorifie God, by observing and obeying his Commands, by which also we attain to what we desire. For Happiness is the only thing that all Men naturally desire, though some seek it in one thing, some in another. But all miss of it; but only such as fear and obey God. For all the Happiness that we are capable of, consists only in his Love and Favour; which it is impossible for us to gain unless we obey and please him, or to miss of, if we sincerely endeavour to do so. Indeed, there is unspeakable Happiness, in Obedience itself, as the Psalmist tells us, *Psal. xix. 11.* But the Happiness which we shall have hereafter, if we obey God here, far exceeds our very Thoughts as well as Words, *1 Cor. ii. 9.* But as this is the only Happiness that we can be invested with, so there is no way of attaining to it, but only by Holiness,  
*Heb.*

*Heb. xii. 14.* And, therefore, as they cannot but be looked upon as the worst of Fools and Madmen, that prefer their Sins before such transcendant Happiness as this is, so they who fear God, and obey his Commandments, and by that means in and through Christ attain to this, not only the highest, but the only Happiness they can possibly be made partakers of, such, I say, must needs be acknowledged to be Men of great Wisdom, and a good Understanding indeed.

Serm. X.

3. True Wisdom discovereth itself very much in fore-seeing and preventing Dangers. He is a Fool with a Witness, that sees Misery and Ruin hanging over his Head, and will not endeavour to avoid it; yet such is the Folly of every Sinner, that he is secure and careless of himself though he stands continually upon the Brink of Destruction. But he that truly fears God, and doth what he Commands him, he thereby prevents all the Evils which foolish Sinners run themselves into. He thereby avoids the Wrath and Displeasure of Almighty God, *who is angry with the Wicked every day*, *Psal. vii. 11.* And so his Fury and Indignation is ready every Moment to be poured forth upon them. And certainly, as God's Love and Favour is the greatest Good, so is his Anger the greatest



greatest Evil of Punishment in the World; yea, there is nothing of real Evil or Misery, but so far as it proceeds from the Wrath of God. Crosses, Reproaches, Afflictions, Sickness, Death, these are no farther Evil, than as they have a Mixture of Divine Wrath in them: Insomuch, that as the greatest temporal Misery, with the Love of God, is a real Blessing; so the greatest temporal Blessing in the World, with his Wrath and Indignation, is a real Curse. But now this Source of all Miseries; this Evil of all Evils; such as keep God's Commandments, do most certainly prevent: For as there are none but Sinners that God is angry with; so there is nothing but Sin that he is angry for. And as they that thus sincerely obey God, avoid his Wrath; so do they likewise prevent the Gnawings and Torments of a guilty Conscience, arising only from the Apprehension of God's Wrath enkindled against us for our Sins committed against him. For this is the Portion only of their Cup that offend God. For as they abuse his Mercies against him, he arms their Consciences against them; which accusing them of their Folly and Wickedness, their Punishment for Sin even in this Life, far exceeds their Pleasure in it. But now they who are truly godly, are  
so



so wise as to prevent all this Misery by Serm. X.  
 keeping their *Consciences void of offence both*  
*towards God and Man*, Acts xxiv. 16. Yea,  
 by this means also they prevent eternal  
 Misery and Confusion in the World to  
 come, Hell-fire I mean, which is nothing  
 else but the Conjunction and Perfection  
 of the Two insupportable Evils before  
 spoken of; as our Saviour himself inti-  
 mates, *Mark ix. 44*. When the Soul shall  
 perfectly apprehend the eternal God as  
 frowning upon it, and be as perfectly  
 convinced of the Sins which it hath fool-  
 ishly committed against so glorious and  
 dreadful a Being: It is impossible to ex-  
 press what Wracks and Tortures it will  
 then be put upon. But howsoever great  
 these Miseries are, such as truly fear and  
 serve God, will never feel them, they be-  
 ing allotted only for them that do not  
 so, *Matt. xxv. 46*. And, therefore, we  
 cannot but acknowledge such to be the  
 only Wise Men in the World.

4. You may know a Wise Man also  
 by his fore-casting for the future, and  
 seriously considering before-hand how to  
 live, and be happy hereafter. It is the  
 Part of a Fool, a Brute, to look only to  
 the present Time; a Wise Man will pro-  
 vide for the Time to come. *He that ga-  
 thereth in Summer, is a Wise Son*, Prov. x. 5.

It

Vol. VIII. It is the Part of a Wise Man to lay up  
 in Summer against Winter, in a Calm  
 against a Storm, in Health against Sick-  
 ness, in Life against Death, much more  
 in Time against Eternity. Thus wise are  
 they, and they only that fear God, and  
 keep his Commandments; for whilst others  
 throw away their Time upon the Imperti-  
 nencies of this present World, they pro-  
 vide for the World to come, *by laying  
 up for themselves treasures in Heaven,*  
 Matt. vi. 20.

5. The principal Thing whereby to  
 know a Wise Man from a Fool is his  
 choise; when of Two Evils he chuseth the  
 least, and of Two Goods the best. This  
 must needs argue a good Understanding,  
 able to discern betwixt Good and Evil, as  
 also betwixt the greater and the lesser Good.  
 A Sinner is such a Fool, that he counts  
 Good Evil, and Evil Good; puts Light for  
 Darkness, and Darkness for Light. But he  
 that fears God is so wise as always to chuse  
 the better Part, *Luke x. 42.* He chuseth  
 Heaven before Earth, Holiness before Sin,  
 the Love and Favour of God before all  
 things in the World besides. And so he  
 chuseth the more Noble, the more Plea-  
 sant, the more Profitable, the more Ho-  
 nest, the more Necessary, the more Last-  
 ing, and by Consequence the better Part  
 of

of the Two; yea, the best of All. As *Moses* did to the Children of *Israel*, *Deut.* xxx. 19. So doth God set before you all Life and Death, Happiness and Misery, Life and Happiness if you obey his Commands, Death and Misery if you do not. Now such as keep his Commandments, are so wise as to chuse the Life and Happiness for themselves, and leave Death and Misery for such Fools as all Sinners are, to undergo. And, therefore, all things considered, all that have any Understanding among you must needs grant that they only have a good Understanding that fear and obey God.

The next Question to be resolved, is, How it come to pass that they that fear God, and keep his Commandments, so far excel others in true Wisdom, and a good Understanding?

The Reasons are,

1. Because such as truly fear God are come to themselves again, they are recovered from their former Madness and Distraction, to the right Use of their Senses and Reason, which Sinners are not: So long as a Man remains in his natural Condition, or until he return to God, his fancy is so disturbed, his Mind distracted, and all his Intellectuals so strangely broken and out of order, that every thing



thing is represented to him to be of a quite different Nature from what it is in itself. He can see nothing of Good in God himself, nothing of Sinfulness in Sin; yea, he oft-times fancies to himself a great deal of Good in Evil, and of Evil in Good; Happiness in Sin, and Misery in Holiness: Hence the Apostle saith, *That the natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him,* 1 Cor. ii. 14. That is, he is so far from looking upon the Wisdom of God as Wisdom, that he reckons it to be but Foolishness: So far from reckoning the Foolishness of Sin to be Foolishness, that he looks upon it as Wisdom: So far from thinking Good to be good, and Evil evil, that he judges Good to be evil, and Evil good. And, therefore, it is no wonder if he be a Fool, seeing he looks upon it as his Wisdom to be so; no wonder if he be so bad, seeing he reckons it his goodness to be so. But now, when God intends to work over a Soul unto himself, he dispels these dark Shades of Ignorance and Error from off the Face of the Soul, and clears up its Understanding, shewing it the Goodness of God, and the Sinfulness of Sin; so that the Soul is now able to discern betwixt the one and the other. Yea, this is the first Act which God passeth



passeth upon the Soul, in order to its Serm. X.

Conversion, whereby it is so enlightened, that it soon discovers its former Folly and Madnes, and so it begins to come to itself again, and is able to consider and weigh things in the Ballance of right Reason. And the Mind being thus recovered from its former Distemper, it is now able to pass a sound Judgment upon every thing that is presented to it; so that now it apprehends God as an All-glorious, Incomprehensible and Almighty Being, and therefore it cannot but fear and dread him: It apprehends the Commandments of God to be infinitely Just and Righteous, and therefore it cannot but endeavour at least sincerely to observe and keep them. And the Mind of such as do so, being thus composed and restored to its proper Frame and Constitution, they cannot but have a right and good Understanding, and so become really and truly Wise.

2. As by our returning unto God, and so coming to ourselves, we are made so wise as to be both able and willing to keep the Commandments of God: So by our keeping the Commandments, we every Day more and more increase our Wisdom, and better our Understandings; not only because the more

Y

we



we accustom ourselves to regulate our Actions according to the Laws of God, the better we shall be instructed and enabled to do that wherein our principal Wisdom doth consist; but especially, because if we faithfully and constantly endeavour to fear and obey God, in what he Commands, he will teach us Wisdom, and make known himself and his Laws more and more unto us, and so clear up, and better our Understandings in what is necessary for us to know and do. *I understand more than the Ancients, saith David, because I keep thy Commandments, Psal. cxix. 100. And thou through thy Commandments hast made me wiser than mine Enemies, v. 98.* So that God by his Commandments doth teach Men Wisdom, and makes them that keep them wiser than other People. Yea, the Commandments themselves, by the Grace of God, help towards the Refining of our Knowledge, and the Bettering of our Understandings. *The Testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the Eyes, Psal. xix. 7, 8.* So that although a Man be not of that quick Understanding as some are, in the Laws of God, if he doth but sincerely endeavour to keep them as well as he can, God will enable him to know better  
 what


what to do, as well as to do that better which he knows. To this purpose is that gracious Promise of our Blessed Saviour, *He that bath 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,* John xiv. 21. That is, he that loveth me so as to keep my Commandments, I will so love him, as to manifest myself unto him, acquaint him with my Will and Pleasure, and so make him wise unto Salvation, directing him in the way that leadeth to everlasting Life. And therefore it is no wonder that he that keepeth the Commandments is wise, seeing Wisdom itself hath promised to make him so, by unvailing and manifesting itself unto him. This, therefore, is the great and principal Reason, why they that fear God are so wise, and so far exceed all others in Prudence and Understanding; even because they are instructed by God and Christ himself, who is the Fountain and Source, from whence all true Wisdom and good Understanding flow.

And that you may the better understand how wise all those are who are truly holy, who fear and obey God, I shall in the last Place instance, in some

Vol. VIII. of those Acts, wherein they shew forth that Wisdom which they have received from above, and manifest to the World that they are the only Men of a good Understanding who keep the Commandments of God. Indeed there is nothing which God hath commanded, but it is our Wisdom to perform it; as considering that Obedience to the Laws that he hath enjoined us, is indispensably necessary to the obtaining of the Happiness which he hath promised us. Howsoever, that you may pass the better Judgment upon all the rest, I shall instance only in some of those particular Graces and Vertues which it is our Wisdom to act, and exercise ourselves continually in, that you may all be convinced that it is your Wisdom as well as Duty to fear God and keep his Commands.

*First*, Therefore as it is God's most gracious Command, so it is our great Wisdom to repent, that is, to be thoroughly humbled for, resolved against, and converted from those Sins which we have heretofore allowed and indulged ourselves in. For seeing Sin is the only Cause of Evil, if it be our Wisdom to prevent Evil, it must needs be our Wisdom to repent of Sin; repenting of Sin being the only way whereby it is possible for us to avoid  
the



the Evil and Punishments which are due Serm. X.  
unto it. *The Heart of the Wise*, saith   
*Solomon, is in the House of Mourning*, Ecclef.  
vii. 4. It is the Trick of a Fool to take  
pleasure in Sin, but it is the Part of a  
Wise Man to be sorry for it; yea, so to  
be sorry for it, as sincerely and con-  
stantly to endeavour to forsake and leave  
it. For tell me, Is it not your Wisdom  
to agree with your Adversary in the way?  
Is it not your Wisdom to get God re-  
conciled to you; and yourselves reconci-  
led to him? Is it not your Wisdom to  
get out of the Road to Hell, and to  
turn into the narrow Path that leads to  
Heaven? Is it not your Wisdom to refuse  
the Evil, and chuse the Good, to avoid  
the Misery, and embrace the Happiness  
which is set before you. If you have  
but so much wit as to know what it is  
to be wise, you cannot but acknowledge  
those to be great Acts of Wisdom. And  
yet there is never a one of them can  
possibly be done without Repentance. It  
being absolutely impossible either to please  
God here or enjoy him hereafter, to escape  
Hell Torments, or attain to the Joys of  
Heaven without Repentance. And, there-  
fore, let the vain and foolish World say  
what it will, the truly humble and peni-  
tent is the only wise and prudent Man.



2. To believe in Jesus Christ, so as to trust and depend upon him, and him alone for Pardon, Acceptance and Salvation; this is so great an Act of Wisdom, that we can do nothing wisely without it: For we can have no Wisdom but what we receive from Christ; neither can we receive any from him, but by believing in him; who is therefore said to be made our Wisdom as well as our Righteousness, *1 Cor. i. 30.* because we are made wise by him, as well as accepted of as righteous in him. Hence when the *Galatians* began to stagger and err from the Faith of Christ, thinking to be justified by the Works of the Law, *St. Paul* calls them Fools and Madmen for their pains. *O foolish Galatians, saith he, who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the Truth, before whose Eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you, Gal. ii. 21. c. iii. 1, 2.* Who hath bewitched you? Implying, that they which think to be justified or saved by their own Obedience and good Works, are certainly bewitched and seduced by some lying Spirit or other. For no Man in his right Wits can possibly think that his future Obedience can satisfy for his former Sins, and that a few weak Performances upon Earth could merit eternal Glory. These  
are

are fond Conceits; and such as no sober Serm. X.  
and prudent Person will be ever persuad-  
ed to entertain. Especially, considering  
that we have now a certain and infallible  
Way found out, whereby never a Soul of  
us but may attain to the Pardon of our  
Sins, and the eternal Salvation of our  
immortal Souls, and that is by Faith in  
Jesus Christ; *who is able to save to the ut-  
most all those that come unto God by him,*  
Heb. vii. 25. And tell me, seeing there is  
but one way whereby you can go to God  
and be saved, Is it not your Wisdom to  
walk in it? Seeing there is but one Re-  
deemer of Mankind that can deliver you  
from Sin and Hell, Is it not your Wisdom  
to haste to him? Seeing there is but one  
City of Refuge, in all the World, which  
can defend you from the Pursuits of Di-  
vine Wrath, Is it not your Wisdom to  
haste thither? Seeing there is but one Phy-  
sician that can Cure you of your Spiri-  
tual Distempers, Is it not your Wisdom  
to go to him? Seeing there is but one  
Advocate in the Court of Heaven that  
can plead your Cause at the Throne of  
Grace, Is it not your Wisdom to retain  
him? Seeing there is but one sure Rock,  
in all the World, that can keep you from  
sinking into the bottomless Ocean, the  
Abyss of Misery, Is it not your Wisdom

Vol. VIII. to anchor your hope on him? In a Word, *Seeing there is no Name given under Heaven whereby you can be saved, but the Name of Christ, Acts iv. 12.* And yet, seeing there is no way neither of being saved by him, but by believing in him, Is it not then your Wisdom to lay hold upon him, to believe in him, and obey his Gospel? What is, if this be not Wisdom?

3. Humility also is another especial Instance of true Wisdom; when a Man is low and humble in his own Esteem, how high soever he be in others. For this argues that a Man hath a good Understanding, he is acquainted with his own Heart, he knows how vile and sinful he is, and therefore cannot but be humble in his own sight. And questionless, it is as great a Piece of Wisdom to be humble, as it is a Folly to be proud and haughty. If I see a Man proud, I am presently apt to suspect him to be a Fool, one that doth not know himself, that knows not how much Sin, Venom and Corruption is within him. For if he saw it, he could not but abhor himself, and be humbled under it. An Heathen Poet, *Persius* by Name, could say, *Tecum habita & nosces quam sit tibi curta supellex*: Live at home, live with thyself, look into thy own Heart, and thou shalt soon see how little thou hast to be proud of;



of; or rather, how much thou hast to be Serm. X.  
 humbled for. For what hast thou to be  
 proud of? Art thou proud of thy Wisdom?  
 If thou hadst any, thou couldst not be  
 proud: *Seest thou a Man wise in his own  
 Eyes?* saith Solomon, *there is more hopes of  
 a Fool then of him,* Prov. xxvi. 12. So  
 that he that thinks himself wise is a Fool;  
 yea, he is therefore a Fool because he thinks  
 himself wise. Art thou proud of the  
 Strength of thy Body, or the Greatness  
 of thy Estate? Thus saith Wisdom itself,  
*Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom;*  
*let not the strong Man glory in his Strength;*  
*let not the rich Man glory in his Riches;* Jer.  
 ix. 23. And verily, an Horse hath as much  
 cause to be proud of his Trappings or Bur-  
 den, as any Man hath to be proud of any  
 thing he hath or can have here below.  
 And therefore, whatsoever our outward  
 Condition be, how great soever our Gifts  
 and Parts, yea, how strong soever our  
 Graces and Vertues are, it is still our Wis-  
 dom to be humble in our own Eyes, and  
 to live as those who believe that great  
 Truth, that we can never think too high-  
 ly of God, nor too lowly of ourselves.

4. Another great Piece of Wisdom;  
 whereby they that truly fear God mani-  
 fest themselves to have a good Under-  
 standing, indeed, is Charity, or a free and  
 liberal



liberal Distribution of what we have ourselves to such as want it. For this is the way to make unto ourselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, Luke xvi. 9. This is the way to enrich ourselves by relieving others. Neither is there any other way in the World to be rich, and to improve our Estates but this. For what we have is not our own; but only God lends it to us to lay out for him. But what we give is our own; for we lend it to God to lay it up for us. *He that hath pity on the Poor, lendeth to the Lord; and that which he hath given, will he pay him again,* Prov. xix. 17. So that what I have is Gods; but what I give is mine own. For I have lent it to God, and have his Word for it, that he will pay it me again; which is infinitely surer than all the Bonds in the World. And so when God lends an Estate to us we are his Debtors for it; but when we give any thing to the Poor, God acknowledgeth himself our Debtor for that. And, therefore, what we keep we cannot call ours, because we owe it unto God; but what we give we may call our own, because God owes it to us, having bound himself by his Promise that he will pay us it again. To this purpose I have met with an excellent Passage in *St. Chrysoftome, Why therefore,*

fore, saith he, dost thou deprive thyself of *Serm. X.*  
those things which God would have thee to possess; for he hath therefore commanded thee to give to another that thou thyself mightest have it, ἕως γὰρ μόνου κατέχεις ἔδδὲ αὐ-  
τοῦ ἔχεις. ὅταν ᾖ ἑτέρῳ δῶς τότε ἢ αὐτοῦ  
ἔλαβες, so long as thyself keepest it; not so much as thyself hast it, but when thou givest it to another, then thou receivest it to thyself. So that what we keep, that we want; what we give, that we have; for at the same time that we give it to another we receive it ourselves. And this is laying up for ourselves Treasures in Heaven, by laying out for God the Treasures that we have upon Earth; which being the only good Use that we can possibly make of what we have, it must needs be acknowledged a great Piece of Wisdom thus to employ what God hath entrusted with us to our own Advantage.

5. The Wisdom of those who are truly righteous, appears also in the Resignation of their Wills to God's. As we see Wisdom itself did, in our Blessed Saviour, who could say, *Not my Will, but thine be done.* And verily, thus to resign our Wills to God's, so as to have no Wills as it were of our own, but to submit ourselves wholly to be guided by the Will of God, is as high an Act of Wisdom



dom as it is possible for us to exert; for by this means, we may always have our Wills because they are the same with God's; which is always done. Nay, when we have thus given our Wills to God's, so as to entrust him always to will for us, all Providences whatsoever are in effect but the Acts of our own Wills, with this extraordinary Advantage, that they are guided and directed by the infinite Wisdom and Goodness of God. And as it is the Wisdom of a Patient to let the Physician chuse what Dyet, Phyfick and the like he must have, so it is much more our Wisdom thus to entrust God to chuse for us, and to be well-pleas'd with his choice, though never so cross to our sinful Desires; because we cannot but acknowledge that he knows infinitely better than ourselves what is good or hurtful for us: Especially, considering also that by this means we may make a Vertue of Necessity. For God's Will besure must be done whether we will or no; and therefore it is madness in us to resist or gainsay it: And our greatest Wisdom wholly to submit ourselves unto it, and always to acquiesce contented in it.

Thus I might shew in all other Acts of true Piety whatsoever, that it is our  
Wisdom




Wisdom to perform them; and that the truly Pious manifest themselves to be the only wise Men, by every Act of Obedience which they perform to the Commandments of God. For what? Doth Wisdom teach you to live happily in the World? Then the Godly are the only wise Men in it; who often retire from the vexatious Bustles and Tumults of this distracting World, that they may fix and unite their Hearts to draw nigh to God, and enjoy Communion with the chiefest Good, the Fountain of all true Happiness. Doth Wisdom teach you to prefer the Good before the Evil? Then they that fear God are wise in chusing the greatest Suffering rather than the least Sin; there being more real Evil in the least Sin than in the greatest Suffering imaginable. Doth Wisdom teach you to consult your Books to see what others owe to you and you to others, that you may know your outward Estate and Condition? How much wiser are the Godly, who oft examine themselves, and consider how the Case stands betwixt God and their Souls? Is it your Wisdom to have a Care of yourselves, and not to run headlong into Ruin and Perdition? Then there is none so wise as the Godly, who are always watchful over themselves, and careful to  
avoid

Serm. X.

avoid Sin, the only Cause of all our Misery. Is it your Wisdom to do that well which you can do but once, and which can never be mended, if it be once ill done? Then certainly they that truly fear God must carry away the Palm for Wisdom from all the World besides; for they are always ready to die, and so to do that well which they can never do again. They were the foolish Virgins which wanted it; the wise had Oil in their Lamps, true Grace in their Hearts, and so were ready when the Bridegroom came, and therefore they entred into the Bride-chamber when the others were shut out, and with all their Importunities could never after be admitted to come in.

But what need I instance in any more Particulars? These may be sufficient to demonstrate that the Fear of the Lord, or true Holiness, is the *תורת*, both the Beginning and the End of true Wisdom; having proved unto you that Sinners so long as such, are meer Fools, not having attained so far as to the first Beginning of Wisdom; And that Saints, so far as such, they are truly wise. All which I have endeavoured to explain with that clearness and perspicuity, that none of you that have any Understanding at all but must needs confess, that they only have

have a good Understanding that fear God Vol. VIII.  
and keep his Commandments. And,   
therefore, I hope you have all prevented  
me in what I intended for the Applica-  
tion of this Truth ; which was to advise  
and stir you up to do that which you  
cannot but be now convinced is not  
only your Duty and Interest, but your  
Wisdom too to do ; even to devote  
yourselves for the future wholly to the  
Service of Almighty God, to fear, honour  
and obey him : For I cannot persuade  
myself but you all desire to act like wise  
Men. This I am sure of, you all either  
are or would be accounted wise : But  
assure yourselves whatsoever your Con-  
dition be in this World, howsoever cun-  
ning and subtle you may be in the Ma-  
nagement of worldly Affairs, whatsoever  
Conceits you may have of yourselves,  
whatsoever Opinion others may entertain  
of you, yet in the Judgment of wise Men,  
and of the All-wise God himself, you  
neither are nor can be truly wise until  
you be truly good. And, therefore, if  
any of you desire, as I hope you all  
do, to manifest yourselves to be sober  
and discreet, wise and prudent, Men and  
Women, take this Course to do it ; break  
off your former Sins by Repentance, and  
shewing Mercy to the Poor, and believe  
in

Vol. VIII. in Christ for Pardon and Salvation, love God's Person, and obey his Precepts, trust on his Promises, and fear his Threatnings, sanctifie his Sabbaths, and reverence his Name, be loyal to your Sovereign, and obedient to Magistrates, be faithful to your Friends, and loving to your Enemies, kind and charitable, just and equitable unto all: In a Word, fear God and keep his Commandments; for this is the whole Duty of Man, and his Wisdom too, *Dan. xii. 3.*

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The



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The Pleasure of being Holy.

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I N A

S E R M O N

On PROV. III. 17.


*Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.*

**M**AN being at first made capable of the greatest Pleasures that it was possible for a Creature to be enstated in, and likewise enstated in all the Pleasures that his Nature was capable of, although by his Fall in *Adam* he lost and forfeited the actual Possession of them, yet his Capacity still remaining, he cannot but be restless and unquiet until it be filled again, and his Soul be restored to the Enjoyment of the same Pleasures which it was before en-


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dowed with. Hence it comes to pass that all Men in the World desire Pleasures, and therefore are still seeking after something or other to delight themselves in; but it is strange to consider what low and pitiful Things they are that Fallen Man takes up with instead of Pleasure. Some please themselves with running after the Beasts of the Field; others with pursuing the Fowls of the Air; others again with ensnaring the Fishes of the Sea; some take Pleasure in Solitude and Retirements, others in the Crowds and Bustles of the World; some take Pleasure in running over the Histories of former Ages, others in censuring the Transactions of the present Times; some delight in stretching their Brains with high Metaphysical Notions, others can even surfeit themselves upon the Pleasures of a Mathematical Demonstration; some hug themselves with the Thoughts of their Temporal Estates, others are even transported at the Smiles of an Earthly Prince vouchsafed to them; some take Pleasure in Lust and Luxury, others in Drunkenness and Gluttony. Indeed there is no Act a Man can do, no Object that a Man can meet with, nor no Sin that a Man can commit, but some or other takes Pleasure in it, which clearly shews that Men will take Pleasure in  
any

any thing rather than nothing ; and that Serm. XI.  
Pleasure is a Thing that all Men desire,   
inſomuch that they will rather do violence  
to their very Natures, and ſtoop ſo low  
as to be Fellow Commoners with the  
Beaſts that periſh, in their Brutish and  
Sensual Pleaſures, rather than have no  
Pleaſure at all.

And I ſuppoſe that there is none here pre-  
ſent can be exempted from the Common  
Eſtate and Condition of all Mankind in this  
Particular, but that you as others, are all  
deſirous of Pleaſure and Delight in the  
World, and you cannot be blamed for it,  
for it is that you were all deſigned to  
have ; and therefore it cannot but be law-  
ful for you to endeavour after it. But  
the great Queſtion is, What true Pleaſure  
is, and how it may be attained ; for no-  
thing can be more certain than that thoſe  
Things which Mankind are generally de-  
lighted in, cannot afford them any real  
Pleaſure at all, be ſure not ſuch as was at  
firſt appointed for them : For they are  
much below ſo high and noble a Creature  
as Man is, to content or pleaſe himſelf  
with : And therefore it muſt needs con-  
cern us all in a very high manner to  
ſearch into the true Nature of Pleaſure,  
and to conſider wherein it may be had.  
But for this we have juſt Cauſe to ſuſpect

Vol. VIII.  our own Judgments, because we have found by our own woful Experience that they have often failed us already, and have passed the Sentence of Pleasure upon such things as we have found to bring Misery and Torment along with them; or at the best have frustrated our Expectation in affording us no solid and real Satisfaction at all, in the Enjoyment of them; and therefore waving our own Judgments, we must consult some or other who understands our Temper and Constitution so well as to know better than our selves what is and what is not pleasant and delightful to us; but that none can do but God, who having made us at first, and still preserving us by his Almighty Power, he cannot but be thoroughly acquainted with the Frame and Disposition of our Bodies, as likewise with the Tendency and Inclinations of our Souls, and by Consequence understand wherein our Happiness and Pleasure doth consist, infinitely better than our selves can do. To him therefore let us appeal, and resolve to submit to his Judgment in the Case, which we cannot but acknowledge to be beyond Exception. But how shall we come to know what he that made us judges to be most satisfactory and pleasant to us? for that we need go no farther than the Words I have  
now



now read, wherein he hath delivered his Serm. XI. Opinion in the Case as clearly as Words could do it, saying, *Her ways are ways of pleasantness*, &c. the Meaning whereof in general is, That the Exercise of true Grace and Vertue doth really afford the Souls of Men more solid Peace and Pleasure than all things else in the World can do.

But that I may explain these Words more clearly, and convince you more fully of this great Truth contained in them, I shall,

I. Consider who or what it is whose ways are here said to be *ways of Pleasantness*.

II. What we are to understand by her Ways which are here asserted to be *Ways of Pleasantness*; and wherein they appear to be so.

III. Wherein it is that her Ways exceed all other Things in *Pleasantness and Peace*.

The *First* Thing to be considered is, Who, or what it is of whom it is here said, that *Her ways are ways of Pleasantness*: But that we may easily gather from the Context; for the Wise Man inspired by the Holy Ghost is here speaking of Wisdom, v. 13. But then the Principal Question is, What the Wise Man understands by Wisdom, in this and other Places of this Book,

Vol. VIII. wherein it so frequently occurs: To which I answer, That by Wisdom all along in this Book of *Proverbs*, the Wise Man means such a Knowledge and Sense of God, as makes us continually to fear and dread him, as is plain from *Cap. i. 29. c. iii. 7. c. xv. 33.* So doth *Job, c. xxviii. 28.* And *David, Psal. cxi. 10.* So also, *Prov. i. 7. c. ix. 10.* Nothing therefore can be more plain than that by Wisdom we are to understand *the Fear of the Lord*, even such a Fear of him whereby we avoid whatsoever is offensive to him, and perform whatsoever is required or commanded by him, *Prov. viii. 13. c. xvi. 6.* For indeed the Fear of the Lord in Scripture is not only now and then, but almost every where put for the whole Duty of Man, for that which we call in general Godliness: Insomuch that in all the Old Testament, yea, and in the Language wherein it was written, as I remember, there is never a Word ever used for Godliness but *יראת יהוה* and *יראת אלהו* *The Fear of God*, and *the Fear of the Lord*, and the like. And in the New Testament wheresoever the Word, *εὐσέβεια*, *Godliness* is used; in the Language our Saviour spake it is always rendred by *Αδωσφορα* *the Fear of God*: So that wheresoever you read of the Fear of God in Scripture, by it you are

are to understand not only that particular Sermon. XI.  
Grace or Act whereby we reverence and  
dread the Eternal God, but likewise that  
excellent Habit or Disposition of the Mind,  
whereby we are ready to perform Univer-  
sal Obedience to all his Laws and Com-  
mands. Or if you will, that which in  
other Places of Scripture is called Godli-  
ness; and the Reason is, because the true  
Fear of God always qualifies and tempers  
the Mind so, that a Man dare not but  
please and obey God in every thing he  
doth to the utmost of his Knowledge and  
Power.

This therefore is that Wisdom and Un-  
derstanding which the Wise Man here  
means, even such Wisdom whereby a Man  
so knows God as to fear him, and so fears  
God as to honour and obey him in all  
things. This is that Wisdom which is  
here commended to us by God himself  
as the most blessed, the most excellent,  
the most precious, the most profitable, and  
the most incomparable thing that we can  
ever desire or have, v. 13, 14, 15, 16. And  
that we may be assured that there is Plea-  
sure as well as Profit to be had in knowing  
and serving God; he further adds, that *her  
ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her  
paths are peace.*

Where the next Thing to be searched into is, What we are here to understand by the Ways and Paths of Wisdom or true Piety, which are here asserted to be so pleasant and peaceable.

For which we must know First in general, That Godliness being the Means whereby we attain Eternal Salvation by the Merits of Jesus Christ; hence it is called *the way of Salvation*, Acts xvi. 17. and *the way to Life*, Mat. vii. 14, and *the way of God*, Acts xviii. 26. because it is the way wherein God would have us walk, as being chalked out for us by himself in his holy Word. And as the Habit of Godliness in general is called *the way of God*, so are the several Acts of Piety called his ways too, Deut. viii. 6. c. x. 12. And as they are called *the ways of God*, so they are termed here *the ways of Godliness*, because they are such ways as true Godliness prescribes and directs a Man to walk in, through the whole Course of his Life. Thus therefore reading and hearing of the Word of God, praying unto him, receiving of his Blessed Sacraments, meditating upon him, loving of him, longing for him, trusting on him, rejoicing in him, and obeying him; in being just and faithful, charitable and merciful, kind and loving to one another; and all other Acts  
what-



whatsoever of true Grace and Vertue, Serm. XI.  
wherein a Man is truly Pious can exercise himself, they are all but the several ways of Wisdom or Piety, which are here asserted to be not only pleasant and peaceable, but Pleasantness and Peace itself.

But this I fear many of you may think to be such as several others of *Solomon's Proverbs* seem to be, even a mere Riddle or Paradox; which, though it may perhaps be true, yet you can hardly believe it to be so, not being able to imagine how so strict and devout a Life as true Wisdom and Holiness requires, should afford such extraordinary Peace and Pleasure to the Soul, as is here asserted to be in it. And therefore, to convince you of this great Truth, That the Performance of those several Duties, and the Exercise of those several Graces which are here called *the ways of Wisdom*, doth really afford true Peace and Pleasure, true Comfort and Satisfaction to the Souls of Men. To convince you of this, I say, is the Work which this Text requires me to undertake, howsoever hard and difficult it may seem to be: And if you will but seriously consider what I shall deliver upon this Subject, and weigh it in the Balance of right and unbyassed Reason, I do not fear but by the Blessing and Assistance of Almighty God,

God, I shall convince you all effectually of it.

But in order thereunto, you must give me leave to premise Two Things: First, That the Wise Man here asserts the ways of Wisdom to be not only *the ways of Pleasantness*, but likewise *the paths of Peace*; that is, they are quiet and peaceable as well as pleasant and delightful to the Soul. Some ways may be pleasant, which yet are unsafe and dangerous; others may be safe, and without danger, but yet unpleasant to such as walk in them. But the ways of Wisdom have both those excellent Properties, *her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace*; which adds very much to the Pleasantness of them; Peace in the Idiom of the Scripture, comprehending under it all manner of Safety, Welfare and Prosperity that can be desired, which always attending the Pleasures and Delights of holy Actions, must needs make them as pleasant and delightful, as it is possible for Actions to be. The other Thing I would premise is, That when I speak of Pleasure you must not expect any Philosophical Definition or Description of it: For it is a Thing that you may better experience in yourselves, than I am able to express it to you. Neither indeed need I tell you what it is, for  
you

you all know well enough when a Thing Serm. XI.  
is pleasing to you, and how your Minds  
are affected with it, which Affection of  
the Mind, with that which is good and  
so pleasing to us, is that which we call  
Pleasure, whereby we rest satisfied in the  
Enjoyment of some either real or seeming  
good.

But certainly he must be a great Stran-  
ger to the Exercise of true Piety and Ver-  
tue; that is, not so affected with it, as  
to take a great deal of Pleasure and De-  
light in it, there being nothing that can  
afford so much Joy and Satisfaction to the  
Soul as that doth; which that I may de-  
monstrate to you, I shall first instance in  
such common Duties, which Wisdom or  
true Piety puts Men continually upon;  
and shew you what extraordinary Pleasure  
they who are real Saints take in them.

1. Reading the Word of God, is one  
of those ways of wisdom which wise and  
good Men often walk in; and could you  
but see how their Hearts are affected whilst  
they read them, you would need no other  
Argument to perswade you it is a pleasant  
and delightful Work: For the Scriptures  
are the Word, the Oracles of God himself,  
and therefore they who are truly godly,  
cannot but find extraordinary Joy and  
Comfort in reading and consulting of them.

For

Vol. VIII. For there they meet with the Will and Pleasure of God revealed to them, and with the glorious Properties and Perfections of God unveiled before them: There they meet with all the Promises which he hath made to Mankind in Jesus Christ, yea with all things whatsoever they desire to know: For here they may learn both how to serve God here, and to enjoy him hereafter, which are the only things a good Man desires to know: And they who are truly such, cannot but be strangely affected in the reading of the Scriptures, yea even transported with the Heavenly and Divine Expressions they meet with there. And that they are so, is plain from the Example of *David*; How sweet, how pleasant, was the Word of God to him? *Psal.* cxix. 103. xix. 9, 10. cxix. 14. And every godly Man being of the same Temper and Disposition as *David* was, he cannot but find as much Joy and Comfort in the Word of God as *David* did; who therefore describes a good Man, by *his delighting*, as he did, *in the Law of God*, Pf. i. 2.

2. Praying and Praising God, are ways of Piety and Pleasure too: For by Prayer they who are truly Pious converse with God himself, with an humble Confidence, that whatsoever they ask in Christ's Name




Name they shall receive, which must Serm. XI.  
 needs afford them more Joy and Com-  
 fort, than any one is able to conceive  
 but they that have it ; especially Praising  
 of him being always joined with Praying  
 to him, which is so high, so holy, so hea-  
 venly a Work, so agreeable to the Nature  
 of Saints, that it cannot but raise their  
 Spirits to the highest pitch of Joy and Plea-  
 sure, as it did *David's*, *Psal.* lxxiii. 4, 5. Yea  
 this is the Work which the very Glorified  
 Saints in Heaven make their constant Bu-  
 siness and Recreation, *Rev.* iv. 9, 10, 11.

3. Frequenting of the Publick Ordi-  
 nances, to present our selves together in  
 a solemn and reverent manner before the  
 Eternal God, to implore his Mercy, to  
 magnifie his Name, to hear his Word, and  
 to perform our Homage and Devotion ;  
 Who is able to express the Pleasure which  
 the truly Pious take in it ? How did *Da-  
 vid* rejoyce to go to the House of God,  
*Psal.* cxxii. 1. How did he grieve when  
 by reason of his Banishment he was de-  
 prived of this Mercy ? *Psal.* xlii, 1, 2, 3, 4.  
 How did he envy the very Birds that  
 could go nearer to God's Altar than him-  
 self, *Psal.* lxxxiv. 1, 2, 3, 4. How doth  
 he beg to be restored to his former Li-  
 berty, that he might freely go to the  
 House of God again ? *Psal.* xliii. 2, 3.  
 preferring

Vol. VIII. preferring it before all other Joys, *Pfal.*  
 84. 10. And questionless, all those who  
 are holy as *David* was, cannot but find  
 the same Delight in worshipping and a-  
 doring God as he did, they cannot but  
 find these ways of Wisdom to be *the ways*  
*of Pleasantness and Peace.*

4. Meditating upon God and Christ,  
 upon Heaven and the Glories of the World  
 to come, is a Duty no less pleasant than  
 profitable to the Saints of God: For by  
 this means they have their Conversation  
 always in Heaven, there solacing their  
 Souls in the Contemplation of Divine  
 Perfections. As the lustful Man is de-  
 lighted with beholding of Earthly Beauty,  
 and the covetous with his worldly Riches;  
 so, and much more, he that is Heavenly  
 and Godly must needs be delighted with  
 meditating upon God and Heaven, Ob-  
 jects agreeable to his Temper and Consti-  
 tution: Insomuch that we may boldly  
 say, that there is no Pleasure like to his  
 who always dwells in Heaven, conversing  
 with those transcendent Beauties, Glories,  
 and Perfections that are there. This is  
 that which *David* found so sweet and plea-  
 sant to his Soul, *Pfal.* civ. 33, 34.

5. Receiving the Sacrament of the  
 Lord's Supper; this you cannot but ac-  
 knowledge to be the highest Refreshment  
 that

that a true Saint can ever attain to in Serm. XI.  
this Life: For here we eat and drink the   
mystical Body and Blood of Christ, feed  
upon Angels Food, the Bread of Life that  
came down from Heaven, *Job. vi. 35, 55,*  
*56.* Here we sit down with Christ him-  
self at his own Table, and have nothing  
less than all the Merits of his Death and  
Passions displayed and set before us, which  
true Saints cannot but account to be the  
best Banquet, the most pleasant Feast that  
they ever were or can be invited to in  
this World. And if the Duties which Wis-  
dom requires to be performed, afford so  
much Comfort and Delight to them that  
duly perform them, what then shall we  
think of the Pleasures which a good  
Man taketh in the Exercise of all true  
Grace and Vertue? What shall we think  
of it? why, that it is certainly far greater  
than we are able to think it, for no Man  
can conceive it but he that hath it. But  
that you may understand something of it,  
I desire you to consider the true Nature  
of Piety; that it consisteth in the right  
Temper and Disposition of the Mind, re-  
ducing all its Powers and Faculties into  
their proper Frame and Constitution; so  
that it may be justly termed the Health  
and Soundness of the Soul, as all Vices  
are Diseases and Distempers in it. And  
therefore,



therefore, as an healthful and sound Body is not only free from Pains and Aches, but all its natural Motions are pleasing and delightful to it: So is it with the Pious Soul, all pious and vertuous Actions being agreeable to its Nature, the exerting of them cannot but be very grateful and pleasant to it. As when such a Soul exerciseth itself in loving of God, and longing after him, in trusting on him and rejoicing in him, and the like; such Acts as these are the natural Products of that Grace and Vertue which is sown in the Heart: So that the Man would do violence to his renewed Nature, if he should not exert them; and therefore he cannot but take extraordinary Delight in the exerting or acting of them. The same may be said of all other Graces and Vertues whatsoever, as Faith, Humility, Self-Denyal, Temperance, Patience, Truth, Faithfulness, Justice, Meekness, Charity, and whatsoever else it is that the Hearts and Lives of true Saints are adorned withal: For such Acts as these flowing naturally from a Pious Soul, renewed and assisted always by the Grace of God, they cannot but always carry a secret kind of Pleasure and Delight along with them, which none can perceive much less partake of, but the Soul from whence they flow.

But



But besides this Agreeableness that there Serm. XI.  
 is betwixt all Acts of Piety and Pious Souls, he that sincerely performeth those Duties and exerciseth those Graces which God requires, thereby enjoys Peace of Conscience, even unspeakable Joy and Satisfaction in his Mind, arising from the Sense and Consideration that he hath done his Duty, and so that God is pleased with him : For the Apprehension of God's Love and Favour is certainly the greatest Pleasure and Happiness that Men or Angels are capable of. But according to our Obedience to God's Laws, so generally is our Sense of his Love to us ; If we have sincerely endeavoured to observe whatsoever he hath commanded, we have just Grounds to hope for Christ's sake he will accept of us, and is well-pleas'd with us, which must needs affect us with extraordinary Joy and Comfort, as it did *St. Paul*, *2 Cor*, i. 12. And this is that which none of you but may often experience in yourselves : For when you have been conscious to yourselves of some wilful and notorious Sin, have not your Consciences often flown in your Faces, and raised Storms and Tempests in your Breasts ready to sink you every Moment into Horrour and Despair ? And so also on the other Side when you have faithfully discharged your

A a                      Duties,

Vol. VIII. Duties, and kept your Consciencés void of offence towards God and Man, have you not then found your Consciencés clear, your Minds serene, and your whole Souls transported into Pleasure and Satisfaction, at the Apprehension and Remembrance of it? I know you have, for so it is with them that walk only by the Light of Nature, *Rom. ii. 14, 15.* And if it be so with them, how much more with such as are guided by the Light of the Gospel, and assisted with the Principles of true Graces: Their Blessed Souls must needs be affected with extraordinary Joy and Comfort at the Sense of their serving and pleasing God; especially considering that every Pious Man hath firm and sure Ground whereupon to build the Hopes of his Acceptance with God, even the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, which he steadfastly believes in, and relies continually upon, as having the Word of God himself for it; that what he sincerely endeavours to do is acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, *1 Pet. ii. 5.* And whosoever believes this, as be sure every Pious Man doth, he cannot but take unspeakable Delight in obeying God, because he believeth that for Christ's sake God is pleased with what he doth, and accepts of it as well, as if it was every way as perfect  
and

and exact as the Law itself requires it should be, which is certainly so great, so high a Comfort, that they who experience it in themselves, can never be able to express it to others, 1 *Pet.* i. 8. Serm. XI.

Thus therefore you see what Peace and Pleasure there is in the ways of Wisdom, even in the several Acts of Piety which they who are truly godly continually exercise themselves in. The Last Thing I promised to shew you is, wherein the Pleasures which they enjoy who constantly serve and obey God, do far exceed all the Sensual Delights of this World; wherein I shall endeavour to demonstrate to you, that they who devote themselves wholly to the Service of God, live the most pleasant and comfortable Lives of any Men in the World; yea that they are the only Men that know what Pleasure and Comfort means, and by Consequence, that the ways of Wisdom are not only the ways of Pleasantness, but the only ways of Pleasantness that it is possible for any of you to walk in.

For first of all, other Pleasures only tickle the Senses and delight the Fancies of Men, and so have no other Being nor Existence in the World but what our deluded Imaginations give them: Abstract your Fancy from all things here below,

Vol. VIII. and what will then become of your Pleasure in them? How soon will it vanish into Smoak and Vapours, yea into Vanity and Vexation of Spirit; think Gold Dirt, and it is so; think the Pomp and Glory of this World to be a mere Dream and Shadow, and it is so; think Lust and Luxury, Drunkenness and Gluttony, to be beastly and brutish Fooleries, and they are so: For those are Things that Fools and Mad-men, yea the brute Beasts themselves take as much seeming Pleasure in as the soberest and learnedst Men can do; and therefore we should never fancy any thing of Pleasure in such things as these are, were not our Imaginations so fearfully corrupted and depraved, as to present every thing in a wrong shape, and under false Colours to us: For we are all Men, Rational Creatures made after the Image of God, endowed with Spiritual and Immortal Souls, as well as with Frail and Corruptible Bodies; and therefore it cannot in Reason be imagined but that far other and higher Delights were designed for us, than such as brute Beasts themselves partake of as well as we.

But the Pleasures which the Saints enjoy are quite of another Nature; they are not seated in the Body or Senses, but the Soul itself is the Subject of them; and  
all



all its Powers and Faculties are affected Serm. XI.  
and delighted with them. And therefore  
our Saviour, to distinguish them from all  
other Pleasures, calls them the Rest or Hap-  
piness of our Souls, *Mat. xi. 28, 29.* The  
Things of this World may something ease  
and refresh our Bodies, but they cannot  
reach the Soul at all, so as to afford it  
any thing of Comfort and Satisfaction;  
and therefore it was a foolish thing for  
the Rich Man in the Gospel, to say to his  
Soul, *Take thine ease,* because his Worldly  
Goods were increased, as you see he did,  
*Luk. xii. 17, 18, 19.* But you know who  
called him Fool for his pains, even no less  
a Person than the Great God himself, *v. 20.*  
He was a Fool indeed that thought his  
Earthly Riches could give Ease to his  
Soul; no, none but Christ can e'er do that,  
neither doth he ever do it to any but the  
truly Pious. They may say indeed to their  
Souls, Souls take your Ease, for you have  
Goods Real, Spiritual, and Eternal; Goods  
laid up for you, not only for many Years  
but for ever and ever. But this is more  
than any one else can say, and therefore  
they must be acknowledged to be the on-  
ly Persons that enjoy true Peace and Plea-  
sure in the World; such Peace and Plea-  
sure as becomes a Man, a Christian, a  
Saint to solace and delight himself conti-  
nually

Vol. VIII. usually in, the Soul itself being the proper and immediate Subject of it, as *David* himself found, *Psal. xciv. 19.*

2. As the Pleasures which arise from Piety exceed all others in the Subject, so do they in the Object too; whatsoever Sensitive Pleasures Men enjoy, they are no more nor greater, nor better than what the silly Creatures upon Earth can afford them: They look no higher than this lower World, and if they can make a shift to pick up something that looks like Pleasure in it, they are beholden to the very inanimate and senseless Creatures for it. Thus the Covetous Man takes Pleasure in refined Dirt, the Epicure in Meats and Drinks, the vain-glorious Man in empty Titles of Honour, and every one but he that is sincerely pious, can find no other Pleasure in the World but what he is forced to fetch from Sensible and Terrestrial Objects, as being the only things that he converseth with, although they were never intended to make Men happy.

But it is not so with the Sons of Wisdom, with those who are born again and so become the Children of the Most High. They feed not like Swine upon the Husks of this lower World, but have their Heads and Hearts continually taken up with the Contemplation and Enjoyment of the  
 Chiefest


Chiefest Good, the Eternal God himself; Serm. XI.  
 or at least, with longing and thirsting  
 after him, and with rejoycing at every  
 Intimation that they have of his Love and  
 Kindness to them: So that he that is the  
 only Center of all Perfections is the only  
 Object of their Joy and Pleasure. *The*  
*Light of his Countenance*, that is, the Ma-  
 nifestation of his Grace and Mercy to  
 them, is the only good that they desire  
 or rejoice in, *Psal. iv. 6, 7.* Hence such  
 as are truly wise and godly, disdain-  
 ing to converse with nothing else but Dirt  
 and Clay, as silly Mortals upon Earth do,  
*their Conversation is in Heaven*, *Phil. iii.*  
*20.* There are all the Wealth and Trea-  
 sures, the Joys and Pleasures that are the  
 Objects of their Desires, and therefore their  
 Thoughts and Affections are always there,  
*Col. iii. 2.* And as there is nothing upon Earth,  
 so neither is there any thing in Heaven  
 but God, which they desire or rejoice in,  
*Psal. 73. 25.* All the World, the whole  
 Creation is nothing to a Godly Man;  
 the Eternal God, the Creator himself is  
 the Portion of their Cup and the Lot of  
 their Inheritance: He is their Hope and  
 Help, their Joy and Desire, their Light  
 and Love, their Strength and Tower,  
 their Wealth and Riches, their Sun their  
 Shield, and their exceeding great Reward;

He is their All, their more than All, their God. And seeing this the Supreme and Universal Being of the World is the only Object of a Saint's Delight, the ways of Wisdom must needs be acknowledged to surpass all other ways in Pleasantness and Peace, as much as Heaven doth Earth, and the Infinite Creator all Finite Creatures.

3. The Pleasures which Saints enjoy, exceed all others in their Properties: For,

1. They are true and solid, pure and unmixt Pleasures, which cannot be said of the Sensual Delights of this World, which are always ushered in, attended and followed with Grief and Trouble; they are no Pleasures until some preceding Pain or Sorrow makes them so: And as they begin, so they go on and end with Sadness, as *Solomon* himself that made as much Tryal of them as ever Man did, found by his own Experience, and therefore hath expressly asserted it, *Prov. xiv. 13.* But it is not so with the godly; their Joys are real and substantial, pure and sincere Joys, without any Mixture or Allay of Trouble with them, *Prov. x. 22.* Their Joys depend not upon the Constitution of their Bodies, but the right Disposition of their Minds, which being always preserved  
in



in a due Temper, their Pleasures are not Serm. XI.  
 subject to such Changes and Vicissitudes   
 as others are, but their Hearts are always  
 fixed trusting upon God, *Psal.* cxii. 7.  
 Hence also,

2. They are firm and constant Pleasures, not like the uncertain Delights of sinful Men which ebb and flow with the Stream of Worldly Prosperity, and depend altogether upon the unconstant Smiles of Fortune in this World: They are merry and jolly while they prosper, but let them be but deprived of any Part of their Estates, crossed in their Relations or Designs, or howsoever let them but be laid upon a sick Bed, and then all their Pleasure's gone, nothing they have can afford them any Comfort or Relief, but their Thoughts trouble them, and every thing seems sad and sorrowful to them. No, the Pleasures of Piety are not such as these; they are not taken from any Sublunary Objects, and therefore do not encrease or wain with them: But the good Man is as chearful when the World frowns as when it smiles upon him; howsoever the World goes with him, it is all one to him, he is still the same; though he lose all things here below, he loseth nothing of his Joy; for that was placed only upon God before, and so it is still, *Hab.* iii. 17. So  
 that

Vol. VIII. that in the midst of all his Thoughts within him, the Comforts of God still rejoyce and delight his Soul, *Psal.* xciv. 19. Yea though he be upon his Sick, his Death-bed, his Comfort still remains, his Sickness cannot be so painful and tormenting to his Body, but the Testimony of a good Conscience is still as pleasing and supporting to his Soul, *Isa.* xxxviii. 3.

3. The Pleasures of the Righteous are full and satisfying. The Things of this World are all so vain and empty, that whatsoever Men fancy they can never be satisfied with them, *Eccles.* i. 8. And the Reason is, because the Soul is capable of more than all this World; and therefore his Desires being as large as his Capacities, can never be satisfied with any thing, or all things in it: But the godly Man drinks continually at the Fountain-head, the inexhaustible Fountain of all true Joy and Happiness; God himself is the only Object of his Delight, in whom he cannot but rest fully satisfied, being not able to desire more than he hath in him, *Pf.* xvii. 15. *Isa.* lv. 1, 2, 3.

4. The Pleasures of this World are but Sensual and Brutish, no better than the very Beasts themselves enjoy as well as you: But the Joys of the Godly are Angelical and Divine; such Joys as the Cherubims and Sera-

Seraphims, the Angels and Archangels enjoy in Heaven; yea such as God himself enjoys: For what does he rejoyce in but himself, and what do they rejoyce in but only him? *Phil. iv. 4.* And therefore, if you would know what Joys there are in Heaven, you must look into a Saint's Breast, there you may see them represented as clearly as they can be in this World; but you cannot read or understand them, unless yourselves be the Saints ye look into.

5. The Pleasures of this Life: They are at the best but the Pleasures of this Life, when this Life is ended you must leave them all, so as never to return to them again. But instead of present Pleasures and Delights, you'll have Grief and Sorrow, Pain and Torment, Misery and Desolation for evermore: But it is not so with the Joys of Saints; they are begun in this Life, and perfected in the Life to come, so as to continue in their Lustre and Beauty, in their Height and Perfection unto all Eternity, *Psal. xvi. 11.* Neither will they only last for ever, but that the Saints shall know and be assured of too, which will be a great Addition to them; for the very Thoughts of losing those Pleasures, as you must lose yours, would damp all the Comfort they take

Vol. VIII. take in them: But no Fear of that;   
 No, they are not such Pleasures as Time can consume, or Eternity itself diminish; but he that enjoys them once, will be certain to enjoy them for ever.

Thus now you see that the ways of Wisdom are not only the ways of Pleasantness, but of such Pleasantness that no other Pleasures in the World can either surpass or equalize it. From whence observe,

1. The great Mistakes that are in the World concerning Piety, as if it was a melancholy and disconsolate Course of Life; whereas it is plain, that no Persons in the World enjoy such Pleasures as the Godly do, nay none enjoy any true Pleasure at all but they: They are the only Spiritual *Dives's* that fare deliciously every Day, the rest of Mankind being altogether unacquainted with true Joy and Comfort, true Peace and Pleasure, because they walk not in the ways of Wisdom.

2. Hence see the Folly and Madness of Sinful Men, who embrace the Shadow for the Substance, and take up with seeming instead of real Joys: They are always thirsting after Pleasure but can never be satisfied with it, until they be sanctified and made truly holy. And therefore, as  
 ever



ever you desire to lead chearful and com- Serm. XI.  
fortable, pleasant and happy Lives, either  
in this World or that which is to come,  
without any more ado consecrate your-  
selves to God, and make it your Business  
to please him, walk continually in the  
ways of Wisdom, performing your Duty  
both to God and Man; and then you'll  
have Pleasure indeed: such Pleasure as the  
World can neither give nor take from  
you; such Pleasure as will refresh your  
Minds, comfort your Hearts, support your  
Spirits, rejoyce your Souls in all Condi-  
tions, and so make you happy both now  
and for ever.

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The

The Advantages of being  
Holy.

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I N A  
S E R M O N


On I TIM. IV. 8.

*For bodily exercise profiteth little: but Godliness is profitable unto all things.*

**W**ELL might the Prophet say, *The heart of Man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?* For who ever yet could fathom the bottom of his own Heart, or thoroughly understand what himself would have? Who ever yet was acquainted with all the concavities and secret recesses that  
are

are in his own Breast, so as really to know himself? Or who ever yet could say that his Heart was faithful to him, or that he was faithful to himself? Certainly very few, if ever any; as might easily be demonstrated from the strange Paradoxical and Self-contradicting Actions, that Men do generally commit. They believe there is a God, and yet they will not strive to serve him; they look for a future Judgment, and yet they will not prepare for it; they know there is an Hell to punish Sinners, and yet they will be Sinners still; they hope to go to Heaven when they die, and yet will not look after it while they live; they condemn Sin, and yet they will commit it; they commend Holiness, and yet they will not practice it: Nay, for all that Men desire to be happy, and know there is no other way to be so, but by being Holy, yet it is the hardest matter in the world to persuade them to be or to live Holy. Insomuch, that although we come unto you in the Name of God, exhort, sollicite, advise and charge you, time after time, to devote yourselves, and all you have, to the Service and Honour of Almighty God; and although you cannot but in your Consciences acknowledge, that it is both your Duty and Interest to do so, yet you will not be prevail'd upon to do it,  
only

Serm. XII.  
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Vol. VIII.  only because you will not: So desperately wicked, deceitful and perverse is the Heart of Man become, that nothing but Omnipotence itself is able to affect or move it.

Howsoever, seeing it is by the Ministry of his Word, that God is pleased to draw off your Hearts from Sin, and to incline them effectually to himself; whether you will be faithful to yourselves or no, we are bound to be faithful to you, and to use all means imaginable, which, by the Blessing and Assistance of Almighty God, may any ways conduce to the making you in love with Piety, and seriously to endeavour after the practice of it. And amongst the many means that may be used to this end, I know none more probable to effect it, than to represent Holiness to you under the notion of such things as you are most apt to be taken withal: But there are Three Things especially which all Mankind is affected with and very much desire, Pleasures, Honours and Profit. Not to insist upon the other now, Profit is a Thing that all look after; for none would be Poor that can be Rich. And how much soever a Man hath, he is still willing if not desirous to have more. This is that which makes some dig into the bowels of the Earth, and others to dive into the bottom
of

of the Sea to find it. This is that which keeps some at Home, and sends others Abroad to look after it. This is that which confines some to their Shops, and makes others trudge about the World, encompassing both Sea and Land to search for it. Indeed Profit is the universal Engine of the World, that draws Mens Hearts and Affections, yea both their Souls and Bodies which way soever it turns. Whatsoever it is wherein any Thing of Gain or Advantage is to be had, no Man but would willingly be a sharer in it. Insomuch, that could I direct you to a way wherein you might all infallibly double your Estates in this World, I dare say, there is none of you but would thankfully embrace the Motion, and prosecute it with all your might and main; and that by reason of the natural desire that is in all Mankind of having and enjoying much. And verily, although I cannot pretend to be so cunning and ingenious as yourselves are, to find out ways how to encrease your temporal Estates, and to manage them for the best Advantage in this World; yet I dare assure and promise you in the presence of Almighty God, that I can direct you to such a course of Life as will be really profitable and advantageous for you. And that is, to devote yourselves wholly

Vol. VIII. to the Service and Honour of God, or to
 live godly and religious Lives, by which
 you may certainly get not only much
 more than you have, but as much as you
 can possibly desire. For this way of Living
 would bring you in a constant Income of
 true and lasting Riches; there being no-
 thing that you can in reason or justice de-
 sire, but by this means you may undoubt-
 edly gain it to yourselves. But, because
 you may not think me a competent Judge
 in matters of Gain or Profit, I shall wave
 my own Judgment in the case, and ap-
 peal to him whose Judgment is beyond
 exception, even to the All-wise God him-
 self, who cannot but be acknowledged to
 understand infinitely better than you and
 I do, what is and what is not good and
 profitable for us. And if you consult his
 Judgment and Opinion concerning it, you
 need not go far to find it; for he hath
 plainly and expressly declared it to you,
 by his holy Apostle, in the Words I have
 now read, *For bodily exercise, &c.* which
 Words did you but clearly understand and
 firmly believe what is contained in them,
 you would not need any other Arguments
 to persuade you to use the best of your
 endeavours after Godliness. And there-
 fore I shall endeavour to give you the full
 meaning and purport of them; and shew

you likewise what just Grounds you have *Serm. XII.* really and firmly to believe the Truth as-
serted in them.

Here therefore, First by bodily Exercise we are to understand such Exercises of the Body as are wont to be undertaken by some upon a religious Account, as Abstinence from some kinds of Meats, from Wines, from Marriage, and the like, wherein many in the Primitive, yea even in the Apostolical Times, as well as now, placed a great Part of their Religion; for it is of such kind of bodily Exercises that the Apostle is here treating, *v. 1, 2, 3, 4.* Now such bodily Exercise, if it be not observed upon right Grounds, and kept within its proper Limits, as if Meats be abstained from as unlawful, and Marriage as in itself detestable, as some of old did, then before it becomes both sinful and dangerous, as the Apostle intimates, *Col. ii. 22.* But if it be undertaken only as an Act of Self-Denial, out of a Desire to keep the Body under, and to make no Provision for the Flesh, then it may be somewhat acceptable unto God, as carrying along with it a shew of Piety, *Col. ii. 23.* And therefore, such kind of bodily Exercise may be, yea is *ωφέλιμος πρὸς ὀλίγον, profitable for a little,* or as we here render it, *it profiteth little,* that is, there is something of Profit in it,

Vol. VIII. at least for some time as some expound
 the Words *πρὸς ὀλίγον*, for a little time,
 a notable Instance whereof we have in
Abab, 1 Kings xxi. 27, 28, 29.

But whatsoever Profit we may reap from such bodily Exercises, be sure it is little or nothing in comparison of the great Advantages which accrue unto us by real and universal Piety: *For bodily exercise, saith he, profiteth little, but Godliness is profitable for all things; that is, ὠφέλιμος πρὸς ὀλίγον, this πρὸς πάντα, that is profitable for some things, this for all things whatsoever; which you'll all acknowledge to be a large Encomium of Godliness, and that which must needs render it very acceptable unto all Men, all Men being ready to catch at every thing that will bring them in any Profit, much more surely at that which is profitable for all things. Insomuch that I am willing to persuade myself, that hearing of these Words you cannot but be very desirous to know both what this Godliness is, which is here asserted to be so profitable a thing, and likewise how it appears to be so; both which I shall endeavour to explain unto you.*

As for the First, what Godliness is: In few Terms it is nothing else but the Rectitude or right Temperament and Disposition
 of

of the whole Man, every Faculty of the Soul and Member of the Body being reduced into its Primitive Conformity to the Laws and Commands of God: So that as the Sun, Moon and Stars, and all other inanimate Creatures, keep the Stations, observe the Motions, and act according to the Rules which were at first prescribed them; so he that is truly godly, all his Thoughts, his Words, and Actions, move regularly according to the Will of the first Mover, the Supreme Being of the World, still keeping themselves within the bounds that he hath set, and discharging the several Offices and Duties which he that made them did at first enjoin them. And therefore it doth not exert and manifest itself only in some few particular Acts of our Life, but in the Devotion of ourselves, and our Lives wholly unto him in whom we live. To this agrees the Description which St. Basil gives of Holiness or Sanctification, Ἀγιασμός ἐστὶ τὸ ἀνακεῖσθαι τὰ ἀγαθὰ θεῷ ἐξ ὁλοκλήρου, *Holiness is the devoting of ourselves wholly to the most holy God*, sincerely studying and endeavouring at all times to do those things which are pleasing and acceptable unto him, which Notion of Godliness is imported also in the Word here used by the Holy Ghost for it: For what we render

Vol. VIII. Godliness, in the Original is *εὐσέβεια*, which properly signifies, the right worshipping of God, which consisteth principally in testifying our Acknowledgment of his Power and Authority over us, by conforming our Lives and Actions wholly to his revealed Will and Pleasure. And hence it is too, that we call it Godliness, or Likeness to God, because by this means we are in our Capacity and Degree, *holy as he is holy, in all manner of Conversation.* This therefore is that Godliness which the Apostle here speaks of, even such an excellent Temper and Constitution of the Mind, whereby we serve and honour, please and obey God, to the utmost of our Power in every thing we set our Hands, our Heads or Hearts about. This is that Godliness which is here said to be profitable for all things, which is the next Thing to be considered.

What it is for a Thing to be profitable, I need not tell you; for you all understand well enough that you reckon a Thing to be profitable, when it conduceth or helpeth towards your getting something that is good and advantageous for you; in which Sense Godliness is here said to be profitable, not only for some, or many, or most, but for all things whatsoever, because it is the way whereby we may attain to
all

all things whatsoever that is or can be necessary, convenient, or any ways good for us; so that as your Trades and Callings in the World are profitable to many of you as to some things, because they bring you in much worldly Gain or Profit, the Thing you so much covet, so Godliness is profitable for all things, because by it you may gain all things you can in reason desire or wish for, either in this Life or that which is to come: For indeed all good things whatsoever are promised to it, which is the Reason the Apostle here brings for this his Assertion, *That Godliness is profitable for all things*, because it hath the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.

Where we may observe, First, the strong Foundation that the Apostle lays his Assertion upon, grounding it upon nothing less than the Promise of God, which is certainly not only the surest but the only Ground that we either have or can have to believe that any thing shall be profitable to us, it being the Promise of Omnipotence itself, of him that rules and disposeth of all things in the World, He hath said and promised that Godliness shall be profitable to you, but not that any thing else shall be so: He never promised you that you should thrive in your Trades

or Callings: He never promised you that your Projects and Designs in the World should prove successful; or that the Care and Pains you take should stand you in any stead; if it doth, it is more than you could promise yourselves, for it is more than God ever promised to you: but he hath promised all good things whatsoever can be desired to Godliness, yea and hath Sealed his Promise too with the Blood of his only Son, 2 Cor. i. 20. And the Promises he hath made to it, are both for this Life and that which is to come, and so Godliness is profitable for all things in both.

I. As for this Life. It is certain that Godliness answers all the Concerns of it, and is profitable to all things in it. But because this is a Thing that you will not be easily perswaded of, I shall further explain and demonstrate it to you, and prove that Godliness, even in this Life, is not only more profitable than any thing else, but itself is profitable unto all things; for you'll all grant me, that that which conduceth to the getting of Estates before you have them, to the keeping of them when you have got them, to the Enjoyment of them while you keep them, and to the Improvement of them while you enjoy them, and will profit you also in all things else wherein your Estates can be no way serviceable

serviceable to you; you'll all grant, I say, Serm. XII. that this must needs be profitable unto all things, but such is Godliness: For,

1. It is profitable as to the getting Estates in this Life; such Estates especially as are most convenient and necessary for every Man to have, for it secures to a Man a sufficient Maintenance and Subsistence in this Life, as firmly as Truth and Omnipotence itself can do it, *Matt. vi. 33.* So that he that takes care to please and obey God, need take care of nothing else, for God himself will take care of all things else for him; and besides that, Godliness hath the Blessing of God always attending it, which is the only thing that maketh rich, *Prov. x. 22.* And that God's Blessing shall always go along with Godliness, is expressly promised by God himself, *Deut. xxviii. 1, 2, 3, 4.* So that he that is godly is sure to be provided for; he is sure to have as much in this World as is good and advantageous for him, which is far more than any other Man either is or can be. Nay Godliness in itself conduceth much to the getting Wealth and Riches even in this Life, because it brings a Man into that Credit and Repute in the World, that all Men will strive to deal with him, who deals truly and faithfully with all Men, as be
sure

Vol. VIII. sure every godly Man doth. Howsoever
 this is certain, that they who are truly
 godly shall never want any good things,
 for God himself hath passed his Word for
 that, *Psal. xxxiv. 9, 10. lxxxiv. 11.* and
 therefore, so far as any thing in this World
 is good for them, they are sure to have
 it. So that Godliness is profitable for
 the getting of all the real Goods, or good
 Things, of this Life. So it is too for the keeping of them
 when gotten, not only because it always
 moderates a Man's Affections; so that
 he'll be sure to live within the Compass
 of his Estate, and not squander it away
 upon Lust and Luxury, *Luke xv. 13, 14.*
 but likewise because God himself hath en-
 gaged to provide for him, and therefore
 to preserve what he hath given him for
 that purpose, which he certainly will do
 for all that trust in him, *Psal. xxxvii. 23,*
24, 25. xxxvii. 33. Dan. vi. 23. Jer.
xxxix. 17, 18. Godliness conduceth much also to
 the right Enjoyment of what we have.
 A wicked Man often wants what he hath,
Eccles. vi. 2. whereas a good Man always
 enjoys what he hath, *Eccles. v. 18, 19.*
 and oft-times what he hath not too, ta-
 king a great deal of Pleasure and Con-
 tentment, not only in his own but in
 others

others Estates too, rejoycing in the Goodness of God, that is so bountiful to others as well as himself, *Rom. xii. 15.*

4. And if you speak of improving your Estates, nothing doubtless conduceth so much to that as Godliness; for it will teach you how to manage every thing you have for the best Advantage: It will teach you how to make *Friends of the unrighteous mammon,* *Luke xvi. 9.* how to return your Estates into the other World, *Mat. vi. 20.* and how even in this Life to receive an hundred for one, *Job. 3.* compared with *Job xlii. 12.* he had two for one, Interest for all you have, *Mat. xix. 29. Mark x. 30.* And therefore Godliness must needs be acknowledged to be a very profitable thing indeed.

5. Where Riches can stand you in no stead at all, there too Godliness will be profitable to you: For Riches profit not in the day of wrath, but so doth Godliness, *Prov. xi. 14. Ezek. viii. 19. Psal. xlix. 16, 17.* Riches cannot profit you when you come to lie upon your Death-bed, but so can Godliness, *Isa. xxxviii. 1, 2, 3.* Riches while you have them cannot afford any Contentment or Satisfaction to you, but the more you have of them, the more thirsty you'll still be after them: But Godliness always breeds Content, and so becomes great Gain, *1 Tim. vi. 6.* Riches can




can never free your Hearts from Cares and Fears, but so doth Godliness: It makes a Man take no thought for this Life, *Mat. vi. 25.* It makes a Man repose his Trust wholly upon God, and to depend on him for all things necessary both for Life and Godliness; so that all things considered, the good Man is the only rich Man even in this Life: He hath all things he desires, for he desires nothing but what he hath: Though he may want something which others have, before he wants nothing that is good for him; for he hath one thing which is not only better than all things else, but profitable for all things too, even true Godliness, which whosoever is endowed with hath all good things secured to him both in this Life and that which is to come.

Thus therefore had we nothing else to mind but the Concerns and Affairs of this Life, yet Godliness must needs be acknowledged to be the most profitable and beneficial way of living that any one can possibly take to, as having the Promise of all good things even for this Life, both made and confirmed to it by him that cannot lye. Indeed though there was no such thing as a Promise made unto it, yet Godliness even of itself, in its own Nature may justly be accounted not only profitable but

Profit

Profit itself, the greatest Gain, the surest Riches, the most real Wealth that even in this Life we can ever be possessed of: For it keeps a Man's Mind continually in such an excellent Frame and Temper that doth not only answer all the Ends of other Riches, but makes him infinitely more happy than all the Riches in this World can do: For it raises a Man's Thoughts and Affections so far above the World, that he is never concerned or affected with any thing that happens in it to the Grief and Disturbance of others; but whatsoever Storms and Tempests arise without him, he hath still Calmness and Tranquility, Peace and assured Confidence within. Hence it is that God himself gives the Name of Riches to the several Acts of Holiness: For the godly Man is said to be *rich towards God*, Luke xii. 21. For he is *rich in faith*, Jam. ii. 5. and *rich in good works*, 1 Tim. vi. 18. So he may be said to be rich in Love towards God, rich in Charity, rich in Sobriety, rich in heavenly mindedness, rich in Humility, rich in all true Grace and Vertue whatsoever. These are true Riches indeed, and let me have such Riches as these are, and do you take the Riches of this World, I'll assure you I shall never envy you for them, but rather pity you as poor and beggarly Creatures, naked and destitute

Vol. VIII.  destitute of every thing that is really good for you and necessary to make you happy, whereas he that is truly godly, is certainly as happy as it is possible for a Creature to be in this World, and all because he is godly ; so that should we look no farther than this Life, Godliness must needs be acknowledged to be profitable for all things in it.

But why do I speak so much of this short, this transient, this uncertain Life we lead in this World, when Godliness hath the Promise not only of this Life but likewise of that which is to come, which as far exceeds this Life as Light doth Darkness, or Heaven Earth : For here by the Life to come we are to understand all the Joys and Glories of Heaven, which are all promised to true Godliness or Piety, as is plain from the whole Tenure both of the Law and Gospel ; yea so plain that I need not undertake to prove it to you, there being none of you I am confident that doubt of it : But that if you be godly here, you shall live in Heaven, and be happy for ever. But the principal thing I am here to do, is to possess you with such a Sense of the Joys of Heaven, and of the Excellency of that Happiness which is there promised to the godly, that you may all for the future be fully perswaded of this great Truth,

Truth, that you will gain infinitely more Serm. XII.
by being godly than you can by any other way of living whatsoever; or that the Profit which by the Mercies of God, and the Merits of Jesus Christ you will receive, if you be truly pious, doth far exceed all the Wealth and Riches which you can ever attain to in this Life, which I shall endeavour to do by comparing the Riches which the godly enjoy in the Life to come, with those which you have or labour for in this, or rather by shewing that there is no Comparison at all betwixt them: For,

1. The Profit which we shall receive by Godliness is true and real, which cannot be said of the Wealth and Riches of this World, which have no real Being in themselves, nor any other Existence but what they receive from the Delusions of Men's Distracted Fancies: For Gold and Silver, for Example, are no further Riches than as they are thought to be so; and were not our Thoughts and Imaginations corrupted and deceived, we should never have put the Name of Riches upon them, as you may easily gather from the Apprehensions that Glorified Saints and Angels have of them: For their Judgments and Opinions of things being always true and perfect, they can find nothing of real Profit

or

Vol. VIII. or Excellency in one Piece of Dirt more than in another, although it may shine a little more gloriously in the Eyes of deluded Mortals. Hence our Saviour himself makes Earthly Riches to have no other Subsistence but only in Mens Thoughts or Fancies, *Luk. viii. 18.* Yea *Solomon* makes them to have no Being at all, *Prov. xxiii. 5.* Not as if those things which are accounted Riches had no real Existence in themselves, but that they have no Existence at all in the proper Notion of Riches, or they are not Riches properly so called, but are only thought or fancied to be so by deluded Mortals, who give the Name of Riches to Houses, and Lands, and Money, and such like things which cannot in themselves profit, or do them any good, and therefore are very falsely called Riches or Goods ; and yet these are all the Riches that all your Care and Pains, your Cunning and Industry for this World can bring you.

But now the Profit that accrues by Godliness is quite of another Nature ; it is real Profit, true Wealth, substantial Riches indeed, such as make the Owners rich in the Eye of Angels, yea of God himself : For Godliness entitles a Man to every thing imaginable that can any ways conduce to make him happy ; it gains an Interest in
 God,

God, and in all the Perfections of the Di-
vine Nature an Interest in Christ, and in
all the Merits of his Death and Passion; an
Interest in the Holy Ghost, and in all the
Graces and Comforts that flow from him;
what is if this be not true Profit indeed,
thus to be interested in him who is all
things in himself? What are all the Riches
of this World, if compar'd with these?
What if you can say such Houses are my
Houses, such Lands are my Lands, such
Wares, such Money, or such Bonds are
mine? What is this to a Man that can
say, God is mine, his Mercies are mine to
pardon me, his Wisdom is mine to direct
me, his Power is mine to protect me, his
Grace is mine to make me holy, and all
his Perfections are mine to make me hap-
py, *Psal. cxliv. 15.* For he is my God. Of
such a one I would say, Behold a rich
Man indeed, one that hath thriven so well
in the World that he hath got more than
the whole World itself is able to afford
him; one that wants nothing, nothing
that is necessary, nothing that is good,
nothing that is or can be any ways pro-
fitable or advantageous for him, because
he hath and enjoys God, in whom all
things desirable are concentred: Yet thus
rich and wealthy is every truly good and
godly Man; he is entitl'd to all these glo-



rious things even in this Life, and in the Life to come hath actual Possession of them, and all because he is a godly Man, one that fears God and keeps his Commandments, and believes in Jesus Christ for Pardon and Acceptance, according to the Tenure and Purport of the Gospel; and therefore they who are truly godly must needs be acknowledged not only to be rich Men, but to be the only rich Men in the World, in Comparison of whom no one else can be properly called rich whatsoever outward Enjoyments he may possess: For theirs are real and substantial Riches, his nothing but Dreams and Fancies, Clouds and Shadows, the mere Chimeras of his own distracted Brain.

2. The Profit that comes by Godliness is full and satisfying, which the Riches of this World are not; for they are not only vain and empty, but even Vanity and Emptiness itself: So *Solomon* you know calls all things here below, *Eccl. i. 2.* And who ever yet was satisfied with Vanity? No, no surely; if No, Satisfaction is a thing that this World never did nor can afford to a Rational Soul, which is able to desire infinitely more than all things in this World, and therefore we may be confident that nothing in this World is able to satisfy its Desires: Nay it is to be observed, that the things of this World are
so

so far from satisfying our Desires, that the more we have of them, the less we are generally satisfied with them; but the more we have the more we crave, our Desires still running *in infinitum*, and by Consequence never resting satisfied until we come to the Enjoyment of the Infinite God, which we can never come to without Godliness, which is the only way that leads to the Enjoyment of this infinite good, in whom alone our infinite Desires can be ever satisfied: For Godliness hath the Promise not only of this but also of the Life to come, which consisteth wholly in the Vision and Fruition of God, the Center wherein all infinite Perfections meet; and therefore it is profitable for the obtaining of such Riches, more than which it is impossible for us to desire, which therefore whosoever hath his Desires cannot but be fully terminated, and his Soul rest fully satisfied in what he hath. But whosoever is truly godly, is thus fully rich, not in Silver or Gold, not in Houses or Lands, but in God himself, the Chiefest, the Infinite, the All, the only Good, *in whose presence is fulness of joy*, Psal. xvi. II. insomuch that though all things in this World are not able to fill and satisfy one Soul, he of himself is able to fill and satisfy all the Souls in the whole World,



as he will do those who are truly godly in the Life to come, *Psal.* xvii. 15. Oh the Glory, the Happiness, the Riches of a Glorified Saint! How full, how excellent, how infinite is the Wealth that he hath gotten by being holy, in and through the Merits of Jesus Christ? Seeing he hath as much not only as he doth, but as he can desire? yea and infinitely more too, the Riches that he enjoys as far exceeding his Desires, as the Wealth of this World comes short of ours. How then are we able to forbear breaking forth into that Pathetical Expression, *Psal.* xlii. 1.

3. The Riches which Godliness in and thro' Christ produceth, are sure and constant; they are not like the Riches of this World, which make themselves Wings and fly away, *Prov.* xxiii. 5. They do not ebb and flow as all those sublunary Riches do, which never continue in one stay: But he that is rich to day may be as poor to morrow, and he that is poor to day may be as rich to morrow, and as poor again the day following, so uncertain and unconstant are all things here below; but so are not the Riches that are above: They never fail nor diminish in the least: No, there are no Bankrupts in Heaven: He that is once admitted a Citizen of the *New Hierusalem*, there is no fear of his ever breaking,

breaking, nor of his sustaining any Losses or Crosses either by Sea or Land; for all things are made as sure and firm to him as Omnipotence itself could make them: Neither have those blessed Souls any mixture of Grief or Trouble in the Bliss and Happiness they there enjoy, *Rev. xxi. 4.* They are never interrupted or hindered in the Enjoyment of what they have, but they constantly enjoy their Spiritual Estates with Joy and Satisfaction to the full; neither do they only enjoy them fully while they have them, but they always have them fully to enjoy.

4. And that is the Fourth Thing wherein the Profit that ariseth from Godliness infinitely surpasseth all the Riches of this Life: For the Riches of this Life, they are but the Riches of this Life, and so are more uncertain than Life itself; for you are never sure of them while you live, and you are sure to part with them when you die, *Luk. xii. 20.* Thus the rich Man that fared deliciously every day! when he is once dead, the next News we hear of him is, that the Man is in Hell, and hath not so much as a drop of Water to cool his enflamed Tongue, *Luk. xvi. 19, 20, 24.* How many such *Dives's* are there in the World, who whilst they are here, are accounted rich and wealthy, or to

Vol. VIII. speak in your own Dialect, Able Men, but when they go out of the World, they leave all they have behind them, which others presently fall a scrambling for, whilst themselves are ingulphed in Misery and Torment, no way able to help themselves; but it is not so with those who are rich towards God. As their Estates will never be taken from them, so neither will they be ever taken from their Estates. No, no Fear of that, once in Hell and for ever in Hell, and once in Heaven and for ever in Heaven. There are no Leases for any Terms of Years there; every thing they have, as what they have not, is firmly settled upon them for ever; every one hath his Life in his Estate, and that *an immortal and an eternal life*, Mat. xxv. 46. Every one hath *an inheritance incorruptible and that fadeth not away*, 1 Pet. i. 4. Every one hath his Mansion House, and that *eternal in the Heavens*, 2 Cor. v. 1. Every one *hath his fill of pleasures, and that for evermore*, Psal. xvi. 11. So infinitely doth the Profit that comes by Godliness, exceed the fading and impertinent Riches of this transient World.

But should I undertake to discourse so fully upon this Subject, as to shew you every thing wherein the Wealth of the godly surpasseth all other Riches, my
Discourse

Discourse must be like the Subject, infinite and eternal. And therefore I shall instance only in one more particular wherein the extraordinary Profitableness of Godliness may be easily seen, and that is, that by it a Man may certainly and infallibly attain to the Riches we have now been speaking of, which is infinitely more than can be said of the Things of this Life: For it is possible for a Man to use all the Art and Cunning that ever Man used to get Earthly Wealth and Riches and yet go without it when all is done. This many have found by their own Experience, who could never attain to any considerable Estate, do what they could. But after all their Care, and Pains, and Trouble, they have still been as poor and indigent as ever: But it is not so with Heavenly Riches which Godliness is profitable for; for never a Soul of you but may most certainly attain to them, that will but use the best of his Endeavours to live in all Godliness and Honesty; not by any Vertue that is in Godliness itself, as if that could merit such transcendent Riches as these are, but by reason of the Promise which is made to it, both for this Life, and also for that which is to come; which Promise being made by God himself who cannot lye, it cannot but be faithfully and



exactly performed, especially considering that it is Sealed and Confirmed too by the Blood of Jesus, who came into the World and died on purpose that they who believe and obey him, and so are godly Persons, *might have everlasting life*, Joh. iii. 14, 15, 16. Heb. vii. 25. 1 Joh. v. 10, 11. So that we have the World, the Testimony, the Promise of God himself, that if we be truly godly, we shall have *Eternal Life in Jesus Christ*, from whence we may confidently assert, that no true Saint ever missed of Heaven, or that true Godliness never yet was, nor ever can be unsuccessful or unprofitable to any, but that wheresoever it is, it is always profitable for all things.

Thus now you see what Godliness is good for, and how profitable a thing it is to all that sincerely follow after it, it being the only way whereby you may every one attain to true and real, to full and satisfying, to firm and constant, to eternal and everlasting Riches, and that as certainly and infallibly as if you were already in the actual Possession of them. Go to now all ye that admire and covet Riches, and see if you can find out any better way of thriving in the World than by serving God, if you can, follow it with all your *Might and Main*. Go to now
ye

ye that think it not worth your while to Serm. XII.
devote yourselves wholly to the Service
of God, that say with them in *Job*, c. xxi.
15. and in the Prophet *Mal.* iii. 14. Consi-
der what you have heard, and then tell
me whether you have any Cause to say so
or no; or rather whether you have not
all the Cause in the World to believe that
the Heavenly is indeed the most profita-
ble Calling you can be of, and that there
is more real Advantage to be got by ser-
ving God, than there is by all other Ar-
tifices, Designs and Practices whatsoever.
And therefore be advised to act according-
ly for the future; I know you all desire
to be rich, yea to be much richer than
you are, and it is my hearty Desire and
Prayer to Almighty God, that you may
be so too: But I am sure you can never
be truly rich unless you be truly pious,
and that all your Care and Pains about o-
ther things will stand you in no stead,
nor bring any real Profit at all unto you;
but if you sincerely follow after Godliness,
that you will infallibly find to be profitable
for all things you can desire; for God him-
self hath said it is so, and therefore all such
amongst you as are so wise as to prefer
God's Judgment before their own, as ever
you desire to be rich indeed, take this
Course; Call in for all your Thoughts and
Affections

The Advantages, &c.

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Affections from this World, and fix them only upon God; set your selves in good earnest to honour and obey him in all things you think, or speak, or do, firmly believing and trusting on Jesus Christ, for the Acceptance of your Persons and Performances, and then you'll be rich indeed, both in this Life and that which is to come.

The

The Exemplary Holiness of
the Primitive Christians.

I N A
S E R M O N

On ACTS II. 42.

*And they continued stedfastly in
the Apostles Doctrine and Fel-
lowship, and in breaking of
Bread, and in Prayers.*

HAVING this Opportunity of
Preaching the Word of God to
you, I heartily wish that I could
do it so effectually, that by his
Blessing upon it ye may all be the better
for it both in this Life and the next: For
otherwise my Preaching will be in vain,
and your Hearing also will be in vain;
and so it always will be, unless when you
hear

Vol. VIII. hear the Word, you receive it, as the *Theſſalonians* did, *not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe,* 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. In them who do not believe it hath no effect at all, but it works effectually upon all that do by the Holy Spirit of God working together with it, and ſetting it home upon their Hearts and Conſciences; as we ſee in this Chapter, where we find that by one ſhort Sermon that the Apoſtle *St. Peter* Preached, about three thouſand Souls were converted to the Faith of Chriſt: For it is here ſaid, *And they that gladly received his word, were baptized, and the ſame day there were added unto them about three thouſand Souls,* Ver. 41.

It is true, this was an extraordinary Caſe, the Holy Ghoſt being that day poured down in a miraculous manner upon the Apoſtles: And they to whom *St. Peter* then Preached, were all Jews, but receiving the Word with Faith, they turned to Chriſt, and were accordingly Baptized, and ſo made Chriſtians; and they were the firſt that were made ſo after our Lord's Aſcenſion into Heaven.

Whereas I am now to Preach to ſuch as are Chriſtians already: For I ſuppoſe you are all Baptized according to Chriſt's
Inſti-

Institution, and by that means made his Serm. XIII
Disciples, and Members of his Body : And
therefore I need not perswade you to be-
come Christians, but to believe and live
as becometh Christians to do ; and for that
purpose have chosen these Words from
whence to shew how you may and
ought to do, after the Example of these
first Converts to the Christian Religion,
of whom it is here said, that *they conti-
nued stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and
fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in
Prayers,* which is doubtless left upon Re-
cord by the Holy Ghost, on purpose that
we may all know what they did, and by
Consequence what we must do, that we
may always live in the true Faith of
Christ, so as to attain the End of our
Faith, even the Salvation of our Souls :
Where we may first observe in general,
that they did not think it enough to be
Baptized into Christ, but they still con-
tinued in him, doing all such things as
he had appointed, whereby to receive
Grace and Power from him, to walk as
becometh his Disciples ; and so must you,
if you desire to be saved by him : It is
your great Happiness that ye were by
Baptism admitted into the Church and
School of Christ, and so made his Disci-
ples and Scholars ; but unless you stay
there,

Vol. VIII. there, and learn and practise what ye are there taught, ye will be never the better, but rather the worse for it: For now ye are brought into a State of Salvation, unless ye continue to do what ye then promised, your Condemnation will be the greater, in that ye do not only break the Laws of God, but likewise the Promise you made him when ye were Baptized. And therefore ye had need to look about you, and take care to live in all respects as Christians ought to do; and for that purpose must follow the great Example of these first Converts to the Faith of Christ, who continued stedfastly in all the great Duties of the Christian Religion, which are here described and left upon Record for your Imitation.

First, *They continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine.* They did not only hearken to what the Apostles said, and believe what they taught, but they continued constant and stedfast in it, so as to believe nothing as necessary to Salvation, but what the Apostles taught them; but to believe every thing which the Apostles taught, being confident that they being acted and directed by the Spirit of God in what they taught, would never teach them any thing either false or impertinent, nothing but what was infallibly true

true and absolutely necessary for them to know and believe that they might be saved. And therefore they would not hearken to any Jewish Fables or Philosophical Speculations, nor yet to their own or other Mens private Opinions, but kept close to the Doctrine of the Gospel as delivered by the Apostles of Jesus Christ, the Founder of it, who gave them Authority to Preach it, and assisted them with his own Spirit in it, that they might be sure to Preach nothing but what he would have them.

Serm. XIII.

This the first Christians knew, and therefore would never give ear to any other Teachers but the Apostles themselves, and such as were sent and authorized by them to Preach the Gospel; and this indeed was one of the Doctrines which the Apostles taught, that Men should not hearken to any other Doctrine but what they taught, and keep fast to that. *Hold fast, saith St. Paul, the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. i. 13.* And St. Peter, writing to all Christians, saith, *This Second Epistle, Beloved, I write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the Holy Prophets, and of the Commandment of*
us

Vol. VIII. *us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour,*
 2 Pet. iii. 1, 2. The Prophets and Apostles being all acted by the same Spirit, what they commanded Men to believe and do, that was necessary to be accordingly believed and done, and nothing else: And therefore he adviseth all to continue steadfastly in their Doctrine, without minding what others said or taught.

And this certainly is the first and great thing that Christians in all Ages ought to be steadfast in, even in the Doctrine which Christ and his Apostles taught: For that is the Foundation of our whole Religion, without which all our Hopes of Salvation will fall to the Ground; for it is by this that we believe aright in God, and in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent: And it is by this also that we rightly understand our Duty to God and Man; and therefore without this we can neither believe nor live according to the Gospel of Christ, and by Consequence can never be saved by him.

Wherefore, as ever you hope to be saved, ye must be sure to continue steadfastly in the Doctrine which the Apostles of Christ by his Order and Direction delivered, at first by Word of Mouth, and afterwards in Writing, that all Generations might know it. By which Means we are
 now

now as fully assured of what the Apostles taught, as they could be which heard them Preach it. Their Doctrine being transmitted to us by the infallible Testimony of the Holy Ghost, by which they spoke and wrote it, in that Holy Book which we call the *New Testament*: So that whatsoever we there read as taught by the Apostles, we are sure was their Doctrine, and are therefore bound stedfastly to believe it, and diligently to frame our Lives according to it. But what we do not find there written, we can never be sure that they taught it, and therefore are not obliged to believe or observe it.

From hence ye may all see, the Excellency of our Church, in that it requires nothing to be believed as an Article of Faith, but what the Apostles first taught, and what the Church of Christ in all Ages hath believed to be consonant to the Doctrine delivered in their Writings. But whatsoever Opinion hath no Ground or Foundation in them, that ours together with the Catholick Church rejecteth as either utterly false, or at best not necessary to be believed. And therefore, in order to your continuing stedfastly, as the first Christians did in the Apostles Doctrine, the surest way is to keep close to the Doctrine of our Church contained in our



Articles and *Common Prayer Book*, which is plainly the same with that of the Apostles in all Points, without any Addition, Diminution or Alteration whatsoever, which is the great Glory of our Church, and should make you not only to continue firm and dutiful to it, but likewise to thank God that ye live in such a Church wherein ye are duly instructed in all the great Truths which Christ and his Apostles, taught and are required to believe nothing else as necessary to your being saved. By which means, as your Minds may be enlightened and your Hearts purified by that Faith which was once delivered to the Saints, so ye are secure from falling into any damnable Heresy, and from being corrupted or perplexed with any of those new and dangerous Opinions which the Ignorance and Superstition of After-ages have brought into the Church.

But, that you may thus continue in the Apostles Doctrine, ye must continue also in Fellowship or Communion with them, as the first Christians are here said to have done. For the understanding of which, we may observe that these Persons being now Baptized, according to Christ's Institution and Order, they were thereby admitted into the Number of his Disciples, and so were incorporated into him, and

made Members of that Body, of which he is Head, which is a distinct Society from the rest of Mankind, founded by Christ himself, under the Name of his Church, which he promised to be always with, and to direct, influence and assist with his own Holy Spirit, in the Use of those means that he had instituted and appointed to be there administered for our obtaining that Eternal Redemption and Salvation which he purchased for us with his own most precious Blood: And therefore it is here said, that *the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved, v. 47.* For which purpose he ordained and deputed his Apostles and their Successors in all Ages to instruct and govern the said Society called his Church, and to take care that all who are admitted into it, might have the said Means of Grace and Salvation duly administered to them, that so they might want nothing that is necessary to their being saved by his Merits and Mediation for them.

Now these Persons being of this Holy Society, *fellow citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God, Eph. ii. 19.* they always kept Company and held Communion or Fellowship with them, not only receiving and believing the Doctrine which the Apostles taught, but likewise obser-



ving the Rules and Orders which they appointed, and using all the means of Grace and Salvation as administred by them, and such as were deputed by them in the Name of Christ to do it, so as not to divide themselves into Parties and Factions, nor ever separate from that Holy Society into which they were admitted, under any Pretence whatsoever, but *continued stedfastly in the fellowship as well as doctrine of the Apostles.*

Now if you would be such excellent Persons as these first Converts to the Faith were, you must do as they did, in this as well as in other Points. It is your great Happiness that ye are of the same Apostolical Church which they were of, and therefore should *continue stedfastly in Fellowship or Communion with it*, as they are said to have done. It is true, there were no Schisms or Divisions in the Church then as there are now; but the Reason was, because the People did not make them, as many do in our days, who, notwithstanding that they are admitted into our Church, yet are so far from continuing stedfast in Communion with it, that they never think that they can separate themselves far enough from it. But let such do what they please, and take what follows. I must advise you in

his Name who laid down his own Life to save you, and hath brought you into his Church on purpose that ye might be saved by him, in his Name I advise and exhort you all to hold constant Communion with it, as in believing the Doctrine, so likewise in loving the Members, observing the Orders, submitting to the Discipline, and exercising yourselves continually in the means of Grace which are there administred to you: So long as ye do so, ye are in the ready way to Heaven, and if ye hold out to the last, ye will certainly come thither by him in whose Name I advise you to it: For while ye live in Communion with our Church, ye are sure to have all the Means which Christ hath appointed for your Salvation, faithfully administred to you, in the same way and manner that he appointed: Ye are sure to be instructed in all the Articles of the Christian Faith, and in your whole Duty both to God and Man: Ye are sure to pray together in such a Form, as both in the Matter, Method and Manner of it agrees exactly with the Word of God: Ye are sure to have the Sacraments instituted by Christ, administred to you in all respects according to his Institution, without any Additions to it, or Detractions from it: Ye are sure to have

Serm. XIII.



all this done by Persons rightly Ordained and Authorized thereunto in the same way and manner which his Apostles, by the Direction of his Holy Spirit, hath Settled in his Church: And ye are sure that what they teach you is Sound and Orthodox, the same Doctrine which Christ and his Apostles taught.

For when they are Ordained, they solemnly profess and promise in the Presence of God that they will instruct the People committed to their Charge out of the Holy Scriptures, and that they will teach nothing as required of necessity to Eternal Salvation, but what they are persuaded may be concluded and proved by the said Scriptures. Neither can they afterwards be admitted to Preach, till they have Subscribed to the Articles and Liturgy of our Church, in which, as was before observed, the Doctrine of the Apostles is fully contained. And besides all this, so long as ye continue in the Communion of our Church, ye are sure to have the Word and Sacraments administered to you by such as have the Care of your Souls committed to them, and who are therefore obliged both in Duty and Interest to take as much Care of you as of themselves, their own Eternal Salvation depending in a great measure upon the

the faithful Discharge of their Office and Sermon. XIII.
Ministry towards you, to which also God hath promised the Assistance of his own Grace and Holy Spirit, to make it effectual to the great Ends and Purposes for which it is ordained; so that all things considered, it is morally impossible that you should be led into Errour, be ignorant of the Truth, or miss of Grace and Salvation, if you hold constant Communion with the Church, and sincerely believe and live as ye are there taught.

But if you once leave the Church, whither ye will go next, I know not, nor ye neither: But this I know, that go where ye will, as ye will certainly want some of the Means of Grace which ye here enjoy, so you will be uncertain whether ye shall enjoy any of them so as to attain the End, even the Salvation of your Souls: So that the most favourable and most charitable Construction that can be put upon the Separation from our Church, is, That it is leaving a Certainty for an Uncertainty, which no wise Man would do in any thing, much less in a Matter upon which his Eternal Welfare depends: From whence ye may see, if ye will, that it is your Wisdom and your Interest as well as Duty, to be steadfast not only in the Doctrine, but likewise in

Vol. VIII. Fellowship or Communion with the Church, as the first Disciples were.

The next Thing they continued stedfastly in, was *breaking of Bread*, or the Celebration of the Lord's-Supper, which is so necessary to our holding Communion with the Church, that it hath got the Name almost wholly appropriated to itself, being commonly called the Communion, because in it we communicate both with Christ the Head, and in him with all the sound Members of his Mystical Body, the Church. In this therefore they continued stedfastly; that is, they never failed to receive the Lord's Supper whensoever it was administred, which was usually every Day, or at least every Lord's-Day: For it is written, *And upon the first day of the week, when the Disciples came together to break Bread*, Acts xx. 7. They did not come together, it seems to hear a Sermon, which many, too many in our days place the most part, if not the whole, of their Religion in, but they came to Communicate together in Christ's Mystical Body and Blood; only being met together, the Apostle took that Occasion to give them a Sermon. But the chief End of their coming together was to receive the Sacrament, which therefore every one did, none offering to go away without

receiving it: And if any did without shewing just Cause, they were looked upon no longer as Christians, and therefore were cast out of the Church, as not worthy to be of that Holy Society, in that they did not keep Communion with it, in the highest Act of the Christian Religion, and that which distinguisheth it from all other.

¶ If you would be such Holy Persons as these were, so as to live with them in Heaven, in this Point also ye must follow their holy Example: Ye live in a Church so truly Apostolical, that she hath taken care that this Holy Sacrament may be administred, as it was in the Apostles Days, at least every Lord's Day, and also every Holy Day in the Year. And where there are a sufficient Number of Communicants in any Parish, the Minister cannot refuse to give it them whensoever they desire it: And I hope there is never a Minister in the Diocese but would be more ready to administer than his People can be to receive it. In the Place where I had the Honour to serve God at his Altar before he called me hither, I administred it every Lord's Day for above Twenty Years together, and was so far from ever wanting Communicants, that I had always as many as I and Two Curates could

could well Administer it to them ; for People found such extraordinary Benefit and Ghostly Comfort from it, that they never thought they could receive it often enough ; and the oftner they received it, the more they still desired, many never omitting it, if they could possibly come to it, whereby they became the great Ornaments of our holy Religion, such as these first Converts were : And such ye may all be, if you would but take the same Course for it, the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper being the great Means whereby to derive Grace and Power from him, *to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world,* as you would find by Experience if ye were but once accustomed to it, which I therefore heartily wish ye were ; at least you must neglect no Opportunities that ye can get of receiving it with that Repentance, Faith and Charity which is requisite to the due Performance of so great and heavenly a Duty as that is.

But for that purpose ye must continue stedfastly as in breaking of Bread, so likewise as these first Disciples of our Lord did, in Prayers, that is, in the Publick Prayers of the Church : For what they did in private, every one by himself, could not be so well known. Neither was it

so material to know that, as how they carried themselves in relation to the Church, that Fellowship or Communion of Saints into which they were now admitted, with whom they constantly joyned in their Publick Devotions, or such Prayers as were common to them all, and so both testified their Communion with them, and assisted in the Worship of the the Most High God, and imploring his Mercy for all in general, as well as every one for himself in particular; and that too, not only now and then, but every day, or as oft as possibly they could.

And in this also ye ought to follow their Pious Example, by being stedfast and constant, not only in your Private but Publick Devotions, according to that Apostolical Form which our Church hath prescribed, that all the Members of it, wheresoever they are, might joyn together with one Heart and Mind, in hearing God's Holy Word, in Praying to him and Praising his most Holy Name, not only once or twice a Week, but twice every Day in the Year, as the Church requires. And accordingly there are many Places in the Kingdom where the Prayers are now read twice every Day, and I heartily wish it could be so in this too: Then you would see another

Face of Religion among you, than you do now; for they who constantly and devoutly attended the Prayers, would find themselves grow wiser and better every day more than other; and they who cannot or will not come, would at least be put in Mind of their Duty, by hearing the Bell every day calling them to it. In short, I know nothing that can contribute more effectually to keep up a due Sense of God and the true Christian Religion in any place than frequent Communion and daily Prayers. This was the way wherein the Saints of God walked in the Apostles Days: *They continued stedfastly as in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, so likewise in breaking bread and in prayers.* And if you would follow them while ye are upon Earth, ye need not doubt but ye will come to them in Heaven, through the Intercession which our Blessed Saviour is always making for them who do so.

In his Name therefore I beseech you all to do so; *Continue stedfastly, as they did, in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship: Be not tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, Eph. iv. 14.* This was a necessary Caution in the Apostles days, and so

so it is in ours, wherein that Prophecy of Serm. XIII. St. Peter is fulfilled, where he saith, *There were false Prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction,* 2 Pet. ii. 1. And that of St. Paul, *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, &c. Having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, and led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,* 2 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7. And elsewhere he foretells, *the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears,* Ch. iv. 3. This you see was foretold by the Spirit of God in the Apostles, and therefore cannot wonder it should be so. It cannot be otherwise but as St. Paul saith, *There must be also heresies or schisms among you, that they which are approved of may be made manifest among you,* 1 Cor. xi. 13. But do ye take care to be in the Number of those that are
evil approved

Vol. VIII. approved of for their *stedfastness to the Apostles doctrine and fellowship*, always carrying in Mind the Words of the Lord Jesus, *Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in sheep's cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves*, Mat. vii. 15.

But it is not enough to *continue stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship*, but ye must do so likewise *in breaking of bread and in prayers*, and in all the means which Christ hath ordained whereby to obtain Grace and Salvation by him, which ye cannot chuse but do, if ye really mind your future State, and make it your chief Care and Study in this World to prepare for the next, that ye may be meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. And why should not ye be so as well as others? Ye have the same Scriptures to direct you, the same Spirit to assist you, the same Sacraments to strengthen you, the same Saviour to intercede for you as they had; Why then should not ye get to Heaven as well as they? Whatsoever your Condition is in this World, ye are all as yet capable of Eternal Life and Happiness, and living in such a Church where the Means of Grace are so duely administred to you, ye cannot miss of it, if ye do but seek it as ye ought before all things else.

This

This therefore is that which I would now persuade you all to, and should think myself happy if I could do it. Play no longer with Religion as People commonly do, but set upon the Practice of it in good earnest. As ye profess to believe the Gospel, live according to the Rules and Precepts of it, that ye may adorn your holy Profession with a suitable Conversation. Let not Drunkenness or Uncleaness, Swearing, Cursing, Lying, Covetousness, Contempt of God's holy Word, or any such notorious Sins be so much as named among you; but strive all ye can to shine as Lights in the World, that ye may be the great Examples of true Piety and Vertue to one another, and to all that are about you. This would be the most effectual means to convince the Enemies of our Church and holy Religion of their Errours and Mistakes, when they see you who profess it so far exceeding and out-doing them in your Constancy at your Devotions; in your Frequency at the Holy Communion; in your Temperance and Sobriety; in your Meekness, Patience and Humility, in your Truth and Justice in all your dealings together; in your Liberality to your Poor Brethren; in your Zeal for God; in your Loyalty to your Sovereign; in your Kindness, Love and Charity

Vol. VIII. rity to one another, and in all such good Works as God hath prepared for you in your several Places and Callings to walk in, still trusting in your Blessed Saviour both for his Assistance of you in what ye do, and for God's Acceptance of it when it is done.

This is the way too, to have a Place ready prepared for you in Heaven, against your departure out of this wicked and naughty World, that you may live together with the Glorified Saints and Angels, and with Christ himself, in all the Ease and Plenty, in all the Joy, Happiness and Glory that Creatures are capable of, not only for some time, but to all Eternity, and all through his Merits and Mediation for you.

Wherefore my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord: In the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, to whom with the Father and Holy Ghost be all Honour and Glory now and for ever.

Christ's

Christ's Grace sufficient to
make Christians Holy.

I N A
S E R M O N

On PHIL. IV. 13.

*I can do all things through Christ
which strengtheneth me.*

ALTHOUGH we had no Divine Revelation for it, yet our own Experience might easily convince us, that we are not such Creatures as the All-Wise and Most Holy God at first made and designed us to be, but that we are very much corrupted, degenerated, and fallen from our first Estate: For God made all Things good, and therefore Man too; but now there is not a Man upon the face of the Earth that is
E e or

Vol. VIII. or doth good of himself, no not one.
 The very best may say, as one of the best that ever was, did; *I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me: For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members, Rom. vii. 21, 22, 23.* They that have no Sense at all of Good or Evil upon their Minds, are too sad Instances of the Corruption of Humane Nature. If any can plead Exemption from it, it must be such as *St. Paul* was, who are not only sensible of the difference between Good and Evil, but really desire to eschew the Evil and do good. And yet these find, as he did, a contrary Principle in them, putting them upon doing the Evil they would not, and hindring them in doing the Good they would do, whereby it comes to pass, that of themselves they can do nothing that can truly be termed good, because nothing that is perfectly so, but in their very best Actions there is still such a mixture of Evil, so many Failures and Imperfections as quite spoil and corrupt them. They cannot Pray without Distraction, nor so much as think upon God, but the Thoughts of other Things will be croud-
 ing

ing into their Heads: They cannot come into God's Presence, but their Minds will be running out again every Moment: They cannot read or hear God's holy Word, nor praise his Name, nor receive the Blessed Sacrament itself, but they are still disturbed and interrupted in it, by some unruly Passion or other: They cannot subdue any Sin so, but it will go near to get up again; nor overcome the Word so, as to keep it always under: They cannot give an Alms, but they are apt to fail either in the Quantity of what they give, or else in the Quality and Manner of giving it. In short, they can do nothing as they ought to do it; but when they have exerted the utmost of their own Strength, and have done all that possibly they can by it, they come short of what the Law of God requires. This they all know and feel by woful Experience, and it is the greatest Trouble they have in the World; so great, that it makes them cry out as *St. Paul* did in the Place before quoted, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. vii. 24.

Who shall deliver me? It is a very hard Question; but the Apostle resolves it in the next Words saying, *I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord,* ver. 25. As if he

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had said, though none else can deliver me from the Body of this Death and Sin, yet I thank God for it, he can and will do it, through Jesus Christ our Lord; where we may observe how he ascribes his Deliverance from the Power of Sin, and his Ability to do good, wholly and solely to the Grace of God, through Jesus Christ. By whom the same Apostle who there complains so grievously of his own Natural Weakness and Inability to do any thing that is good, in my Text assures us, he could do all things; *I can do all things, saith he, thro' Christ which strengtheneth me.*

A strange Expression, but not so strange as true; nor so true but it is as great a Comfort and Encouragement to all that concern themselves in good earnest about their future State: For we cannot but all know, that in order to our being happy in the other World, it is necessary for us to do many things whilst we are in this, whereby to prepare and qualify ourselves for it; and we cannot but be sensible withal, that by our own Strength we are not able to do any one of these things as we ought to do it: And by Consequence if we look no further than ourselves, we may even lay aside all Thoughts of Heaven, and trouble ourselves
no

no more about it, for all our Labour Serm. XIV. would be in vain and to no purpose: But when we consider on the other side, that although we can do nothing of ourselves, yet we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us: This must needs inspire us with holy Resolutions, *to be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, as knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.* As we see it did St. Paul, who, notwithstanding his manifold Sins and Infirmities, which made him look upon himself as the chiefest of all Sinners; yet here he rejoices and glories in his Power to do all things by Christ's Assistance: *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

And though he speaks this only of himself, yet he speaks it of himself only as a Christian; and therefore all Christians may speak it, every one of himself, as well as he did; and it is left upon Record on purpose that we might all know where our Strength lies, and how we also may be enabled to do all things, even by Christ which strengthens us.

But that we may fully understand the true Sense and Meaning of the Words, we shall briefly consider in what Sense it is here said, that we can do all things;

Vol. VIII. how Christ strengtheneth us; and by what means we may receive Strength from him to do all things.

- The Power of doing all things is the same with Omnipotence, which is one of God's incommunicable Perfections? How then comes it here to be communicated to his Creatures? much in the same Sense as it is in God; only in a lower degree, as Creatures are capable of it: And tho' it be attributed unto them, it is still God's Power in them, and so it is He, not they that are omnipotent; and although he be omnipotent, there are some things of which it may be truly said that he cannot do them; He cannot do that which implies a Contradiction: He cannot deny himself, He cannot lye, He cannot die. And yet He is not less omnipotent because He cannot do these things, but rather He therefore cannot do them because he is omnipotent, such things as those arguing only Weakness and Impotence. But He is therefore properly said to be omnipotent, because He can do whatsoever he will; so that there are many things a Christian cannot do: He cannot create a New World: He cannot produce any thing out of nothing; for then he would be both a Creature and a Creator, which implies a Contradiction:
But

But a Christian can do whatsoever he will Serm. XIV.
as a Christian; all things that God would
have him do in order to his Eternal Sal-
vation: And in this Sense it is that
St. Paul here saith, *he can do all things,*
as is plain from the Context; *I know,*
saith he, *both how to be abased, and I know*
how to abound: every where and in all things
I am instructed, both to be full and to be
hungry, both to abound and to suffer need;
and then adds, *I can do all things,* that
is, all such things as belong to me as a
Christian to do, in whatsoever State or
Condition I am: I can do all things that
God requires me to do, whereby to pro-
mote his Honour and Glory in the World,
and at last to obtain everlasting Life,
through Jesus Christ my Lord.

And in this Sense all Christians, and
we as well as others can do all things;
all things that God would have us; all
things that we are bound to do to him
or one another; all things necessary to
fit us for Heaven, or to bring us thither.
Particularly we can repent of all our Sins
and turn to God: We can crucifie the
Flesh with the Affections and Lusts: We
can resist the Devil and make him flee from
us: We can overcome the World and live
above it: We can love, and fear, and de-
sire, and rejoyce, and trust in God with



all our Hearts: We can pray sincerely to him, we can praise him heartily, we can read and hear his Word attentively, and receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper worthily: We can devote our time to his Honour, spend our Estates in his Service, and if there be occasion, lay down our Lives for his sake: We can adore and worship him with Reverence and godly Fear, we can walk in Holiness and Righteousness before him all our days.

And as for our Neighbours, we can honour and obey our Parents, and submit to the Governors that God hath set over us in Church or State: We can *love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us*: We can as freely forgive the Injuries we have received from others, as we desire God should forgive those we have done him: We can make Restitution of what we have heretofore wronged others of, and for the future keep ourselves from wronging any Man in Name, Body, or Estate: We can be meek and humble, chaste and modest, sober and temperate in ourselves: and we can be true and faithful, just and righteous in our dealings with all men: We can always do to others,

others, as we would have them do to *Serm. XIV.*
us: We can keep our Tongues from ly-
ing and flandering, as well as our Hands
from picking and stealing: We can in-
struct the ignorant, reprove the obstinate,
support the weak, comfort the disconso-
late, help the oppressed, and relieve the
poor, according as opportunity shall serve,
and our Estates will bear. In short, we
can do all that the Grace of God which
brings Salvation teacheth us: We can *de-
ny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live
soberly, righteously, and godly in this pre-
sent world;* and when we go out of it,
we can commit our Souls to him that re-
deemed them with his own most precious
Blood.

But how can these things be? How is
it possible for us to do so many and
great things as these are, when, as the
Apostle saith, *we are not sufficient of our-
selves so much as to think any thing as of
ourselves,* 2 Cor. iii. 5. It is true he saith
so, but he resolves the Doubt in the very
next Words, saying, that *our sufficiency is
of God.* And so he doth in my Text,
saying, *I can do all things;* how! of my
self? by mine own Strength? no, but
through Christ which strengtheneth me. And
if He who is Almighty, and can of him-
self do all things, if he strengtheneth us,
it

Vol. VIII. it is no wonder, that we by his Strength
 can do all things too.

But then the next Question to be consider'd, is, How Christ strengtheneth us? how? not that he doth it: For that he doth it, there can be no Question, it being so expressly asserted here by the Apostle; and besides, unless Christ strengthens us, so as that we can do all things by him that are necessary to Salvation, he would not be our Saviour. But that he is our Saviour, and *is able to save to the utmost all that come to God by him*, we all agree; and therefore cannot but withal acknowledge, that there is nothing necessary to be done in order to our being saved by him, but what we may be enabled by him to do it.

But how he strengthens such infirm Creatures as we are, so as that we can do all things by him, is a great Question, and very difficult to be resolved: Forasmuch as he doth it by his Almighty Power, which we cannot comprehend while we are in the Body, nor perceive how he exerts it upon us. Only this we know, that he doth it insensibly, and by degrees, as we are able to bear it; and that he doth it, not as God only, but as God-Man, and so the Mediator betwixt God and us; and as such, hath all
 Power

Power given unto him both in Heaven **Serm. XIV.**
and Earth, by which he is able to em-
power us to do all things that are re-
quired to our obtaining that eternal Re-
demption which he hath purchased for
us with the Price of his own Blood. And
as Almighty God the Creator of the
World, doth by his general Providence
govern and dispose all things in it, so
as that every thing doth what he would
have it, and so answer his end in creating it :
So Christ having purchased to himself an
Universal Church, takes particular Care
of that, ordering all things in it, and af-
fording every Member of it Power suffi-
cient to do whatsoever he would have done
by it, for the accomplishing his End in
purchasing it : And that we may not be
altogether ignorant of his way in giving
such Power and Strength to the several
Members of his Church, to do all things
that he requires of them, he himself
hath given us some Light into it, both
with his own Mouth, and by his Holy
Spirit inspiring his Prophets and Apostles
to do it.

As where he saith, *I am the true vine,
and my father is the husbandman. Abide
in me and I in you. As the branch cannot
bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the
vine ; no more can ye, except ye abide in
me.*

Vol. VIII. *me. I am the vine, ye are the branches :
 He that abideth in me, and I in him, the
 same bringeth forth much fruit, for without
 me, ye can do nothing, Joh. xv. 1, 4, 5.*
 whereby he gives us to understand, that
 as a Vine-branch if it be cut off or se-
 vered from the Stock it presently withers,
 and grows fruitless; but if it continue in
 the Stock, it receives Sap and Nourish-
 ment from thence, whereby it is enabled
 to bring forth such Fruit as God design-
 ed it should: So if a Man be not in
 Christ, but is separated from him, such
 a one can do nothing at all that is good:
 But if a Man be grafted in him, or uni-
 ted to him, so as to be a true Member
 of him, then as the Stock communicates
 its Vertue to the Branches, so doth he
 communicate or convey from himself so
 much Grace and Vertue to such a one, as
 is sufficient to make him fruitful in all
 good works.

St. Paul explains it much the same way.
 He compares Christ and his Church, to
 the Body of a Man or other Animal:
*Of this Body Christ is the Head, and all
 true Christiaas are the Members,* every
 one in his proper Place, 1 Cor. xii. 12.
Eph. iv. 15, 16. Now as the several Parts
 of a Man's Body are all animated, and
 enabled to perform their respective Offices,
 by

by the Animal Spirits which are transferr'd into them from the Head: So all the Sound Members of Christ's Body are actuated by the Spirit that proceedeth from him, and is directed and infused by him into every one of them, whereby they are strengthened and empowered to perform all such Duties as he hath set them. Serm. XIV.

Again the Holy Ghost compares Christ to the Sun, saying by the Prophet *Malachy*, *Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings*, Mal. iv. 2. which Expression, being doubtless to be understood of Christ, will give us great light into this Mystery: For the Sun, we know, doth not only give Light unto the World, but also Heat, Motion and Activity to all things in it; It is that which invigorates the Earth, and makes it fruitful, causing all sorts of Herbs, and Plants, and Trees to spring out of it, and to bring forth Flowers, and Fruits, and Seeds, every one according to its respective Kind and Quality. Now what the Sun is to the World, that is Christ to his Church: He is the Sun of Righteousness, that causeth Righteousness to spring up there; and being long since risen, he shines continually upon it, with healing in his Wings or Rays,

Vol. VIII. Rays, even the wholsom benign Influences of his Holy Spirit, whereby he heals us of our Unfruitfulness and all our Spiritual Distempers; so that we shall not be barren and unfruitful in the Knowledge of Christ, as *St. Peter* speaks, but shall abound in *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*, and the like, which *St. Paul* therefore calls the fruits of the Spirit, *Gal. v. 22.*

And as the Sun, although the Body of it be only in Heaven, yet by its Beams it produceth such wonderful Effects as we see it doth upon Earth; so Christ, although his Body or Humane Nature far more glorious than the Sun, be only in the highest Heavens at the Right Hand of God, yet by his Spirit that proceedeth from him, he so actuates and influenceth his Church upon Earth, that the sound Members of it are enabled thereby to do all those wonderful things we spake of, even all things that are required of them.

But in this Christ infinitely exceeds the Sun: Forasmuch as though his Body or Humane Nature be only in Heaven, yet his Divine Person to which that Nature is united, is in all Places of the World, and in a more peculiar manner in his Church, with all his true and faithful Disciples. This he assured his Apostles

to make Christians Holy.

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stles of, just as he was going up to Heaven. Serm. XIV.

Lo, saith he, I am with you alway, πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας, every day, continually, to the end of the World, Mat. xxviii. 20. And elsewhere he tells them, that his holy Spirit, *the Comforter should abide with them for ever, Joh. xiv. 16.* He shall not only come to them now and then, but shall abide constantly with them, he shall dwell with them, and in them.

To which purpose we have a remarkable Passage in *St. Paul*, who being troubled with a Thorn in the Flesh, earnestly besought the Lord Christ, that it might depart from him; and at length received this Gracious Answer, *My Grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.* From whence the Apostle draws this Inference, *Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me, 2 Cor. xii. 9.* where the Word is *ἑπισημαίνωμαι, may dwell in me*, as the *שכינה* or *Divine Presence* did in the Tabernacle and Temple, where there was a kind of a Cloud, the Symbol of God's special Presence, resting continually between the Cherubim over the Ark, which was therefore called *שכינה* *God's Inhabitation* or *Dwelling there*: And so it is that he dwells in every Christian, whose Body is said to be the Temple of God: *Know ye not, faith*

Vol. VIII. *saith the Apostle, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, 1 Cor. iii. 16. And again, What, know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you? 1 Cor. vi. 19. From whence it appears that every true Christian hath the Spirit of God residing and dwelling continually in him, as well as the Temple of God ever had it; and it is for this Cause that he is called the Temple of God, it being by this means that he is Dedicated to God, and God keeps as it were Possession of him, by dwelling continually in him.*

But where the Spirit of God and Christ is, there is Christ; where that abideth, there Christ abideth. Hereby we know, saith St. John, that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us, 1 Joh. iii. 24. And hence it is, that Christ himself is so often said to be in us. I in them, saith he, and thou in me, Joh. xvii. 23.

And, that the love wherewith thou lovest me, may be in them, and I in them, ver. 26. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him, Joh. vi. 56. And St. Paul saith, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, Gal. ii. 20. And in the same Epistle to the Galatians, My little Children, saith he, of whom I travail
in

to make Christians Holy.

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in birth again until Christ be formed in you, Sermon. XIV.
Gal. iv. 19. And to the Ephesians, that
Christ may dwell in your hearts, Eph. iii.
17. And elsewhere, *Know ye not your own*
selves, that Christ is in you, except ye be
reprobates, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. And this he
saith is *the great mystery which was hid from*
former ages, but is now made manifest to
the Saints. To whom, saith he, *God would*
make known, what is the riches of the glory
of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is,
Christ in you, the hope of glory, Col. i. 27.
All which Expressions used by Christ him-
self and his holy Spirit, plainly imply, that
he himself by his said Spirit, doth in a special
and marvelous manner inhabit and reside in
all true Christians, exercising his own Al-
mighty Power in them, and so sanctify-
ing them wholly in Soul, Body, and Spi-
rit, and enabling them to order their
whole Conversation according to the Rules
he hath set them in his holy Gospel; as
is intimated also by the Word which we
translate, *strengtheneth*, in my Text: For
in the Original it is, *ἐνδυναμῶν με*, *that streng-*
theneth me within; implying, that he him-
self is within us, strengthening and assist-
ing us; and as the same Apostle saith in
another Place of this Epistle, *working in*
us both to will and to do of his good plea-
sure, Phil. ii. 13. And when Christ him-
self

Vol. VIII. self doth in such a wonderful manner inhabit and strengthen us by his own Almighty Spirit, it is no wonder that we can do all things: We may well do all things by him, who can do all things by himself.

But there is another Question to be resolved, which nearly concerns us all, and that is, What we must do that we also as well as others, may be thus strengthened by Christ, so as to be able to do all things by him? But this will be easily resolved: For it is plain from the whole Design and Tenor of the Gospel, that the great thing required on our Parts, is to believe in him; not only to believe what is written of him, and revealed by him in his holy Gospel, but also to trust and depend upon him to strengthen and assist us, according to the Promises which are there made us: For he himself resolves the whole of our Salvation by him into our believing in him; saying, *That God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. iii. 16.* And if whosoever believeth in him shall have everlasting Life, then whosoever believeth in him must needs be strengthened and enabled by him to do whatsoever is necessary in order thereunto.

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unto. And so be sure every one is who believeth in him, upon that Account because he believeth in him, Faith being the means whereby we are united to Christ, and made Members of his Body, and therefore participate of that Holy Spirit, which proceedeth from him, our Head: *For we are made partakers of Christ,* saith the Apostle, *if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast to the end,* Heb. iii. 14. that is, so long as we continue to believe stedfastly and confidently in him, we are partakers of Christ, not only of his Merit for the Pardon of our Sins, but of his Strength and Spirit, to direct and assist us in doing all such good works as he hath prepared for us to walk in: For as we are justified so we are sanctified also by Faith in him we may be confident of it, for we have it from his own Mouth, saying, *that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them, which are sanctified by faith that is in me,* Acts xxvi. 18.

And hence it is, that all the great Exploits that a Christian doth, are still ascribed to his Faith. *By faith we overcome the world: for 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*
F f 2 God,

Vol. VIII. *God, 1 Joh. v. 4, 5.* By Faith we resist and conquer all the Powers of Hell; *Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, Eph. vi. 16.* By this we may obtain whatsoever we ask of God: *Therefore I say unto you, saith Christ himself, what things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them, Mark xi. 24.* By Faith we can remove mountains, *Mat. xvii. 20.* that is, we can do the greatest and most difficult things that God requires. As we see in the Father of the faithful, who at God's Command was able to offer up his only Son, in whom God himself had promised that he and all Nations should be blessed, which was certainly the hardest Task that ever was set any Man; but it was not too hard for Faith, to which nothing is impossible, as Christ himself said to the Man in the Gospel: *If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth, Mark ix. 23.* And the Reason is, because *Faith, as the Apostle saith, is the substance of things hoped for, causing all those great things which God hath promised, and we therefore hope for at his Hands, actually to subsist, and be verified in us.* But God hath promised, that he himself to whom all things are possible,

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ble, will strengthen and enable us to do Serm. XIV
his Will: And therefore it is impossible ~~~~~
that any thing which he commands should
be impossible to one that believeth. Hence
therefore, if we desire to be so assisted by
Christ, as to be able to do all things
through him, we must firmly believe in
him, and live with a constant Trust and
Dependance upon him for his Assistance,
and then we cannot fail of it; but as *A-*
braham believed and it was imputed to
him for Righteousness, so we thus belie-
ving in Christ, shall by him be enabled
to fulfil all Righteousness, so as that not-
withstanding any Defects there may be in
it by reason of our imperfect State here
below, yet it shall be *acceptable to God*
thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, 1 Pet. ii. 5.
And so we may truly say with *St. Paul,*
I can do all things through Christ which
strengtheneth me.

The Sense of the Words being thus
cleared up, it will be easy to observe sever-
al things in them very worthy of a Chri-
stian's Notice. First we may observe, that
we can do nothing of ourselves; for if
we do all things by Christ, there is no-
thing left for us to do of ourselves with-
out him, and it is very well there is not;
for if there was, I do not know how we
should do it, seeing Christ himself saith,

Vol. VIII. *Without me ye can do nothing, Joh. xv. 5.*

As he is God, we can do nothing at all; as he is Christ our Saviour, we can do nothing that is good without him. It is true we can sin without him, we can dishonour God without him, we can destroy ourselves without him; but the doing of such things, is not so properly doing any thing, as not doing what we ought: But we cannot save ourselves, we cannot honour God, we cannot keep any one of his Commands without him: *For we are not sufficient of ourselves so much as to think any thing of ourselves, 2 Cor. iii. 5.* And if we cannot think any thing that is good of ourselves, we can much less do it; No, when we do ill we must blame ourselves, when we do well we must thank God for it: And therefore whatsoever it is wherein we may seem to excel others, we have no cause to be proud of it, or to glory in it; much less can we merit any thing by it, seeing we are beholden wholly unto our Saviour for it: For as the Apostle argues, *Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou which thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? 1 Cor. iv. 7.*

This

This is a Thing much to be observed: Serm. XIV.
For if we happen to be or to do any thing better than others, we are very apt to boast or at least to be proud of it, which doth not only spoil all the good we do, but makes us uncapable of doing any good at all; for *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble,* 1 Pet. v. 5. So that where there is Pride, there is no Grace; and where there is no Grace, no good be sure can be done there: And therefore, as ever we desire to do all things, or indeed any thing at all by Christ's Assistance, we must be always humble and lowly in our own Eyes, and truly sensible of our own Weakness and Inability to do any thing without him, and then we shall be in a right Disposition to receive such Power and Vertue from him, as to be able to say, We can do all things through Christ which strengthens us.

But in the next place, we may observe also from hence, that notwithstanding our own natural Weakness and Infirmities, we have no cause to complain of our Inability to keep any of God's Commandments; for what is wanting in us is abundantly supplied by our Blessed Saviour. Though we can do nothing without him, there is nothing but we may do by him,



who hath not only repaired the Loss we sustained in our first Parents, but hath done it with mighty Advantage to us: By them we lost our natural, by him we gain supernatural; by them we lost finite, by him we gain infinite Strength; by them we lost our own, by him we have the Power of God himself to enable us to do his Will; that Power by which God himself doth whatsoever he will: So that we have not so much Cause to be sorry for our Fall in the first *Adam*, as we have to rejoyce at your Redemption by the second, who, as he hath broken the Head of the old Serpent, and tied his Hands himself, so he gives us Power to do it too, the same Power by which he himself did it; that Power which no Creature is able to resist, and by Consequence not all the Devils in Hell. It is true, *St. Paul* represents them to us under very frightful Appearances, as if he had a mind to terrifie us with them, calling them *principalities, powers, the rulers of the darknes of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places*, Eph. vi. 12. And yet we are able to conquer them all, conquer them did I say, that is too low an Expressi-
 on; for as the same Apostle speaks, ὑπερνικῶ-
 μεν, *we are more than conquerors thro' him that loved us*, Rom. viii. 37. We do not only con-
 quer

quer them, but we do it with Joy and Triumph, being fully persuaded, as he there goes on triumphantly, *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. viii. 38, 39.*

And as by this Divine Power which we receive from Christ, we are able to destroy the works of the Devil; so likewise to do the works of God, even all such works as he sees good to set us. *I can do all things,* saith St. Paul; neither did he only say it, but do it: What did he not do? What did he not suffer for Christ's sake: It would make one amazed to read or hear the History of his Life, as he himself describes it, *2 Cor. xi. 22, 23, &c.* And yet he was so far from sinking under any burden that was laid upon him, that he took Pleasure and Delight in it. *I take pleasure,* saith he, *in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake, 2 Cor. xii. 10.* Strange things for a Man to take Pleasure in, but not for a Christian assisted by Christ himself, as he intimates in the following Words; saying, *For when I am weak, then am I strong;* that is, the weaker



I am in myself, the more Strength I receive from Christ. And what could not he do by his Strength who can do all things? By that he thought himself able to endure the very flames of Hell: *For he could wish himself accursed from Christ, for the Glory of God, in the Salvation of his Brethren the Jews, Rom. ix. 3.* which is certainly the hardest thing that it is possible for a Creature to do, and more than God ever required of any Man. And yet *St. Paul*, as well as *Moses*, could willingly have undergone it if had been possible, for *Christ's* sake and by his Strength. And although the Strength of *Christ* do not manifest itself after the same manner, yet it is the same in all true Christians, as it was in *St. Paul*: And therefore we need not despond or despair of doing any thing that God commands, seeing he commands nothing but what he himself gives us power to do. And though we can do nothing by our own, by his Power there is nothing but we can do; so that every one of us may say as truly as *St. Paul* did, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*


But, as the same Apostle elsewhere observes, *we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God,*
and

and not of men, 2 Cor. iv. 7. The Power Serm. XIV.
which we have in and by Christ is ex-
cellent, it is infinite, such Power where-
by we may or can do all things: But
we who have this Power, being of our-
selves but finite, weak and infirm Crea-
tures, we seldom or never use it so as actu-
ally to do all things by it, or indeed any
thing so perfectly and exactly as the Law
requires. It is true, as Christ himself
knows, and therefore hath made abun-
dant Provision for it: For he having in
our Nature, and for our sakes been per-
fectly obedient, even to Death itself;
hence as we have infinite Power in him
to enable us to do all things, so we have
infinite Merit too, to satisfy for the De-
fects of our Obedience, and to render
every thing we do as well-pleasing to
God, as if it was most perfectly done;
or, as the Apostle himself expresseth it,
*He makes us perfect in every good work to
do his will, working in us that which is well-
pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ,*
Heb. xiii. 21. So that as we can do all
things through Christ which strengthens
us, so God accepts of all things we do,
through his Merits and Mediation for
us.

Furthermore, we may observe from these
Words, That whatsoever we do by Christ,
it



it is still we that do it. *I, saith the Apostle, I can do all things through Christ; and, through Christ which strengtheneth me.* He was the Person whom Christ enabled to act, and he was the Person who acted by that Ability which Christ gave him: So it is with all of us; All the good we do, we do it by Christ's Assistance; but we are properly the Agents who do it by that Assistance. As when he himself was incarnate of the Blessed Virgin, he was conceived in her by the Power of the Holy Ghost overshadowing her, and yet she is said to have conceived him. *Behold, saith the Angel to her, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus, Luk. i. 31.* So here all holy Desires, all good Counsels, and all just works come from God, being wrought in us by the Power of Christ's Holy Spirit, yet nevertheless we are the Persons who produce and act them by that Power: And therefore, where our Saviour saith to his Disciples, *When they deliver you up take no thought how or what you shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you, Matth. x. 19, 20.* The Meaning is not, that they should not be the Persons that spake; for he himself saith they

they shall, saying, *it shall be given you* Serm. XIV.
what ye shall speak; but the Meaning is, 
that they should not speak of themselves,
of their own Heads, but the matter they
were to speak, should be dictated and
suggested into them by the Holy Ghost,
who is therefore said to speak in them;
but they were to speak it to the Peo-
ple. To the same Purpose is that re-
markable Saying of St. Paul, *By the grace
of God I am what I am*; and his grace which
was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but
I laboured more abundantly than they all:
*yet not I, but the grace of God which was
with me,* 1 Cor. xv. 10. that is, not I by
my own Strength, but by the Grace of
God: It is by that I laboured more abun-
dantly than others; it is by that I am
what I am, and do what I do; but still
it is I that am and do so. He ascribes
the Glory of all he did, to the Grace of
God, yet nevertheless he was the Person
who did it by that Grace. As although it be
the Heat and Influence of the Sun, which by
God's Blessing upon it, causeth the Earth to
fructify; yet it is *the earth itself that bring-
eth forth herbs, meet for them by whom it is
dressed,* as the Apostle speaks, Heb. vi. 7.

Neither will it seem strange, that we
should be said to do that which we do, not
by our own but by Christ's Strength; if
we

Vol. VIII. we consider, that in this Case we are not
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 meer Tools or Machines ; but Christ by his  
 Holy Spirit moves upon our Minds in a way  
 suitable to our Nature, as we are reasonable  
 Creatures, endowed with the Power of  
 discerning between Good and Evil, and  
 of chusing the one before the other ; and  
 therefore he useth no Violence upon us ;  
 he doth not drive but lead us, *Rom. ii. 4.*  
 he doth not force us one way or other  
 contrary to our Wills ; but he dispels those  
 Clouds and Fogs which darken our Un-  
 derstandings, and corrupt our Judgments,  
 and so he clears up our Apprehensions of  
 Good and Evil, that we may judge aright  
 both of one and the other ; and then  
 freeing our Wills from such Distempers as  
 disorder and pervert them, he influenceth  
 and disposeth them so, that we freely and  
 of our own accord, chuse the good before  
 the evil, and so become *a willing people in  
 the day of his power, Psal. cx. 3.* willing to  
 observe and do whatsoever he commands.  
 But for this we are beholden to his Power,  
 who is therefore said *to work in us to will,  
 as well as to do, Phil. ii. 13.* because it is  
 by his Grace that our Wills are thus in-  
 clined to what is good, as well as our  
 Hands empowered to do it : And there-  
 fore *David* prays, that God would incline  
 his Heart, saying to him, *Incline my heart  
 unto*

*unto thy testimonies*; Psal. cxix. 36. And Serm. XIV. accordingly after the Repetition of each Commandment, we pray to God, saying, *Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this Law.* And seeing Christ is pleased thus to work upon us in a way so agreeable to our own natural Constitution, although we can do nothing but by his Grace and Power; yet whatsoever we do, we are the Persons who do it, and who do it as Men, as understanding and free Agents, with the whole Bent and Inclinations of our own Wills, and so make it our own Act; as it is said of *Lydia*, that God opened her heart, that she attended to what was spoken of Paul, Acts xvi. 14. God opened her Heart, and then she herself attended and embraced the Truth; so in my Text. Although *St. Paul* was sensible that whatsoever he did, he did it only by the Strength of Christ, yet he doth not say, Christ doth all things by me, but, *I myself can do all things by Christ which strengtheneth me.*

And hence it is that God is graciously pleased for his Son's sake to accept of what we do, as done by us, because though we do it not by our own Strength but his, yet it is we that do it; and although we are so far from meriting any thing at his Hands by what we do, that  
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Vol. VIII. we are more beholden to him than he to us for it; yet howsoever upon the Account of what Christ hath merited for us, he of his infinite Mercy is pleased to recompence all the good we do, with a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. This we may be assured of, as *St. Paul* was, when he said, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith*; all this he did through Christ which strengthened him: And then he adds, *From henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to them also that love his appearing*, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. And so on the other side; If any of us fail in our Duty to God, we must bear the Blame and the Punishment too: For seeing Christ's Grace is sufficient for us all, and none of us but may if he will do all things necessary to our Salvation through him; if there be any such thing which we do not, it is not because we cannot, but because we will not do it, and so the fault is wholly in ourselves, in the Obstinacy and Perverseness of our own Wills, and therefore we justly deserve to be punished for it. This the Gospel represents to us under the Similitude of a Tree, that hath all things necessary



necessary to make it fruitful, and yet continues barren, or doth not bring forth good fruit. Now also, saith St. John the Baptist, even now, that the Sun of righteousness is risen upon the world; now the ax is laid to the root of the trees, therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewen down and cast into the fire, Mat. iii. 10. And in the Parable of the Fig-tree which a Man planted in his vineyard, and finding no Fruit upon it for three Years together, in which it should have born some, he said to the dresser of the vineyard, cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground; and he answering said, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it, (and so do every thing that may make it bear;) and then if it bear fruit, well, if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down, Luke xiii. 6, 9. Thus our Blessed Saviour seeing a Fig-tree, and finding no Fruit upon it as he expected, he cursed it so that it immediately dried up and withered away, Mat. xxi. 19. So here, Christ having tasted death for every man, Heb. ii. 9. Every Man is capable of attaining Eternal Life by him, and by consequence able to do all things by him that are necessary in order thereunto: But if Men will not make use of that Grace and Strength which he affords them, whereby



to bring forth fruit meet for Repentance, they can in reason expect no other, but like fruitless Trees, to be cut down and cast into the fire, *into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*: And therefore we had need to look about us, and take heed lest we neglect that Grace which is offered to us in the Gospel of Christ: By him *working in us both to will and to do*; we may all *work out our salvation with fear and trembling*. But if we *refuse and rebel*; and notwithstanding all that he hath done, and is always ready to do for us, will still continue to mistrust his Promises, and slight the Grace which he offers to us, we shall certainly *be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe in that day*, 2 Thess. i. 9, 10. And it will be a great Addition to our Misery, that we might have been happy if we would, but we would not; we would not make use of Christ's Assistance, otherwise we might have done whatsoever was required to make us happy; as St. Paul found by Experience, saying, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Through Christ which strengtheneth me*; which Words afford us  
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another very remarkable Observation: Serm. XIV.

For the Apostle doth not say, *I can do all things through Christ which hath strengthened me, or which did strengthen me*, by infusing the Principles of Grace and Vertue into my Heart at first; but he speaks in the present Tense, *ἐνδυναμῶντι με*, which doth strengthen me: He looks upon Christ as strengthening him continually, assisting him in every thing he spake, or did, or thought; and so ought we to do: We ought to act our Faith continually upon our Saviour, that so we may be always deriving Power and Vertue from him to eschew evil and do good: We must apply ourselves to him upon all occasions, so as to undertake nothing but in his Name, and by his Strength. This is that which the Apostle expressly commands, saying, *Whatever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him*, Col. iii. 17. This was the Course which he himself took, whereby to do all things through Christ which strengthened him: And he would have us take the same Course too, if we desire to do all things effectually as he did; when *David* undertook to fight with *Goliath*, he did it *in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies*

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*of Israel, 1 Sam. xvii. 45.* And if we desire to conquer our Spiritual Enemies, as he did the *Philistines*: We must set upon them only in the Name of Christ, the great Captain of our Salvation; And if we would do any thing at all as we ought, we must begin it, carry it on, and finish it only in him; actually believing and trusting on him to assist us in it, and to supply us with such a Measure of his Grace and Holy Spirit, as may be sufficient to carry us through it: As suppose we Pray, if we do it in his Name we are sure to be heard; for we have his own Word for it, saying, *Whatsoever ye ask the father in my name, he will give it you, Joh. xvi. 23.* The same holds good as to all the Actions of our Life; whatsoever we do in his Name, be sure is well done, and God for his sake will accept of it: So that by this means we may always live as becometh Christians, and be able to say, as *St. Paul* did, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

And why should not you and I be able to say so, as well as *St. Paul*? Christ is our Saviour, as well as his, and both as willing and as able to assist us as he was to assist him. Why then should not we do all things by Christ, as well as he? Let us therefore now resolve to do so in good earnest: *Whatsoever Almighty*



Almighty God requires of us, in order to Serm. XIV.  
our serving him while we are upon Earth, and to our living with him hereafter in Heaven, let us but set about it in the Name of Christ, and we need not fear but by his Assistance we shall be able to accomplish it: Or rather, we ought not to fear or doubt at all of it, but firmly believe that he according to his Promise will assist us, and then he will most certainly do it. Let us therefore banish out of our Hearts all diffident and unbelieving Thoughts of Christ, and put our whole Trust and Confidence in him to carry us through our whole Duty both to God and Man: Wheresoever we are, let us look upon him as present with us; whatsoever we do, let us look upon him as helping us to do it: And for that Purpose, let us be constant in performing our private Devotions to God in his Name; and in his Name converse as much as possibly we can with him in his Publick Ordinances; in Praying and Praising God; in Reading and Hearing his Most Holy Word, that so we may live under the Influences of his Blessed Spirit, and have it always with us and in us. Above all, let us take all the Opportunities we can get of receiving his most blessed Body and Blood, to put us in mind of him, to confirm our Faith in him, and to draw Ver-  
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tue from him the Fountain of all Wisdom and Goodness, to make us wise and good. In short, let us but keep our Minds and our Faith always fixed upon our Blessed Saviour, and we shall find by Experience, that he will strengthen and assist us by his Grace and Holy Spirit, so as that we shall be able to walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless, and at last obtain Everlasting Life through his Merits and Mediation for us: *To whom, &c.*

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