

CHURCHES GLORY:

OR,

The Becoming Ornament:

Being A seasonable Word, tending to the Provoking, Encouraging, and Perfecting of Holiness in Believers.

Wherein is discovered the

Nature, Necessity, and Excellency thereof:

Also, many grand Obstructions or Impediments removed, which hinder the Saints growth and increase therein.

Whereunto is added,

A Glass for the Unconverted;

shewing the woeful state of Fallen Man,

and the only way of his Recovery.

As also, several Articles of Faith briefly laid down
for the further establishment and confirming of the Faithful.

By *Josias Bonham*, sen. of *Byfield* in *Northamptonshire*.

Follow peace with all men, and Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12.14.

London,

Printed for the Author,

1674.

To the Church of JESUS CHRIST, Congregated In the order of the Gospel, by Confession of Faith and Baptism; meeting at *Priers Marson* in the County

of Warwick; wishing the abounding of all Grace, Mercy, Peace, and Unity in, and through Our Lord Jesus Christ; and one with another, as the Truth is in Jesus.

Beloved in the Lord,

Having for some Years been a Companion with you in the fellowship of the Gospel; and by the hand of God upon me, and your requirement, have been instrumental among you as opportunities have been offered, to impart unto your Edification what I through grace received: Now, considering that Mortality is approaching near towards me and having those words of the Apostle *Peter* upon my spirit which saith: *Moreover, I will endeavour, that after my Decease, you may be able to have these things always in Remembrance, 2 Pet. 1.15.* And likewise considering the abounding of Iniquity & Errors, both in Opinion & Practice in these latter days; all which do witness the truth of that in a great part, which our Saviour Christ and his Apostles in holy war have fore-told; the which is much manifested in Papist Rantism, Quakerism, and superstitious Ceremonialism: as also the abounding of self-love, self-endedness, and profane and vicious Atheism. I thought it my care and duty to present unto you this small Treatise; wherein is comprised most of the chief heads, and principle grounds of doctrine, that by me hath been delivered unto you; hoping that you will make these lines herein contained, your Companions; sometimes when you sit at your Table, or Window, or by the Fire-side, that they may be your Remembrancers, how you have heard and received; and that you may hold fast unto all stability & perseverance in judgment, and practice, the truths therein contained that are agreeable to the revealed will of God; that when I have put off this Tabernacle, and am Deceased, these few gleanings out of God's Vintage may be of some use unto you, the better to enable you to stand fast in the Truth, in unity of the Spirit, striving together for the faith of the Gospel. So with my Prayers to God for you, hoping to see your faces in Heavenly Mansion places,

I remain your servant in what I may,
for Jesus sake both Night and Day.

John Bonham.

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TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

Christian Reader,

Casting mine eye, and considerations upon the holy and pure Word of God, and exercising my mind and meditations therein, I beheld through Grace, the habit of Holiness to be of high acceptation with God, and of great concernment to the Christian Soul: Also I harkened, and heard, as it were the Lord in his word calling unto, and commanding the Sons and Daughters of men to put on the said habit in the use of the means thereunto appointed, and many argumental grounds and reasons he produceth to move and draw the Creature's love thereto, and to cause him to delight therein: But casting mine eye, and considerations on the other hand, I beheld the present state of the Sons and Daughters of men in this Generation, to see what acceptation this habit of Holiness found among them: And lo its interest seemed very small and mean as to true holiness in its proper nature; scarce here and there a man that affectionately seeketh after it in comparison of the contrary.

Wherefore I receiving some glimpse of the excellent properties of Holiness, and the necessity and benefit thereof, did think it my duty to promote its interest in the best manner I could, according to what I have received; and to that end, I here present unto thee these ensuing considerations; humbly requesting thee, that in thy perusal of the same, thou wilt view them with an impartial eye: And seriously consider the doctrine therein affirmed, and weigh it in the Balance of the Sanctuary; and what thou findest to hold weight, therewith, for the God of truths sake, accept the same as the work of God that worketh all in all, according to the operations and manifestations of his holy Spirit.

Let not the meanness of the Instrument, nor any Imperfection in the method cause thee to despise the work, but rather with *Aquilla and Priscilla expound to me the way of God more perfectly, Act. 18.26.*

I have not penned these ensuing considerations as any new light or administration that hath not been of old; but rather as a witness to that antient Apostolical Doctrine of Faith and Holiness, which was once delivered to the Saints; the which, through grace in the operative power of the spirit, hath wrought in me to bear this Testimony according as I have received.

That Servant that improved his two Talents into four, was accepted as well as he that had improved his five into ten; whiles he that had made no improvement was rejected with the fruitless Fig-tree: *If the Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy work: If day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge, Psal. 19.1, 2.* how much more should man, whom God hath endowed with the faculties of Reason and Understanding above other Creatures, that so he might be apprehensive of divine demonstrations; and especially that soul, whose understanding God hath in a good measure enlightened, to understand his mind, and will, contained in his Word, and hath given him a state of grace here, and an assurance in Christ of glory hereafter.

Our Saviour having held forth some Divine Truths to his Disciples, asketh this question; *Have ye understood these things?* they say unto him, *Yea Lord;* then saith he unto them; *Therefore, every Scribe that is instructed unto the Kingdom of God, is like unto a man that is an Householder which bringeth forth out of his Treasury things New and Old.*

The term therefore is a relative to the enlightened understanding, and stands as a Reason why the understanding soul should be as this Householder, bringing forth; as if he should have said, Because ye understood these things, therefore ye ought to bring them forth, like this Householder; and the good man mentioned, *Mat. 12.35. Which out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things.*

Whence I *Note*, what Divine Truths being received into the understanding, ought not to be there concealed, but to be brought forth to the glory of God, who hath discovered them, and to the edification and comfort of God's people, according to the measure of the gift given.

And to this Saint *Peter* witnesseth, *1 Pet. 4.10, 11. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold graces of God. If any man speak, let him speak, as the Oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it, as of the ability that God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

The like mind also was in *Paul*, who exhorteth the *Corinthians* to covet earnestly the best gifts; follow after Charity, saith he, and desire spiritual gifts; but rather that ye may Prophecy, *Because he that Prophesies, speaketh unto men to Edification, and Exhortation, and Comfort, 1 Cor. 14.3.* So likewise *Moses*, when his Servant would have had him forbid *Eldad* and *Medad* of Propheying in the Camp, he answered him thus; *Enviest thou for my sake, would to God all the Lord's people were Prophets, and the Lord would put his Spirit upon them.*

And although there be now no Propheying by extraordinary Revelation, but only that which is ordinarily wrought in the soul, through the operative power of the spirit in the exercise of the mind, and meditations in the word of God: yet the day of small things is not to be despised; for God will accomplish his work, not by might, nor by power, but by his own spirit; and although these ensuing considerations be not adorned with variety of tongues, nor such eloquence as human Wisdom teacheth; yet now in love they are tendered to thy consideration: If they bear an harmonious sound to the wisdom of God, and thou receive any Edification or Comfort thereby, let God have the glory, and me thy prayers for my further growth and increase in the grace of God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom I desire to be an obedient Subject and faithful Servant, although unworthy of so high a calling, and remain thine in all Christian Office.

Josias Bonham.

And now my Friend, art thou for Heaven design'd,
And to the way of Holiness inclin'd:
Lend me thine eye, thine ear, thy heart, and hand,
These lines with me to read, and understand.

Would we an holy state and glory win,
Let's search our hearts, and there the work begin,
By application of God's word thereto;
Preventing evils that from thence ensue.

The heart is naturally Corruptions seat,
Whence flows great sins that do us often cheat.
Obstructions great from thence doth often rise,
Like filthy Rubbish in our way it lies.

The which in wisdom must remov'd be,
If we an holy state, and Heaven would see:
Therefore with diligence, let's fall to work,
To search what Vermin in our hearts do lurk:

Unanimous let's be, go hand in hand,
Corruptions, Laws, and Power to withstand;
That we from slavery may be set free,
To serve the Lord in holy Sanctity.

Thine in the Lord,

J. B.

AN EPISTLE TO THE READER Of
this Ensuing Treatise.

It is man's misery since the Fall (having lost his God, and therewith his Happiness) that he knows not the way to return to Happiness again: Indeed every man in the world aims to make himself happy, but is at a loss, where, or in what to place his happiness, not considering the first make of man's noble Soul, which was like God; which can never be happy, or content without something Infinite and Eternal. Hence it is that man placeth happiness in Goods, not in Goodness, crying, *Who will shew us any Good*; any good serves turn, though but a shew of good; in the meantime the one thing needful is neglected; they see no need of this one thing needful; he is concerned with trifles, and trifles with his great concernment. And as he is to seek where, or in what to place his happiness to the way by which happiness is to be obtained, forgetting that irrevocable decree of the Almighty, *viz. That without Holiness no man shall see the Lord*. This way of Holiness thou hast here discovered in this Book, now this thou mayst assure thyself, that of all those things disputable, this is without all dispute on all hands, that holiness is the great thing designed by God; his threatenings are, that we should be Holy; his promises are, that we should effect Holiness; all his Afflictions, that we should be partakers of his Holiness. Christ prays that we should be Holy, and pleads that we should be Holy; the end of all Preaching, and of all the Ordinances, is, that we should be Holy: ever did any perish, but for want of holiness; God glories in this, that he is Holy God, He is glorious in Holiness: Christ is the Holy Child, Jesus, as a Holy Saviour; he had his Name Jesus, that he might save us from our sins: Wouldest thou go in that way towards Heaven, as not to miss, as many most Christians and foolish Virgins have done; why Holiness is this way; *the wayfaring man, though a Fool, shall not err therein*, Isa. 35.8.

Let me therefore intreat thee, whoever thou art that may be the Reader of this Book, to consider the great thing designed herein, *viz.* which is to shew that what is the only becoming Ornament, *viz.* Holiness; as for all other ornaments, they may perish, but this becomes thee for ever: Possibly I may say, if I be Holy, I must be with many frowns from an unworldly world; matter it not, there is in God's love more than the world's has frowns and smiles from the world not long; one smile from Christ in a dying Bed, will make amends for. Therefore fear not what will become thee; study what becomes thee, as Wise man once said, *Yet I know shall be well with them that fear God* but it shall not be well with the Wicked. Therefore I beseech you consider where you walk on the brink of Eternity, what provision is made for the world; Vessels of glory are afore prepared for glory; and be sure of that though you may own yourself and others may own you, yet God never own you, if you be not holy. Now, art thou one that sayest, as the disciple once to Christ, *Rabbi, where dwellest thou*, and he answered, *Come and see*; So say I, would thou know the Excellency, the Near Beauty, the Glory of Holiness, come and see; read this Treatise, pray that thine eyes may be anointed with eye-salve, and that he which is

Truth, may add thee into all Truth, who is sanctification, that he would sanctify thee; who shed his precious blood to wash us, that we might be Holy; who before the foundation of the world hath chosen us that we should be Holy, and that he would bless all means leading thereto; that his blessing may go along with the colors of that his Servant, the Author of this Book, is the unfeigned desires of him who is an unworthy Servant Jesus Christ, and thy Friend,

Jo. Norcott.

TO THE READER IN

Commendation of this Book.

Reader,

Two things are chiefly treated of in this ensuing Treatise, the Filthiness of Sin, and the Excellency of Holiness; the Covering of a Sinner, and the Ornament of a Saint: Nothing makes a Wicked man so much like the Devil, as Sin; nor nothing makes a Saint so much resemble Christ, as doth Grace and Holiness.

Grace makes man more man, yea, more than a man; but Sin un-man's man, yea makes him worse than a Beast: Sin is the Brat and Spawn of the Devil, but Grace is the Seed and Offspring of Christ; God loathes nothing so much as Sin; yet wicked men love nothing better. God's great design and labour is to destroy Sin; but man resolves to keep and cherish it. O what a Rebel is man to God! Sin is the greatest Thief and Deceiver in the World (for every one has more or less been cheated thereby) yet the most of men are greedy to entertain the Cheater. Nothing is such an Enemy to man as Sin, yet but few men will make War against it. Sin seeks to destroy the soul, yet some men will rather die than leave their Sin.

O what blindness and madness is in the heart of man! Sin separates man from God, and hides his face from him, yet man resolves to hug and hide his Sin. That must needs be the greatest evil, that deprives man of the greatest good, and exposes man to the greatest misery. He that makes a mock at Sin now, will *change his Note*, when the Sentence shall be pronounced, *Go ye Cursed*. If Sin be so odious, and Grace so excellent, what cause have we to take up a lamentation, that there should be so much of the one, and so little of the other in the world; that sin should be so countenanced and encouraged, and Grace and Holiness so such slighted and contemned.

Never was there greater need to stand up against Sin, and contend for Holiness, then in such days as these as Looseness and Licentiousness. This worthy Author has cast in his Mite in seasonable time; there are abundance of Professors, but too few that strive after the power of Godliness. Many strive to Preach well, and Dispute well, but few to Live well. I dare not say a man, who is of a false Religion, cannot be saved; yet, I will say, he that walks not holily and uprightly with God, cannot, though externally doth profess the truth.

This Book, Reader, whosoever thou art, may (with God's blessing) prove of great advantage to thee; for here seasonable Council for Saints and Sinners, both for the Professor and Profane.

First: Art thou a Sinner (I mean one not truly converted, one that has not (as yet) put on the Ornament Holiness, then read the latter part wherein thou mayest clearly perceive what a Cursed and Miserable state thou art in, whilst thou dost remain unconverted. Maybe thou art one that makes a mock at Religion and Conversion (for alas, there are some miserable Wretches that seek not to contradict and revile the very Word of God so ripe are they grown in Sin as Wickedness:) What Sinner soever thou art, let me mind thee with these two three things.

1. Consider thou hast an immortal soul that is of a precious worth and value, and that this soul thou art in danger to lose to all Eternity.

2. Consider the shortness and uncertainty of thy days, how soon thou mayest be cut off; and remember, if thou diest in thy Sins, having no interest in Christ, thou art undone and damned for evermore; there is no Repentance after death; let not the Devil tell thee that thou shalt die like a Beast, and have no Resurrection.

3. Consider what God's Word says; *Unless ye Repent, ye shall all likewise Perish*, Luk. 13.5. *And a man must be born again, or else cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, Joh. 3.3. and without Holiness no man shall see the Lord.

4. Consider with thyself to what end God has given a Law or Light in thy Conscience; and know assuredly, that if thou dost go on in Sin, minding not these inward reprovings of

Conscience, that it will rise up against thee, and Condemn thee in the dreadful day. Conscience truly enlightened, doth judge for God; I may say beforehand, and pass judgment too, and men may in part know how it is like to go with them hereafter, if they did but mind the Testimony of their Consciences; for if Conscience judges & condemns thee by the light of God's Word, you have cause to tremble at those Reprovings, and to fly to the Lord Jesus Christ, for he is, I may say, God's Viceroy; and doth, whilst rightly informed, judge for his Sovereign in Truth and Righteousness: The Lord help thee to consider these things before Repentance be hid from thy eyes.

5. Consider, if thou wouldest put on the comely or becoming Ornament of Christ and Holiness, then thou must put off thy filthy garments of Sin and Corruption; before thou canst put on the New man, thou must put off the Old.

1. And as to you that are called Saints, one word further let me say since I have this opportunity in my hand; take heed you rest not contented with the name of Saints, the form of Godliness, without the power, will do you no good in the day of Christ.

2. Remember the foolish Virgins were shut out; 'tis not enough to be Virgins, unless you and I have Oil in our Vessels. O labour for Grace, you know not what times of need are at hand; he that has the most, will have none to spare, and some will seek it too late.

3. Remember, and think upon the man that had not on the Wedding Garment: Know assuredly; that none will be made welcome, and lovingly entertained by the Bridegroom, but those only that have that excellent Garment on of Christ's Righteousness, Holiness, and Humility; and how many will the day of Christ find unprovided, notwithstanding the time and space which God doth afford us to make ready.

O look upon it as your chief work and business to dress, trim, and make yourselves ready; for at a time you think not of, the Son of man cometh; and that the labours of our Brother in the ensuing Treatise may be blessed to your advantage upon this very account, shall be the Prayers of him who is willing to serve you in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as strength shall be Communicated.

Benjamin Keach.

THE CHURCHES GLORY:

OR THE Becoming Ornament.

Being a Seasonable Word,

tending to the Provoking of Holiness in Believers,

raised from the dead.

Psal. 93.5. Holiness becometh thine House, O Lord, for ever.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the words are Opened and Explicated.

Several things are in these words very considerable for our Christian Edification: First, by way of Division. Secondly, by way of Explication. Thirdly, by way of Doctrine. Fourthly, by way of Application.

First, By way of Division.

First, we have in the words a subject bearing the Denomination of an *House*: Secondly, the person to whom the right of Propriety doth belong. And that is the Lord: *Thine House O Lord*. Thirdly, we have the Ornaments of the house, which do most Adorn the same to make it comely and delightful unto the Lord. And that is Holiness: *Holiness becometh thine House, O Lord*. Fourthly, we have here set forth unto us the duration of this Ornament Holiness, how long its comeliness is acceptable in the sight of God; and that is here said to be for Ever; *Holiness becometh Thine House O Lord for Ever*.

Secondly, By way of Explication.

We have several particulars very considerable. First, who this Lord is that claimeth propriety in this house; Secondly, what the House is and how considered; Thirdly, what Holiness is; And Fourthly how far the term Ever doth Extend.

Of these particulars Briefly. And First who this Lord is that claimeth propriety in this House.

Now among the multitude of Scripture Testimonies which do unfold this Question, that of *Jeremiah* is very full and clear; where the Lord, by the Prophet, doth discover himself in these words; *But the Lord is the true God; He is the living God, and an everlasting King, at whose wrath the Earth shall tremble, and the Nations shall not be able to abide his Indignation, Jer. 10.10.*

To this may be added, *Hebrews 3.4.* the Words whereof are these; *For every House is builded by some Man, but he that built all things is God,* who is a Spirit, or spiritual Essence, pure, perfect, eternal, incomprehensible, having his Being of and from himself, and giving Being to all Creatures, of which he is the supreme Governour, Orderer, and Disposer, by his Omnipotency, Providentiality, Omnipresency, and Omniscieny, according to his Infinite Wisdom and Divine Will, *Ep. 1.11.* Thus much to the first particular; Who it is that claimeth Propriety in the House.

The Second Question concerns the House itself, under what Consideration it may be taken.

The term House doth signify a Dwelling-place, a place of Abode, Habitation, or of Rest.

Now it is not to be conceived, that any one particular place can comprehend an Incomprehensible and Infinite God.

Do not I fill Heaven and Earth, saith the Lord, Jer. 23.24. If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there, saith the Psalmist: If I make my Bed in Hell, behold thou art there: If I take the wings of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the Sea, even there shall thy Hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me, Psal. 139.7, 8, 9, 10, 11; 12.

So that God dwells in Heaven by his glorious essential Presence, in Hell by his Wrath and just Judgments, in the World by his common Mercies, and in his Saints by his Spirit, whereby they are regenerated, sanctified, assisted, and assured of his Favour, in the use of all his Ordinances. And under this last Consideration, is my ensuing Discourse, I shall consider the House of God: That a Believing people in whom the Covenant of Grace is confirmed by the indwellings of the Spirit of Grace in its Operations and powerful Influences, whereby they are drawn forth to walk with the Lord Christ, in the Faith and Practice of his Truth, according to his Revealed Will contained in his Word; such a People upon a Scripture account may be called the Lord's House.

The Apostle *Peter* writing to the Saints scattered abroad, considering them as People in Covenant with Christ, and Partakers of the Spirit unto Sanctification and Obedience, putteth them under this Denomination; *Ye also as lively Stones, saith he, are built up a spiritual House, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual Sacrifice acceptable to God by Jesus Christ: So Hebr. 3.6. Christ as a Son over his own House, whose House are we, if we hold fast the confidence*

and the rejoicing of the Hope firm into the end. The Believing *Ephesians* likewise being in Christ by Faith, and Christ in them by his Spirit operating and working them up to Sanctification and Obedience, and sealing the Promises unto them. The Apostle considering their near Relation unto God, which they were hereby brought unto, hath these Expressions concerning them:

Now therefore, saith he, ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God; and are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner Stone; in whom all the Building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for an Habitation of God through the Spirit. Thus God's People are his Habitation: as God hath said, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People,* 2 Cor. 6.16. The Prophet *Isaiah* doth bear testimony to this truth, *Isai. 66.1, 2. Thus saith the Lord, The Heaven is my Throne, & the Earth is my Footstool: where is the House that ye build unto me? saith the Lord: and where is the place of my Rest? for all those things hath my hand made, and all those things have been saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word.*

Two things briefly we may note in these words: First, the Question propounded; *Where is the House that ye build unto me? saith the Lord: and where is the place of my Rest.* Secondly, the Lord's Answer to his own Question: *But to this man will I look even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit and trembleth at my Word.* Now how will the Lord look to this man? surely to make his abode with him, to take up his residence and dwelling with him and in him by his Spirit of Grace, quickening, reviving, comforting and replenishing the Soul with assurances of his Favour in Christ; endowing them with such Gifts and Qualifications of Grace, whereby they are enabled to offer up spiritual Sacrifices of Prayers and Praises acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

I dwell in the high and holy place, saith the Lord, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. *Judas*, one of Christ's Disciples (but not *Iscaiot*) putting forth this Question to his Lord: Lord, saith he, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the World? Jesus answered and said unto him: *If any man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* Now how will the Father and the Son come to such a Soul to take up their abode? Surely, by that illuminating and quickening spirit of Truth proceeding from the Father and the Son, enlightening the Understanding, informing the Judgment, rectifying the Will, subduing Corruption, and quickening to act in holy Duties, assuring and confirming the Soul in the Favour of the Father and the Son unto eternal Life, according to that Promise of God held forth by *Ezekiel* 11.19, 20. *I will give them one heart, and I will put a new Spirit within them, and I will take the stony*

heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh: whence note by the way, that the Spirit is here said to be a new Spirit, not because it is any new erected thing in itself, for it was of old from eternity: but first, because by its powerful influences and operations it doth take up its residence in that Creature that was formerly destitute thereof; and so it is new to the Creature. And secondly, because it doth erect a new Work in the Creature; so as to alter and change the Inclinations and Dispositions of the Heart, by destroying the Carnality, Earthliness and Rebelliousness thereof towards the things of God: which is signified by the stony Heart, and making it tender and pliable to yield a cheerful conformity to the Will of God, which is signified by the Heart of Flesh. This great Promise, as to the end of it, is further expressed in these words: *That they may walk in my Statutes, and keep mine Ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my People and I will be their God.*

To the same effect are the Words of the Apostle *Paul*, Rom. 8.11, 12, 13. *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you; He that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you: Therefore Brethren, we are Debtors not to the Flesh, to live after the Flesh; for if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die: But if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live: Hereby saith John, We know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.* The Apostle *Paul* giving Instructions to *Timothy*, concerning the qualifications of Church-Officers, maketh this application to *Timothy*; *These things Write I unto thee, that thou mayest know how to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and ground of the Truth*, 1 Tim. 3.15. So that, first, God's people are called the house of God, as they have the indwellings of God by his Spirit, in its Influences, Operations, and Laws, residing in their hearts: Secondly, They are called the Church of God, as they are a company, or Congregation of people imbodyed together by the Ligaments and Nerves of God's word, and walk together in the observation of all his Laws and Ordinances, according to his Will. Thirdly, such a people or Congregation are called the Pillar and ground of the truth, as they perform the office of a Pillar in upholding and propagating truth's interest before the men of the world, by doctrine and practice answerable thereunto, as the Apostle to the *Ephesians* teacheth; *To the intent*, saith he, *that now unto the Principalities and Powers in Heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God*, Eph. 3.10. So that God's people within the Evangelical Covenant of Grace, believing on Christ, and conforming to Christ in his holy Laws, Orders, and Ordinances, according to the Gospel-dispensation and improving the same to the obtaining Victory, or overcoming of their own Corruptions, and inordinate affections to self and the World in its Vanities, and live to God in holy Sanctity by the indwelling of God by his Spirit in the heart: Such a people are by the Spirits demonstration, called the House of God, the Church of God, and the Temple of God, 1 Cor. 3.16, 17. And such as *overcome*, Christ makes *Pillars* in the same, Rev. 3.12. In which Temple God doth dwell by his Spirit; as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 6.19, 20. *What? know you not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price,*

therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which is God's, chap. 3. ver. 16, 17. Know you not, saith the Apostle, that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you; if any man defile the Temple of God, him will God destroy; for, the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are. The Temple which *Solomon* built, was called the Lord's house, upon four Considerations:

First, He made choice of that house above all other, for an house of Sacrifice.

Secondly, He Sanctifieth that house to himself for that purpose.

Thirdly, He placed there his name, that his eyes, and his heart might be there perpetually.

Fourthly, He promised such acceptation of the Worship there performed according to that dispensation, that his eyes should be open, and his ears attentive to the Prayers there made, *ver. 15.* and for a clear Testimony thereof, he filled the house with his glory, *ver. 2.* In all these Considerations, God's faithful people may be accounted his house:

For first, God hath chosen them, and builds them up a Spiritual House, *1 Pet. 2.5. A habitation for God, through the Spirit, Eph. 2.22.* to the use of spiritual Service, and the offering up the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving to his name.

Secondly, He sanctifieth them, and fitteth them thereunto, *1 Cor. 6.11. Eph. 5.26.*

Thirdly, His eyes and his heart are upon them, beholding with delight their Sacrifices and Services performed in Faith and Love.

Fourthly, He so accepts of their worship performed in Spirit and Truth, that his ears are open to their Prayers; and for their consolation and assurance, he fills them *with Joy unspeakable, and full of glory, 1 Pet. 1.8.* Whence note by the way, that when a people's Sacrifice of Prayer, and Praise, and other obedience, doth arise from an indwelling of the Spirit of Faith and Sanctifying grace, and is offered upon the Altar, Jesus Christ, in the golden Censer of his merits; this doubtless is highly accepted of God, in what place soever it be performed according to the words of Christ; *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them, Math. 18.20.* The Conclusion drawn from these considerations is this, That although God doth dwell in Heaven by his divine Essence and all-glorious presence, and so Heaven may properly be called his house and dwelling-place; yet God dwelleth also spiritually in, and among his people, who may be called his house or dwelling-place, where he doth Record his Name, and where he doth give his Blessings of Grace, and Mercy, as the Apostles in their Epistles to the Churches do declare, and the Author to the Hebrews doth testify in these words; *But Christ, as a Son over his own House, whose House are we, if we hold fast*

the Confidence and the Rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. Thus much in Answer to the second Question.

The third particular we have to consider by way of Explication, is, the Furniture or comely Ornaments of this House, and these are here comprehended under the term *Holiness; Holiness becometh thine House O Lord:* Holiness is an Ornament which doth adorn and beautify both the inside and outside of a Christian, or Christian Society; it is curiously wrought in the inward man by the In-dwellings of God's holy Word and Spirit in the influences and operations thereof; and it branches forth itself in those visible actions and practices that are agreeable to God's Will.

This Ornament comprehendeth within its circumference, the great work of Transformation, sometimes called Renovation, or new Creation, according to the Apostle's exhortation. *And be not conformed to this World, but be ye Transformed by the Renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect Will of God,* Rom. 12.2. And saith the same Apostle, *Eph. 4.23, 24. Be ye Renewed in the Spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the New Man, which after God, is Created in Righteousness and true Holiness:* When the mind is transformed from Carnality to stand in the things of God, it may then be said to be Holy: The will also may be said to be Holy when it is transformed from that stubbornness and Rebelliousness, which by corrupted Nature it standeth in against the will of God, and is become submissive and obedient to the will of God, so as freely to observe it in all his Commands, and freely to submit unto his Will in all his dispensations; saying, The Will of the Lord be done.

So likewise the affections, when they are transformed from Earthly objects to Heavenly objects; when the Meditations, Desires, Love, and Delights, are all seated in God, and in the things of God; this may be accounted holiness in the inward man; holiness in the outward man doth arise from this inward work as from the root, and brancheth forth itself in word and action; as that holy man *David* saith of himself, *That his mouth should shew forth the praise of God,* Psal. 34.1. *and his tongue should talk of his Righteousness all the day,* Psal. 71.24. It was the Prayer of *Paul*, that holy Servant of God, in the behalf of the believing *Romans*, *That with one mind, and one mouth they might glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* Rom. 15.6. The mind and the mouth should go together in those things where the glory of God, and the edification of the Church is concerned; yea, all the members of the body, as *David* saith, *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy Testimony; I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments,* Psal. 119.59.

It is not enough for a man only to withdraw his affections from Carnal objects, but he must have also his eye fixed upon the Lord, and his Truth, with the Professors thereof; as *David* saith, *Psal. 101.6. Mine eyes shall be upon the Faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with*

me; Neither is it enough for a man to have his hand shut from doing any action of violence or oppression, but he must have it open also in doing works of Mercy and Charity, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the Oppressed go free, *Isa. 58.6.* to be ready to Distribute, and willing to Communicate to such as are in Want, *Tim. 6.18.* So that when all the faculties of the inward man, and members of the outward man act in their places according to the will of God, by virtue of his sanctifying and quickening Spirit that gives motion thereunto: When a man is set free from sin, and become the Servant of God, he hath his fruit unto holiness, and the end will be Everlasting Life, *Rom. 6.22.* So that holiness is the perfection of purity in Nature, Word, and Works; the which perfection is only found in God; but in reference to man, holiness consisteth in pardon of sin, and in transformation of Nature, by the renewing of the mind, from corrupted Nature to a renewed or new-begotten Nature which is wrought by the operations of the holy-Spirit, in such thoughts, words, and actions as arise from that original: And thus much by way of Explication concerning the term *Holiness.*

The fourth particular concerns the duration of this Ornament which is expressed in the Text by the term Ever: *Holiness becometh thine House O Lord for Ever.* The term Ever, doth here signify Time without limitation or end, and so it is taken sometimes in Scripture: We have the Lord's Kingly Office in respect of the duration of it, set forth by this term Ever; *The Lord sitteth King for Ever,* *Psal. 29.10.* So the Apostle *Paul,* setting forth to the *Thessalonians* the second coming of Christ, and the happy Estate of the Faithful at that day, when the dead in Christ shall rise first; *Then we,* saith he, *which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord; wherefore comfort one another with these words,* *Thess. 4.* whence I apprehend the term Ever to signify Time, without limitation or end, which is also called Eternity, or Life Eternal, *Math. 25.46.* And so having considered the words by way of Explication, I shall proceed to the Doctrine and Application.

CHAP. II.

The Doctrine Propounded and Confirmed.

The point of Doctrine, or Observation, which doth offer itself to our Christian consideration from the words thus explicated, is briefly this:

Holiness is an Ornament ever becoming the people of God:

Or thus,

It ever becometh God's people to be an Holy people.

This Doctrine is confirmed by such Scriptures as do shew the Grounds and Reasons why it ever becometh God's people to be an holy people: And the first ground I shall present to consideration, is this; because they do therein most resemble God their Heavenly Father, and Jesus Christ their Elder Brother.

Paul to the Colossians gives this Exhortation; Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the Old man with his deeds, and have put on the New man, which is renewed in knowledge after the Image of Him that Created him. The same Apostle in his Epistle to the Ephesians, gives the like Exhortation; Put off (saith he) concerning the former Conversation the Old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful Lusts, and be renewed in the Spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the New man, which after God, is Created in Righteousness and true Holiness. In which words we may note:

First, That the Lord calls for a renewed mind, and not only the mind, but also the whole man.

Secondly: The way in which this work of Renovation is wrought; and that is through a true and sanctified knowledge of God: *Put on the New man which is renewed in Knowledge.*

Thirdly: Here is the likeness or Image into which the New man is renewed, and that is after the Image of Him that Created him after God, or the likeness of God.

Fourthly: Here is the particulars wherein this Image or Resemblance of the New Creature unto the Creator, doth consist; and that is in Righteousness and true Holiness.

Agreeable hereunto are the words of the Apostle to the *Corinthians: But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord; So that Holiness doth most resemble the Image of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ; therefore it ever becometh the Lord's people to be an holy people.*

A second Ground and Reason why it ever becometh God's people to be an holy people, is, because God hath chosen them thereunto in Christ, before the foundation of the world, as the Apostle teacheth the *Ephesians; According (saith he) as he hath chosen us, in Him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in Love. In this Scripture we may note these three particulars.*

First: God's choice of his people.

Secondly: Upon what account this choice is made; and that is, not our works foreseen, but Christ's merits; he hath chosen us in him.

Thirdly: To what end this choice is made; and that is, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in Love. But if it be asked how hath God chosen his people in his Son unto holiness before the foundation of the world? I Answer, God did from Eternity see the lost condition of his people, through their transgression of his Law; and their defacing his Image of holiness, in which he did at first Create them: He also did foresee, and in himself purpose and decree a satisfaction to his Justice, in and by Jesus Christ, his obedience to his just Law, which man had transgressed; and by his suffering death for sin in the same human nature that had sinned, that thereby a perfect Righteousness and Justification might be wrought for man-kind, that all those who through grace, and the operations of the holy Spirit are in time brought over to believe in Jesus Christ, should be justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the Law, and sanctified to the obedience of Christ, and to acceptance with the Father through him. And so God beholding his people from Eternity, in that Righteousness that Christ by his perfect obedience to the Law, should in time obtain; and in that satisfaction which he should make to divine Justice by his sufferings on the Cross: God also beholding his people in that work of Regeneration and Sanctification, which in time Christ by his Spirit should work and effect in them, did accept and choose them in this means, to be a people to the praise and glory of his grace; in relation whereunto are these words of the Apostle to the *Ephesians*; *For we are his Workmanship, saith he, Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*, Eph. 2.10. So that God's people ought ever to be an holy people, because they are chosen thereunto from Eternity. And this is the second Reason.

A third Ground and Reason why it ever becometh God's people to be an holy people, is, because they are called thereunto with an holy calling, as the Apostle to the *Thessalonians* saith; *God hath not called us unto Uncleanness, but unto Holiness*. The Apostle also writing to *Timothy*, speaking in the words before of God, *Who (saith he) hath saved us, and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began*.

In these words we have the Lord's act of saving his people, set forth unto us in two particulars: First, he Saved us. Secondly, he Called us; whereby the term Saved, I do apprehend that free and full Redemption from Sin and the Wrath of God, due to man for sin, which Jesus Christ, the unspotted Lamb of God, hath by his perfect and unsinning obedience, wrought for Man-kind; for which obedience sake, the Father doth give to his people a free and full Remission of their sins, with everlasting Salvation.

And by the term Called, I understand the operating power of Christ's Spirit, bringing persons into the way of Salvation, and investing them with the holy Calling, whereby they may receive the privileges of the Gospel; that is, Adoption, Sanctification, and Justification, as *John* 1.12. *1 Cor.* 6.11. which the Spirit of Christ doth work either immediately, as in the Apostles, or more ordinarily in the Ministry of the Word, plainly and purely set forth to the understanding,

to the producing Faith, Regeneration, and Sanctification, whereby the Creature is called forth to walk with God in that way whereunto it hath pleased the Father to annex the promise of salvation, according to those words of the Apostle to the *Thessalonians*; *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you Brethren, beloved of the Lord; because God hath from the Beginning, chosen you to Salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the Truth.* Believers therefore, are the persons that are saved and called, not according to their works, but according to the purpose and grace of God, given in Christ Jesus before the world began; so that man's works are no ways meritorious of Salvation, nor any original ground of God's love to man; but Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification, together with all the means appertaining thereunto, are God's free gift to man upon the account of Jesus Christ; to the end, that man in a diligent improvement of the same, might bring forth the fruit of holiness to the praise & glory of his name; God hath called his people unto holiness, with an holy calling, therefore it cometh them always to be an holy people, suitable to their Call. And this is the third Reason.

A fourth Ground and Reason, why it ever cometh God's people to be an holy people, is, because God hath enjoined holiness upon his people by special command: The Lord said to the Children of *Israel*, to whom he had given his Laws, Statutes, and Ordinances: *Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy, for I am the Lord your God, and ye shall keep my Statutes, and do them, I am the Lord which sanctified you.* As if he should have said, *I am the Lord your God which have chosen you unto myself, to be an holy people; and to that end, I have sanctified unto you the means of holiness, therefore sanctify yourselves through a careful and diligent improvement of the means that you may be holy.*

So the Apostle *Peter* gives the like exhortation by virtue of the same command: *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation, because it is written, be ye holy, for, I am holy,* 1 Pet. 1.15, 16. So that God's people are to be an holy people, because they are enjoined thereunto by special command. And this is the fourth Reason.

A fifth Ground and Reason why it ever cometh God's people to be an holy people, may be taken from the consideration of the beautifulness of holiness: It doth beautify and adorn the Christian, and the Christian-profession; or the profession of Christianity. It is of great excellency to the advancement of God's glory, to the promoting of the Gospel, and to make Christian performances in the way thereof delightful in the sight of God; and therefore the spirit of God by the *Psalmist* hath this exhortation unto the Sons and Daughters of men: *Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty; give unto the Lord the glory and strength; give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,* Psal. 96.

A sixth Ground and Reason why it ever becometh God's people to be an holy people, is, because they are a people unto whom God hath made exceeding great and precious *promises*, 2 Pet. 1.4.

The Apostle *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, making a recital of many excellent *promises* which God hath made to his people, as to dwell in them, and walk in them, to be a God unto them, and to accept them as a people unto himself, repeats an exhortation laid down by the Prophet *Isaiah*, to *come out, to be separate, and not to touch the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*: As if the Lord should say, my Divine power and providence shall be over them for their protection; my Spirit of Wisdom and Counsel shall be in them by its influences and operations, to instruct them in the way of Life; My mercy shall be exercised in remission of their sins: The experiences of my Love shall replenish their hearts with consolation and support in time of trouble; My Righteousness shall plead their cause, and right their wrongs against all their Oppressors: As a Father will I take care of them in this their present Pilgrimage, and interest them in an Heavenly and Everlasting Inheritance, that it may be well with them for ever. Upon these and the like considerations the Apostle groundeth this Exhortation. *Having these promises* (dearly beloved) *let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*, 2 Cor. 7.1.

So that God's people are a people unto whom God hath freely given exceeding great and precious Promises; therefore it becometh them to be an Holy people: And so I shall proceed to some Considerations by way of Application; only make a brief recital of the six particulars laid down for the proof of the point; namely, *It ever becometh God's people to be an Holy people*; and to be found therein, is matter of great concernment.

First, Because they do therein most resemble God their Heavenly Father.

Secondly: Because they are thereunto Elected in Christ from Eternity.

3dly: Because they are thereunto called with an Holy means or calling.

Fourthly: Because God hath enjoined holiness upon his people by special Command.

Fifthly: Because holiness is a beautifying Ornament unto a Christian and Christianity.

Sixthly: Because they are a people unto whom God hath made exceeding great and precious promises.

CHAP. III.

Containing some Considerations, by way of Application.

The foregoing Considerations may be of use unto us in several particulars by way of information.

First: To inform our Judgments wherein the beauty and comeliness of a Christian doth consist; that is to say, not in fleshly beauty, nor the adornings of gay Apparel; but in Holiness. God delighteth in the likeness of himself, where he seeth his own Image in a person or people, that is the soul he delighteth to honour with the Communications of his choicest favours: *The Lord hath set apart him that is godly, for himself*, Psal. 4.3.

Secondly: We are hereby informed into the original or first moving cause of holiness in a people, with the means and promises thereunto appertaining; and that is God's electing Love in Christ Jesus, as the Apostle teacheth: *But God who is Rich in Mercy for his great Love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; by Grace ye are saved*, Eph. 2.4. *and herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us; and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*, 1 John 4.10. So that Jesus Christ, with all the means of holiness, and promises thereunto appertaining, are the effects of the Father's Love; see *Deut. 7.6, 7, 8*.

Thirdly: We are hereby informed into the knowledge of the will of God concerning holiness in his people: It is certainly the will of God that his people should be an holy people, seeing he hath chosen and called them thereunto, as the effects of his Love towards them: *For this is the will of God, even your Sanctification, that ye should abstain from Fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his Vessel in Sanctification and Honour; for God hath not called us to Uncleanness, but unto Holiness*. So that it is the will of God that his people should be an holy people.

Fourthly: It may inform us of our Duty in answer to God's command: God's command implieth his people's duty in obedience to the command, by a careful improvement of the means which he hath ordained to accomplish that end: The Lord said to the *Israelites* of old, *Sanctify yourselves, and be ye holy, for I am the Lord which sanctify you*, Levit. 20.7, 8. As if he should say, I am the Lord which set you apart for myself, and sanctify the means whereby

you may be an holy people; therefore sanctify yourselves by a careful and diligent walking in the use of that means, that you may be an holy people unto me: So likewise the Apostle to the *Romans* saith, *If ye through the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the body, ye shall live*, Rom. 8.13. Also to the *Philippians* he gives this Exhortation; *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure*, Phil. 2.12, 13. All which Scriptures do shew that God is the chief Author of the means, and the mover to the means; yet there is something enjoined on the Creature's part in obedience to the command, wherein the Creature by the direction and assistance of the means, ought to be active in the things of God which concern its own salvation, and the *Edification, Comfort, and Assurance* of others; and that not upon the account of merit or desert on the Creature's part, but to glorify God that hath freely given forth both means and merit in his Son, whom God the Father hath ordained supreme Head, King, and Governour to his Church and People; that men might *honour the Son* by obedience to his Laws, as they *honour the Father*; unto which obedience, through Faith in the merits of Christ, God the Father hath annexed the promise of *Salvation* of his own free Love and rich Mercy: so that *Salvation* is on God's part an act of Mercy; on Christ's part an act of Merit; on man's part it is undeserved in his best obedience: for, *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth Mercy*, Rom. 9.16.

A second Use which the afore-mentioned considerations may direct us unto, is a use of Admiration: It may raise up our Souls to behold with Admiration God's great Love, and rich Mercy manifested in all his proceedings, in, and by Jesus Christ towards man, (a sinful and undeserving Creature) who by sin had dishonoured God, defaced his Image of Righteousness and true Holiness, wherein he was at first Created, and deprived himself of the Paradise of God, and made himself an object of his displeasure, according to due desert.

Now that God should look upon the Creature in its lost condition and corrupted state (from which he was no way able to recover himself) with such an eye of pity, and bowels of compassion, as to lay help upon one that is mighty, even Jesus Christ his only Son, both God and Man, to take satisfaction in him that sinned not, for the world of Sinners: And by his grace to accept those unto the adoption of Sons, that by *Faith* receive *Jesus Christ*, as in the Gospel he is tendered, *Joh. 1.12*. and to repair the decays of Nature, and to restore that Image of holiness which by sin was defaced; to pardon the sin of Sinners, and to impute Righteousness unto them without the deeds of the Law; to behold the Creature in the Righteousness of his Son, and to bestow upon him Heavenly felicity and eternal life, is admirable Mercy, and he is *to be admired in all them that believe it*, 2 Thes. 1.10. They may say with the Psalmist, *What is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man, that thou visitest him*, Psal. 8.4. And with the Apostle; *O the depth of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be*

recompensed unto him again? for of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever Amen, Rom. 11.33, 34, 35, 36.

Thirdly: Is it so, that holiness ever becometh the people of God; and to be found adorned therewith, is matter of great concernment? it may then put us upon a third Use by way of Examination, to move us to examine our own hearts and ways, how far we have attained to the Ornament of holiness, which so becometh the people of God: And in the prosecution of this Duty, two things are to be considered.

First: Our hearts, or inward man.

Secondly: Our ways, or outward walkings: We may know our holiness by our Heavenliness: Hath the Lord through the illuminations of his Spirit, and the operations thereof manifested to thy Soul the great sufferings of Christ, to procure the pardon of thy sins, together with the privileges of Adoption, Justification, and Salvation? hath he shewed thee the dignity of Christ, in respect of his Offices, King, Priest, and Prophet? hath he sealed the benefits and privileges thereof to thy Soul, with the signet of his Love, through the demonstrations of his holy Spirit to thy great Consolation in the enjoyments thereof? so that thy mind and affections are thereby raised up from Earthly and Carnal objects, and seated on God with so earnest a desire and delight in him, that thou canst truly say with the Psalmist, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee, Psal. 73.25. Thy Testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart, Psal. 119.111.* When thou canst experience by a supernatural work of grace, that thy affections are so fixed on the Lord, that thou canst sincerely love him for his own sake; and in love to him, bear an affectionate esteem to, and delight in his Testimonies, Statutes, Ordinances, and Commands, so as to make them thy *choice*, Psal. 119.30. or *chosen* Subjects of thy meditations, and rule of observations, when thou canst experience thy will by grace, made free to stand in the will of God, so as in love to him, submit and wait upon him in all his dispensations; serve, worship, and obey him in all his institutions: When thou canst experience thy desires drawn forth towards him, with holy longings, thirstings, and pantings after more enjoyments of him, and supplications to him for further strength and power of grace to assist thee, support and uphold thee against those corruptions and temptations that attend thee, lest thou shouldest thereby be overcome to sin against God to the dishonour of his Name, the grief of his Spirits, and stain the profession of his Truth.

When thou canst experience this end in thy desires and supplications for his assisting grace, as aforesaid; not only that thou mightest not dishonour God by sin, but also that thou mightest honour him by such motions and actions as may answer his will in his commands, to the experiencing of self-ends, self-righteousness, self-merits, and carnal delights, and the vain pleasures of this world, in a dying or dead condition in thee, and thee dead to them, so as not

to have any motion or action thereunto approved by thee, when thou canst experience such a Love to the Lord, as that for his sake thou canst perform Offices of Love towards *all men*, as *opportunity* serveth thee; and that as they are his Workmanship by Creation; but especially to his *Saints*, as they bare his Image by *Regeneration*; for *every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him*, 1 Joh. 5.1. So when thou canst experience such a supernatural work of grace in thee, every experience will be an evidence that thou hast attained unto a good degree in the ornament of holiness, and hast an interest in the promises thereunto belonging.

But on the contrary; if thy mind, will, affection, desire, delight and meditation is chiefly exercised on carnal and worldly objects, with expectation of content therein; but as to the things of God, which concern his glory, and the eternal welfare of thy Soul, thou hast but little affection thereto, thy mind and meditation but little exercised therein, thy love, desire and delights but cold to the exercise thereof; it is an evident sign thou art but in the Old Man, and in thy corrupt Estate, in the carnal mind, earthly affections, obstinate will, worldly desires, and vain delights thou hast not yet put on the New Man, which after God is Created in Righteousness and true Holiness; for, look how far a man hath proceeded in the work of Mortification of the Old Man with his deeds, and in putting on the New Man, with the fruits and effects thereof: so far hath he attained towards the Ornament of Holiness.

Wherefore first: Let us examine ourselves, and consider what sins we have cast off, what Lusts we have subdued, what Corruptions we have conquered, through the holy means and Heavenly calling, and divine assistance which we have Received,

They that are Christ's, have Crucified the Flesh with the affections and Lusts, Gal. 5.24.

Secondly: Let us examine ourselves, and consider how far we have proceeded in putting on the New Man; what *Works of Faith*? what *Labour of Love*? what *Patience of Hope* we have been exercised into the glory of his name, that gives the means, and commands obedience.

It may be some Soul may say within itself, *I have spent much time in hearing God's Word Preached, I have been often in Prayer and Fasting, and in receiving the Sacraments; yea, and have preached in Christ's Name to others: and many Alms have I given, and many good deeds to my Neighbours and Brethren have I done, as need required: also, many Sins and Vices, which formerly I delighted in, I have now cast off: therefore I hope I have attained to a good degree in the Ornament of Holiness.*

These Exercises of Preaching and Hearing God's Word, Prayer and Fasting, Alms and good Deeds done to Neighbours and Brethren, are all Duties belonging to a Christian, which he ought to do according to the measure of the Gift given: But let us examine our End, in the performance of such Undertakings; it is the End that crowns the Action: if we perform these or

the like Christian Duties to by and base Ends, as to be seen of men, to obtain the favour and applause of some persons with whom such Duties are in estimation; or because it is the Fashion or Custom of the Country wherein we live, at least, of the better sort: or for lucre of some temporal Benefit; or that thereby we might deserve God's Love, or purchase Heaven. These and the like Ends will be unto our performances, but like unto the dead Flies in the Apothecaries Ointment; it will destroy the sweet Savour thereof in the Nostrils of God, and we shall be forced, at last, to lie down in sorrow with that doleful Sentence, *I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity*, Matt. 7.22, 23.

But when Christian Performances do flow from an inward work of Grace received, from a renewed Mind and sincere Love to God; to the end we may thereby glorify him in faithful Obedience to his Commands; and obtain strength against corruptions and temptations that do so frequently assault us; and that we may be instrumental to edify and build up others also in the Knowledge of God, and in obedience to his Will; that they may set their hope in God, and glorify his Name by becoming obedient to his Commandments: then the more active we are in those Christian Duties, the more is our Comeliness in the fruits of Holiness; the more is our power and strength against our Corruptions; the more increase of Grace; the more communion with God; the more we glorify his Name, the more peace of Conscience, the more comfortable enjoyments of God's Favour, and the more rejoicing in his Promise of our eternal Happiness through Jesus Christ.

Wherefore let us examine ourselves, first, whether we are moved or acted by a right Principle, *viz.* an inward work of the Spirit of Grace, quickening, sanctifying and renewing the inward man. Secondly, whether we perform our Christian Duties in a right manner according to the Direction of Christ in his Word. Thirdly, whether we perform them to a right end; *viz.* that God may have the Glory in all our Obedience, through Jesus Christ: and if we can experience these particulars, we may have the comfortable assurance of God's favourable acceptance of us upon the account of Christ as an holy people comely in his sight.

But happily some Soul may say, I have a long time pressed after the attainment of Holiness; and I have thought it hath been from a right Principle, in a right manner, and to a right end; and yet me thinks I cannot attain to the perfection of Holiness, so as to be without many spots and stains of Sin; by reason of which, I am afraid, my best and holiest Duties will not find acceptance with God.

In answer whereunto, we may consider that spots and stains of Sin may be and are in the best of God's Servants, by reason of our present state composed of Flesh and Spirit, two contraries, the Flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, which occasioneth much weakness and frailty in the best of God's Servants; by reason of which weakness, and the strong temptations many times that do assault them, for want of a careful

watchfulness, the poor Servant of God is overtaken with Sin; although he approveth not of it, nor delighteth in it, but beholdeth it with sorrow and grief of heart: And in this condition God sometimes suffereth his dearest Servants, for good Reasons; as, first, because they should not be exalted above measure with high thoughts and conceits of themselves; but beholding their own Imperfections, they might be the more humbled in the sense of their own weaknesses.

Secondly, that they may be provoked to depend upon God: and to seek unto him for his Grace and holy Spirit, to comfort, support and strengthen them upon all occasions.

Thirdly, that seeing their own imperfect state, they might be moved to prize Jesus Christ and that atonement made by him with the higher estimation: *The whole have no need of a Physician, but they that are sick: Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* This is not spoken to encourage any to continue in sin; that Grace may abound, *Rom. 6.1.* but by way of support to that Soul that seeth it his duty to be holy in all manner of conversation; and therefore presseth after it; but lying under the sense of his own weakness is cast down with doubts and fears of his not being accepted with God, because he cannot attain to Holiness in the perfection thereof. But although the full perfection of Holiness will not be attained till this vile Body be changed, and this Mortal hath put on Immortality: yet notwithstanding when the Creature's Endeavours after Holiness do arise from the work of Grace, and renewed Mind, and are performed in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ; the spots and stains of Sin being beheld with grief of heart, and the Blood of Christ thereunto applied by Faith, both Person and Performance shall assuredly be accepted, and through the sanctifying Grace of Christ shall appear in the comely Ornament of Holiness, without spot before the Throne of God, who did from eternity behold and accept his people in his Son, and not in themselves; as hath been before considered.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Use of Exhortation.

A Fourth Use that presenteth itself unto us from the aforementioned Considerations, is, an Use of Exhortation. Hath God chosen his people in Christ, that they should be holy; hath he called them thereunto with an holy Calling; hath he commanded them to be holy in all manner

of Conversation. Then let us be exhorted to strive to answer God's end in electing, calling and commanding us to be holy, by pressing after Holiness in the use of that means that God hath ordained to accomplish that End: let us put on that noble Spirit of Blessed *Paul*, that Servant of God; *I press towards the Mark*, saith he, *for the prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus*, Phil. 3.14. Holiness is an high Calling; yea, it is an high Calling of God in Jesus Christ, well becoming the people of God. Men are most earnest after a Commodity when they consider these two particulars in it: first, the Necessity of it: secondly, the Excellency of it: wherefore to press on the Exhortation on our Spirits, let us consider Holiness in these two particulars.

First, Holiness is of great necessity: *for*, saith the Scripture, *without Holiness no man shall see the Lord*. Hebr. 12.14. Want of Holiness deprives a Soul of the comfortable enjoyment of God.

Adam when he had defiled himself with Sin was thrust out of Paradise from the comfortable enjoyments and paradisaical privileges he was there invested with.

It is true, that wicked men may, and many times do, enjoy a great measure of this world's felicity, in respect of the Riches, Honours and Pleasures thereof; while God's faithful Servants suffer hard things: which made *David* at a stand till he went into the Sanctuary of God, and gained understanding in the Promises of true Felicity in eternal life made to the sanctified ones: and then he understood the End of those wicked and unholy men. That as to true peace with God, and assurance of his favour, as to enjoyment of Communion with him in Grace here, or in Glory hereafter, there is no Promise made to them in that their unsanctified estate: and therefore he puts on this resolution: *But as for me, I will behold thy Face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness*, Psal. 17.15. There is no beholding God without Holiness, with true satisfaction to thy Soul. Wherefore let that Exhortation of the Apostle be an Exhortation to us; *Follow Peace with all men, and Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord*. O let the consideration of the necessity of Holiness strengthen the Exhortation upon our Spirits, so as to quicken us in our motion after the attainments thereof.

Secondly, let us be exhorted to put on this Ornament of Holiness upon the consideration of the Excellency of it: the which is very great in several respects: first it is very beautiful in the sight of God; it beareth his Image, and adorns the Soul with the likeness of himself; it beautifieth the Profession of Truth, and filleth the Soul with Love both towards God and towards all men: yea those excellent fruits of the Spirit, as Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, against which there is no Law: What are they but effects of Sanctification? 1 *Cor.* 6.11. 1 *Pet.* 1.2. therefore let all persons that make profession of Christ be exhorted to worship the Lord in the Beauties of Holiness.

Secondly, Holiness is of great Excellency in respect of its Descent: it is of an heavenly Birth: those only are the persons invested with it, that are born not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God, *Joh. 1.13. Joh. 3.3, 5.* It is the Church that is sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be Saints, *Rom. 1.7. 1 Cor. 1.2.* and for the Church he gave himself, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of Water through the Word, that he might present it to himself a Glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish, *Ep. 5.26, 27.* Holiness is therefore of great Excellency: as also the Excellency of Holiness doth demonstrate itself by its Valuation; nothing below the precious Blood of Jesus Christ could be a valuable price to purchase it, *1 Pet. 1.18, 19.* yea those excellent Virtues that are in Charity must needs accompany salvation, *viz.* it suffereth long and is kind, envieth not, it vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; it may be said, though I speak with the tongues of Men and Angels, though I understand all Mysteries, though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and give my Body to be burned, and have not Holiness, it profiteth me nothing: O! therefore follow Peace with all men, and Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

Thirdly, Holiness is of great Excellency, in regard of the privileges it brings to the Soul; it gives peace of Conscience, and Comfort in a dying hour; it gives Boldness to appear before the great tribunal Seat of Justice, to behold the Face of the Judge with assurance of his Favour: when the great Men of the Earth, and the rich Men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty Men, and every Bond-man, and every Free-man, that is not adorned with Holiness, shall call to the Rocks and Mountains, to hide them from the Face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb, *Rev. 6.15, 16.* O! what would many a poor Soul give to be found in this Ornament of Holiness, when Death shall summon him to the Grave, and this Consideration is upon his Spirit, that the next thing he hath to do after Death, is, to arise and come too Judgment, when all his Riches, Honours, Pleasures and delightful Vanities, carnal Friends and Companions in Iniquity, with all those goodly things his Soul hath lusted after shall be turned into Gall and Bitterness to his Soul, and become his miserable Comforters, to the greater horror of his Conscience, and the furtherance of his condemnation? See *Rom. 2.9.* When tribulation and anguish shall be upon the Soul, then will the poor Soul bewail his former Folly, and careless Negligence, in slighting the Means of Grace, and the precious Price put into his hand, and he had not a heart to improve it, *Prov. 17.16.* and all those things whereon his heart was fixed shall be dissolved according as it is written: *But the Day of the Lord will come as a Thief in the night, in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat; and the Earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up: Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness?* *2 Pet. 3.10, 11.*

Fourthly, let us consider this Ornament of Holiness in respect of the Duration of it: Holiness is an everlasting Ornament unto the people of God: it becometh God's House for ever: It is the Wisdom of the Children of this world, that when they want any Commodity, as Apparel, or otherwise, they will endeavour to obtain it with these three considerations in their eye: first, where they may buy at the best hand, or cheapest rate: secondly, which Commodities are likely to be of longest continuance: thirdly, which are most beautiful and fashionable.

Now let us cast our eye upon this Ornament of Holiness, of which there is so much necessity, that without it no man shall see the Lord: and we may behold it tendered unto us at a very cheap rate, as on our part; for although Gold and Silver will not purchase it, yet God doth freely give it in the use of the means that he hath ordained to effect it. Let us then improve the means, and God hath promised a Blessing. It will indeed cost us the parting with our rotten rags of the Old man: but what are they in comparison to the Ornaments of the New man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness: it may be it will cost us the parting with our former Companions in worldly vanities: and not only our gross sins, but our own Righteousness, which is of the Law, *Phil.* 3. It may be it will cost us the parting with a good Name among men, and with our Goods, Liberty and Life, which are things near and dear unto us: but if we part with all these for Holiness, we shall be abundantly gainers by the hand: for what are corrupt Lusts and carnal Vanities in comparison of the Gifts and Graces, and spiritual enjoyments of Christ? and what is the Fellowship of carnal Friends and vain Companions unto the Communion of God in Jesus Christ, and the Fellowship of the Saints? and what are the Sufferings of God's people, though in Name, Person and Estate, in comparison of that exceeding and eternal weight of Glory promised unto a holy life? Holiness doth far surpass all valuations that can be laid in opposition to it: wherefore let us lay out for Holiness; it is a rich bargain at the highest Rate.

Secondly; Holiness is an Ornament exceeding durable in respect of its Use and Service: the more it is made use of, the more excellent it is: Holiness is every way serviceable to the Creature: it helps the Creature to glorify God in obedience to his Commands, as to find acceptance with him: it helps towards peace of Conscience and Comfort in a dying hour: it helps towards a sanctified use of all the Creatures with comfort in the enjoyments of them: it helps a Soul to the sight of God, and that blessed enjoyment of Communion with him in Glory: Yea it is serviceable upon all accounts, at all times, in in all places, in all companies, & in all conditions: provided the Creature cast it not off as a Garment out of fashion & esteem; but put it on, and gird it to him, and be always found in it, and it will be so serviceable to him, that as abovesaid, the more it is made use of, the more excellent it is. For,

Thirdly, Holiness is never out of fashion and esteem with God and good men: it is that which God in Christ designed from Eternity, to accomplish in his people; and Holiness shall be the Ornament of the people of God unto Eternity: when all these outward things shall be

dissolved, holiness shall remain in its primitive beauty: Holiness accompanieth and beautifies a Soul not only in this life, but also in the life to come, as saith the Text; *Holiness becometh thine House, O Lord, for ever.*

O let us be exhorted and moved therefore by all these forementioned considerations, to run the Race set before us; *to press after the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus, Phil. 3.14. to follow Peace with all men, and Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12.14.*

CHAP. V.

Containing some Directions how to put on the Ornament of Holiness.

I Shall now apply myself to the enquiring Soul, which happily may propound this question: You exhort us to Holiness, and to press after it, because it is excellent, and of great necessity: but what course may we take, that we may so press after Holiness, as to obtain it?

In answer hereunto, I shall lay before you these ensuing Considerations by way of Direction.

First, I shall propound to your consideration the center where Holiness, together with the means for the obtaining thereof is placed.

Secondly, the way in which a man must walk, and the manner how he must press on to the Center where Holiness is centered, so as to obtain the same.

First, as Holiness in its perfection resideth in God the Father: so Holiness, together with the means for the effecting the same, in the Children of Men, is, of the Father centered in God the Son, Jesus Christ both God and man, and by the holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and

the Son, in its powerful influences and operations upon the inward man, is wrought and effected in them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be Saints through the exercise of Faith in Christ.

Now for the clearing up of these things to our understanding, let us consider some Scripture-Testimonies. The Apostle *Paul*, speaking of Jesus Christ, hath these Expressions: *For it pleased the Father, that in him should all Fulness dwell*, Coll. 1.19. *And in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, Col. 2.9. Saint *John* saith, *And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth*, Joh. 1.14. *in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*, Col. 2.3. *and of his Fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace*, Joh. 1.16. So that in Christ is centered both Holiness and the means to produce Holiness in the Sons and Daughters of men, unto whom he tenders Holiness in the Gospel, as *John* the Evangelist teaches, *He came unto his own, and his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God; even to them that believe on his Name*, Joh. 1.11, 12. And hence it is, that God hath chosen his people in Christ, that they should be holy, even because the perfection of Holiness is inherently in Christ, with sufficiency of the Spirit of Grace to effect Holiness in his people through believing.

If then thou wouldst press after Holiness, so as to attain such a degree thereof that thou mayst have the comfortable sight of God, and be enabled to stand before him with joy, then observe these ensuing particulars.

1. In all thy undertakings, look unto Jesus, have an eye of faith fixed on him; he is the Center where Holiness is centered: if we look short of the Center, we are like to fall-short of our purpose: let us therefore take the counsel of the Apostle; *Let us run with patience the Race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who, for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God*, Heb. 2.1, 2. Yea, whether we read the Word; pray, or perform any other Christian Duty whatsoever, let us still look to Jesus, with desire that we may have more Knowledge of him, more Faith in him, and more Love and Obedience to him: let us look unto Jesus with an Eye of Faith fixed on him, and behold his performances on our behalf: let us behold his humility, who was very God, and yet, assuming the human Nature, became also Man; and taking upon him the form of a Servant, became obedient not only to the divine Precepts of his Father's Law, but also unto Death, even the most shameful Death of the Cross. O let us look unto Jesus, and behold him in his Sufferings, and in the Cause and End of his Sufferings. The Cause of his Sufferings was our Sins, the End of his Sufferings was to free us from Divine Wrath due to us for Sin, and to obtain Eternal Salvation for us.

To look unto Jesus, and with an Eye of Faith, to behold him as aforesaid, is to take God's way to hearken to his Call and to observe his counsel, for our better attainments unto Holiness and Heavens Happiness, as saith the Lord by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth, I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles*, Isai. 42. *I said, behold me, behold me unto a Nation that was not called by my Name*, Isai. 65.1.

Secondly, let us not only look unto Jesus and behold him, but also consider him; this is a piece of Divine Counsel: also consider the Apostle and High-priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus, *Heb.* 3.1. O let us consider the Greatness of his Burden in his Sufferings of Death; wherein he did not only suffer a natural Death, but also did bear the Burden and weight of Divine Wrath due to Mankind for Transgression: the which being set home upon his precious Soul by the hand of Divine Justice, forced him into that Agony, that his Sweat was as if it were great Drops of Blood falling down to the ground; and to cry out, *O my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* as if the sense of Divine Wrath had so overwhelmed his precious Soul, that all the apprehensions of his Father's Love had been eclipsed from him.

One sin set home to the Soul by the hand of Divine Justice is a heavy Burden: how great then is the weight which Christ underwent for us. *Surely*, saith the Prophet, *he hath born our Grievs, and carried our Sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted: but he was wounded for our Transgressions; he was bruised for our Iniquities: the Chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his Stripes we are healed: All we like Sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquities of us all*, Isa. 53.4, 5, 6.

Certainly, if the Sons and Daughters of Men did but look through all their outward, transitory and fading Felicities unto Jesus Christ, with a serious consideration of those hard things he hath undergone, to procure Redemption for their poor sinful Souls, it would more draw up and endear their Affections to the Lord, and produce in them a delightful endeavour to honour him in the way of Holiness.

Thirdly, as we should look unto Jesus, and consider him in his great Undertakings for us: so ought we to consider his Faithfulness towards his Father, in respect of the Trust he reposed in him; and towards Man also in the prosecution of poor fallen Man's Redemption: Had he shrunk back in those great and hard Undertakings, how had the Father lost his Glory, and Man his true Felicity? but he, like a faithful and valiant Soldier, set his Face like a Flint against all the oppositions the World and Devils could raise against him, until he had faithfully completed his Undertakings to the Glory of his Father: so that he could boldly make up his accounts, saying, *Father I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the Work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the Glory which I had with*

thee before the World was, Joh. 17.4, 5. O let us look unto Jesus with a serious consideration of his Faithfulness to our Cause, and it will both quicken and direct in the way to Holiness: and we being faithful after his example shall have boldness in the day of account.

Fourthly, let us look unto Jesus, and consider with a due consideration, his tender; affectionate Love and yearning bowels of Compassion towards Mankind, manifested in his great Undertakings for us. Surely, if ever that Saying of *Solomon* in his *Song of Songs* be made good in any, it was abundantly manifested in Christ's Love to Man: his Love indeed was strong as Death; *Cant.* 8.6. the many Waters of Affliction, nor Floods of the Ungodly, nor Death (the King of Terrors) could not be able to quench the Flames thereof: greater Love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his Life for his Friend: but so great was the Love of Christ to poor worthless Creatures, that while we were ungodly, and enemies to him, he died for us, *Rom.* 5.6, 8, 10. so that Redemption, Justification, Sanctification and Glorification are the effects of Divine Love; the which, if we could behold with a believing Eye, and seriously consider, it would be an excellent means to raise up our affections to Love and Delight in the Lord, and to quicken us in our motions towards the Attainment of Holiness: for every Performance of Christ in the days of his Humiliation was so perfumed with Love towards us, that did we truly apprehend it, and really consider it, it would be of force to draw our feet out of those crooked paths of carnal vanities, and to place them in those pleasant paths where Peace with Holiness doth dwell.

Fifthly, let us look upon and consider Jesus Christ in his Exaltation: The Scripture saith, that *Christ is entered into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us*, *Heb.* 9.24 to carry on the Execution of his Office as High-priest, to be Interceder and Advocate with the Father on the behalf of his People, to perfume their Prayers and Praises, which are offered up in his Name, with the sweet Perfumes of his own Merits, wherein the Father doth accept them: and therefore, as the Apostle saith, he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him; seeing he hath an unchangeable Priesthood, and ever liveth to make Intercession for the Saints, according to the Will of God, *Heb.* 7.24, 25. *Rom.* 8.27. Should I transgress the King's Law in some high nature, whereby his Displeasure is so provoked against me, that all that I can do cannot appease his Wrath, nor stop the proceedings of Justice against me unto Death: in this sad condition should a Friend arise on my behalf, who is of near Reliance to the King, and in tender Love and Pity to me should take my Case upon himself, and make an atonement for me, not only to the appeasing of the Kings Wrath, but also to the procuring of his Favour so far, as not only to save my Life and Possessions forfeited, but also to endow me with such Benefits and Privileges in his Kingdom, as far surpass all my former Enjoyments; yea farther, this Friend in Court, doth so engage himself by Promise unto me, that if I should again transgress the King's Commandment, (provided it be not willfully, but only through weakness, infirmity, and inability to resist the Strength of the Tempter) that then he will become my Advocate and Interceder with his Majesty, to make an Atonement on my behalf: O how

great is the Love and tender Affection of this my Friend! how may these his Actions prevail upon my Heart, to rejoice in him, and engage my dearest Affections to him, to love him, and so delight in him, as to desire more communion with him, to hearken to his Counsel, and to obey his Will in whatsoever he commands me? And indeed, while I exercise mine Eye upon this happy Object with a serious consideration of the excellent Benefits I received by him, there is nothing more dear unto my Soul: but if I cast mine eye & considerations upon lower Objects, of less concernment, and short of my Friend, I may soon forget his loving Kindness, and suffer my Love and Delight to grow dead towards him.

Surely, herein is our Condition represented; for we, unworthy Creatures, have transgressed not only a Law of an Earthly King, but even of an *Eternal God, the King of Kings and Lord of Lord's, at whose Wrath the Earth shall tremble, and the Nations shall not be able to abide his Indignation, the which is due unto every Transgressor of the Law of God.* And such is our weak and frail estate now since the Fall: yea such is our willful Stubbornness, that in many things we offend all, and become guilty before God, whose Law condemns us, and whose Justice calls for Satisfaction: so that every Soul is liable to his Indignation and Wrath, which we are no ways able, of ourselves, to appease, nor stop the Proceedings of Justice from inflicting upon us the heavy Horrors and Terrors of Divine Wrath, and the Indignation of the Almighty; no, not so much as for one day, much less for time without end, or for Eternity.

Now in this our sad condition, which we are fallen into by reason of our Transgression, a Friend is risen up on our behalf, even Jesus Christ *the Son of Righteousness with Healing in his Wings*, Mal. 4.2. who hath not only performed the Office of an High-Priest in the days of his Humiliation, *in offering his own Body* upon the Cross, to make an *Atonement* for us, and to free us from the Wrath to come, *Heb. 10.10. Ro. 5.11.* but also is *entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us*, Heb. 9.24. to enrich us with such Benefits & Privileges as Grace & Glory doth afford.

If now a poor Soul lie under the apprehensions of God's Displeasure for some sin committed, if he want an increase of Faith in God's Promises, if he want inward peace and assurance of God's Favour, if he want Power against Corruption and Temptation, if he be oppressed by the violence of men, and want Patience to bear it, if he want Wisdom or Knowledge in the things of God, or any Grace or good thing whatsoever, would this poor Soul make its humble address unto God, the Father of all Mercies and Fountain of all Supply to all our Wants, from whom every good and perfect Gift proceedeth, that he would grant a continual Supply of all good things, according as the conditions of his poor Creature doth require, Then behold, O thou poor Soul, behold thy Friend at Court, Jesus Christ in his unchangeable Priesthood, and ever glorious Exaltation on the right hand of the Majesty on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us in all the approachings of thy Soul unto God, take this Friend with thee; he is able to save them to the utter most, that come unto God through him,

seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for us, *Heb. 7.24*. There is no approaching to the Father without the assistance of the Son, our faithful High-Priest, Mediator and Advocate, as he himself hath said, *I am the way*, (saith Christ) *the Truth and the Life, no man commeth to the Father but by me*, Joh. 14.6. *I am the Door*, saith Christ, *by me if any man enter, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find Pasture*, Joh. 10.9. as if he should have said, I am the way, or place of entrance to the Father; by me, if any man enter, he shall go in and out, that is, he shall have free access unto the Father, *Ephesians 2.18*. and he shall find Pasture, even such spiritual enjoyments, as shall abundantly refresh, replenish and content the Soul even to its full satisfaction.

When Christ foretold to his Disciples his Exaltations to the Father, and the great concernment he should be unto them therein, as their High-Priest, to intercede for them, he leaveth these Expressions, with other, upon their Spirits, for Comfort and Encouragement in times of Sorrow and Affliction, and as a piece of Divine Counsel useful upon all occasions: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you: hitherto ye have asked nothing in my Name: ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full: these things have I spoke unto you in proverbs, the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs: but I shall shew you plainly, of the Father: at that day ye shall ask in my Name, and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you; because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God*, Joh. 16.23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

*If Christ enjoin, his People must obey:
But their Privilege is, he helps them in their way.*

I cannot well pass these Words, without observing some of the particulars therein contained, first the thing enjoined, and that is Prayer: secondly, the Person enjoining, that is Jesus Christ: thirdly, the Persons enjoined, which are Disciples, or persons learned and taught by Christ: fourthly, the Person to whom the Disciples are directed to present their Petitions, and that is God the Father: fifthly, the means or way of Acceptation, & that is, they are to pray unto the Father in Christ's Name; *Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my Name* (saith Christ) *he will give it you*.

There are three Specialties included in the word, *Name*, which we are to observe in order to the right performance of the Duty of Prayer: The first is Christ's Authority or Command; as when a poor Soul in the sense of its Wants and Weakness shall approach unto God upon this or the like account, saying, Father, I thy poor unworthy creature being made in some measure sensible of my own Wants and Imperfections, and of thy Fulness and All-sufficiency, do humbly appear in thy presence, being directed to Thee, the Fountain of all Supplies, by the special Command of thine only Son, in whom thou art well pleased, in whom thou hast made

many gracious Promises to thy People, have respect, I pray thee, as thou hast to thy Son, so also to thy poor Creature, that exerciseth Faith in the Promises and in the Commands of thy Son, whom thou hast ordained to be King of Saints, and by whose Authority I now approach thy presence, and for whose sake, I pray thee, grant supplies of Grace and spiritual Assistance according to thy Divine Wisdom and good Pleasure, to the further enabling thy poor Creature to glorify thy Name in this my present Pilgrimage, that my Soul may be supported in the many straits and troubles that this World affords; and so confirmed in the assurance of everlasting Peace and Consolation with thy Son, and with thy Saints, in eternal Bliss and Happiness. Thus when a poor Soul, through the Exercise of Faith in the Commands of Christ, is drawn forth conscientiously, to act in obedience thereunto, it is, doubtless, an argument greatly prevailing with the Father; for Obedience of the Son is agreeable to the Father's Will, and hath many precious Promises annexed thereunto.

A second Specialty, or prevailing Argument, included in Christ's Name, doth arise from the Influence and Operations of the Word and Spirit of Christ upon the Creature's Affections, whereby the Love and desire of the Soul is bent toward the enjoyment of Spiritual things, with holy longings, thirstings and pantings after God; and for further participations of his Grace, making its address unto God these or the like words, saying, Father, I thy poor unworthy Creature, unto whom thy Son Jesus Christ hath appeared, and the Divine Illuminations and Operations of his Spirit, in and through thy Word, whereby I am, in some measure, made sensible of my own Wants, and of that Fulness & All-sufficiency that is in thee, and you supply the same, do humbly approach thy presence upon the account of thy Son Jesus Christ, being directed to thee for Supplies by him whom thou hast ordained not only King of Saints, but also the Prophet of thy People, to teach them Obedience to thy Will.

Behold, O Lord, the chief Cause as Ground of my coming to thee, even thy Son, thine only Son, he it is that quickens me, and raiseth up my Affections toward thee, by the powerful Influences and Operations of his holy Spirit, whereby the Riches of thy Grace is, in a measure, to my Soul discovered, my hope of acceptation with thee much revived, my love unto thee somewhat enflamed, and the desires of my Soul after more enjoyments of thy special Grace and Favour much enlarged: therefore, O Righteous Father, I pray thee behold me in thy Son, as being enlightened, moved and quickened to come unto thee by him: it is his work upon my heart, supernatural and divine, even the Effect his Prophetical Office, whereby I the poor Creature am made sensible of my own Wants and Necessities, and wherein I behold a Fulness for Supply in thy blessed Self, and whereby my Soul is drawn forth towards thee, with earnest desires after more Communications of thy Grace and Favour.

And now, Dear Father, I pray thee, behold the Work of thy Son upon my Soul, yea thine own Work in and through him, and satisfy those longing Desires wrought in me by virtue thereof, with assurance of Acceptance with thee, and of the Communication of the Gifts and

Graces of thy holy Spirit, to the replenishing of my Soul with spiritual enjoyments, and to the further enabling me to walk before thee in the ways of Holiness, to the Glory of thy Name, and to the everlasting Consolation of my Soul through Jesus Christ: to whom with thee and thy holy Spirit be ascribed all the Honour, Praise and Glory both now and forever. *Amen.*

Thus when the poor Soul can make its approach to the Father of Mercies, experiencing the Work of Divine Grace by Jesus Christ, enlightening and quickening to holy Duties; so that the Creature can truly plead, that Jesus Christ, executing his Prophetical Office upon the inward Man, is the Ground and Cause of its approaches to the Father. This, doubtless, is an Argument greatly prevailing with him for Acceptation, and for an Answer of Peace from him, seeing the original Ground and moving Principle is his own work of free Grace upon the Creature, wrought by his own Son, through the operative Power of his holy Word and Spirit, to the Praise and Glory of his Name.

It was the main Argument of the Prophet *Isaiah*, wherewith he moved God, and strengthened his own Confidence in him: *Lord, saith he, thou wilt ordain Peace for us, (and why so?) for thou hast wrought all our Works in us: other Lord's besides thee have had Dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy Name,* Isai. 26.12, 13.

It may be said of a Soul's coming to God in the Name of Christ, as aforesaid, as *David* said of his and the people's Willingness to offer Provision for the building of the Temple: *But who am I, and what is my People, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee,* 2 Chron. 29.14. For such a frame of Spirit doth flow from a supernatural Work, wherein the Creature is taught of God; the Duties which he performs, do flow as Fruits and Effects of what he hath received from the Lord, to the Glory of his Name.

Thirdly, a Christian comes to the Father in the Name of Christ, not only upon the account of the Commands, nor only because Christ, by Divine Discoveries, hath wrought an earnest Desire in him after further Enjoyments; but also when he comes unto the Father upon the account of the Merits of Christ, making his Address to this or the like effect, saying,

Most glorious God and merciful Father, in Jesus Christ, although my Sins of Omission and Commission (by which I have transgressed thy holy and just Law, and offended thy Majesty) do render me not only unworthy of the least of thy Mercies, but also worthy of thy just Condemnation to proceed against me; yet forasmuch as thy only Son Jesus Christ, in the prosecution of his Prophetic Office, hath revealed unto my Soul, that the exceeding Riches of thy Grace and free Mercy to thy unworthy Creatures, is so abounding, that thou hast given thy Son, who hath fulfilled thy Law by his actual Obedience thereunto, to the end that I, thy poor Creature, which stand condemned thereby, by reason of my manifold Sins whereby I have

transgressed the same, might receive a free, full and absolute Remission, Pardon, and Deliverance from the Guilt, Dominion and Punishment of Sin, having an interest in the Righteousness which thy Son by his Obedience hath obtained, through the Exercise of that supernatural Grace of Faith, wrought in my Soul by the Influence of the Word and Spirit of thy Son: I therefore, thy poor unworthy Creature, am emboldened and somewhat enabled to appear before thee in hope of Acceptation; forasmuch as the Riches of thy Grace and free Mercy to thy unworthy Creature is so abounding, that thou hast not only given thy Son to fulfil thy Law by his actual Obedience, but also passively to suffer the Ignominy and Reproach of the World, and patiently to yield and offer up himself in obedience to thy Will and determinate Counsel unto Death, even the most shameful Death of the Cross, shedding his most precious Blood, and undergoing the Terrors of Divine Wrath due unto us for our Transgressions, upon which account thou hast declared thyself to be a God well pleased in thy Son, and reconciled unto such as through a true and lively Faith are united to unto Him, whom thou hast raised again from the dead, and set at thine own right hand in Glory, now to appear in thy glorious presence for us, as an Interceder and Advocate.

Now therefore, most righteous Father, as thou hast given unto thy poor Creature this new and living way unto the Throne of Grace, to approach thy presence with free access, I come unto thee utterly renouncing all my own Righteousness, as being not any ways meritorious or deserving the least of the Mercies which thy poor Creature doth enjoy, and casting my whole dependency upon the Merits of Jesus Christ my only High-priest, Mediator and Advocate for my acceptance with thee: I beseech thee therefore, even upon the account of thine only Son, to grant me a free and full pardon of all my Sins, and to seal the assurance thereof unto my Soul, by that illuminating, quickening, sealing and sanctifying Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from thy blessed self, and from thy Son, my blessed Saviour. Therewith do thou enlighten my Understanding, that I may understand thy Mind and Will contained in thy Word: therewith confirm my Judgment in thy Truth, and let me experience the Demonstrations of thy Love in Christ: therewith transform and rectify my rebellious Will, and bring it to a conformity to thy Will in all things: thereby enable me to mortify my Corruptions, and let not Sin have dominion over me: thereby do thou draw my Affection unto thyself, and let not worldly Vanity be my delight.

O do thou replenish and satisfy my thirsting Soul

*[In want of Grace we sadly may
Our sad Estate condole:
Nothing but Grace can satisfy
The thirsting Christian Soul.*

Grace is attained by that Soul

*That unto God doth cry,
By Prayer in the Name of Christ,
That asks believably.]*

with the rich treasures of thy Grace in Christ, through the operating power of thy Spirit of Truth, that my heart may abundantly rejoice in thy saving Benefits, and be thoroughly furnished to praise thy Name.

O Lord hear, accept and answer thy poor Creature in these and all other particulars, which thou in thy infinite Wisdom judgest most expedient for thy poor Creature's temporal and eternal well-being, to the Glory of thy Name, even for the meritorious Name sake of thy Son, my only Redeemer and Advocate, by whom I have received Command, Direction and Encouragements to appear before thee, for whom thy poor Creatures have always cause to bless and praise thy holy Name: unto whom, with thee and thy holy Spirit, be ascribed (as is most due) all Glory, Power, Praise and Obedience, by us thy Creatures everlastingly. *Amen.*

Thus have I briefly delivered my Apprehensions concerning the Creature's going to God the Father by Prayer in the Name of his Son Jesus Christ: wherein we may take notice of some particulars: as,

First, what great Concernment Christ is to the Believing Soul now in the days of his Exaltation, whose Name is a prevailing Principle with the Father, in the behalf of all those that come unto God therein.

Secondly, how highly it doth concern every Soul to have an Eye of Faith fixed on him, and consider him with a due consideration in all his Benefits.

Thirdly, consider that, as I am upon a use of Direction towards the Attainment of that excellent Ornament, *Holiness*: so Prayer in the Name Christ is not one of the least of the means whereby it is attained, inasmuch as Jesus Christ (who is Truth, and cannot lie) hath crowned the Duty with a Promise of the Father's Gift; as he hath said, *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you*, Joh. 16.23. And, lest any should reply, Lord, we know not the Father, and how shall we come unto him? he annexeth this Promise also to the other, *The time cometh* (meaning the time of his Exaltation) *that I shall shew you plainly of the Father.*

And, lest there should be any scruple or doubt arise, that they should not perform the Duty aright, or not so perfect without Imperfections as to be heard of the Father, and answered by him: he annexeth this Promise also unto the rest, for their Encouragement in the Duty; *in that day* (saith he, meaning his Exaltation) *ye shall ask the Father in my Name, and I say to you, that I will pray the Father for you*, Joh. 16.25, 26.

O excellent Privilege, to that Soul for whom the perfection of Wisdom, Knowledge and Fidelity is exercised to plead its cause! Christ the Wisdom of God and the Power of God is become an High priest for ever, to intercede with the Father in the behalf of those Souls that come unto the Father with a dependency by Faith upon his Intercession, for their Acceptation with the Father: wherefore, as saith the Holy Ghost, *having an High priest over the House of God, let us draw near in full assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our Bodies washed with pure Water, let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering: for he is faithful that promised,* Heb. 10.21, 22, 23.

O! did we really consider this High priest Jesus Christ, as in his Humiliation, so also in his Exaltation, executing his Priestly Office upon our account, that we might experimentally partake of the benefits and Privileges thereof: how would it engage our Love to him, our Delight in the enjoyments of him, and our utmost Endeavours to answer his End in all his undertakings for us: which is, that *we should be holy and without blame before him in love,* Ephesians.

CHAP. VI.

Containing a Word of Advice, to consider Christ in his Kingly Office, and by Faith to embrace him in the same, in order to our better Attainment unto Holiness.

Sixthly, would we attain unto Holiness, & be found in the Ornaments thereof: then we are concerned to exercise our eyes of Understanding and Faith upon the Dignity and Authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, beholding and considering of him, and submitting to him in his Kingly Office, wherein the Father hath exalted him unto his own right hand of Power, and Throne of Majesty on high, to sway the Scepter of Rule and Government in Righteousness, by his righteous Laws, Statutes and Ordinances, *Heb. 1.8.* and to execute Justice and Judgment accordingly against all opposers. The Prophet *Isaiah*, speaking of Jesus Christ, saith of him, *he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with*

Righteousness shall he judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity, for the meek of the Earth, Isa 11.3, 4, 5.

The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand, or into his Power and Jurisdiction, Joh. 3.35. Paul to the Ephesians saith, that He, meaning the Father, hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, Eph. 1.22.

By Headship is signified Supremacy, Sovereignty, or his Kingly Office and Authority, to give forth Laws, Statutes and Ordinances, with Order of Rule and Government, with Power to command Obedience thereunto, with Power to defend his Subjects in the proper Rights and Privileges of his Kingdom, to plead their Cause, to revenge their Wrongs, and to crown them, his Subjects, with an immortal recompence of heavenly Glory, all the oppositions of the Devil & wicked men notwithstanding; as the Lord by his Spirit in his Word hath of old declared, saying, *Yet have I set my King upon my holy Hill of Sion, Psal. 2.* The word *Yet* is a Relative to what is in the foregoing Verses related; as if the Lord should say, Although the Kings of the Earth and Rulers, yea, though *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, the chief Priests and Elders, the Scribes and Pharisees, yea all the rude multitude of the people consult together, & set themselves against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their Bands, and cast their Cords from us: yet for all whatever they can do, I have exalted him, & set him at my right Hand of Power and Majesty, *Act. 5.31. far above all Principalities, and Powers, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: & hath put all things under his Feet, Eph. 1.20, 21, 22.* that is to say, all persons of what Rank and Quality soever, by what Names, Titles or Dignities soever distinguished; together with all earthly Dominions, Rules and Governments whatsoever to be at his disposing, or deposing, according to his own Will and Pleasure: all shall be brought in subjection unto him, either by active Obedience to his Laws and righteous Government, or passively to submit unto the Execution of his Justice; as it is written, *At the Name of Jesus every Knee shall bow, Phil. 2.9, 10, 11.* the which bowing of every Knee, doth intend Subjection to his Laws, as aforesaid, or Submission to his Justice; unto one of which all the whole Creation of Men and Angels shall be forced to submit unto: Such a Construction the Apostle *Paul* seemeth to put upon the words, *Rom. 14.11. But why dost thou judge thy Brother, or why dost thou set at naught thy Brother? we shall all stand before the Judgment-Seat of Christ:* his ground and reason is, *because it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every Knee shall bow to me, and every Tongue shall confess to God:* the which Expressions the Apostle asserteth, to prove the certainty of Christ's sitting on the Seat of Judgment, and that all persons in particular, none excepted, shall be forced to appear before him, to give an account how they in this life have acted in order to the Supremacy of Christ, and to receive the Sentence of Absolution into Glory, or the just and righteous, but dreadful Sentence of Condemnation into everlasting Perdition: as the Apostle *Paul* by the Spirit of God doth testify, that will render to every Soul

of Man, that doth evil, Indignation and Wrath; *But Glory, Honour and Peace, Immortality and eternal Life to every Soul of Man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for God is no respecter of persons*, Rom. 2.9, 10, 11. *every man shall give an account of himself unto God*, Rom. 14.12.

Surely, it will then be in vain for ungodly and wicked men: be they of what Degree, Rank or Quality soever, *to call to the Rocks and Mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the Face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb*; Rom. 6.15, 16. for nothing in that day shall be found to be a shelter, *vers.* 17. but an Interest in Christ by Faith, which in this day of Grace bringeth forth the fruits of Obedience to the Supremacy of Christ.

We usually say, a man forewarned of a danger, is fore-armed; he will seek to secure himself in time, and take him for a Friend that gives him the warning.

O! how many friendly warnings hath the Lord by his Spirit in his Word given unto poor sinful mortal man, of the great and eminent dangers approaching, as the fruits and effects of Sin? O what friendly Counsel and advice hath he laid before us for security, did we improve the same accordingly; as if his very bowels yearned towards us for our eternal preservation? O how are his Warnings and Counsels made out in his Word to all sorts of men, of what Degree, Rank or Quality soever, high and low, rich and poor, free and bond, as if he was no Respector of persons in his Warnings, Advice and Counsels, as he is no Respector of persons in Judgment.

The Lord having made known, by his Spirit in his Servants, the certainty of his accomplishing his Decree, and fore-Determinations in exalting his Son Jesus Christ into the Throne of Kingship and Seat of Justice, gives this Counsel and Advice unto Kings, and other inferior Magistrates, saying, *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the Earth, serve the Lord with Fear and Trembling, kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, while his Wrath is kindled but a little: Blessed are all they that put their trust in him*, Psal. 2.10, 11, 12.

As if he should have said, O ye Kings and Judges of the Earth; in whose hands the Sword or Power of Magistracy is entrusted: herein doth the principle part of your Wisdom consist: let the Salutations of your Love and chief Respects be manifested towards Christ Jesus the Son of God, whom the Father hath exalted into the Throne of Government & Seat of Justice, King of Kings, and Lord of Lord's; Let the Salutations of your Love and chiefest Respects be manifested towards him, by embracing his Counsel for your Counsel, his Laws for your Laws, his Government for your Government, his Subjects that desire to obey him in his Laws and righteous Government, the people of your chiefest protection and objects of your Praise, that you may be as nursing Father's unto them, but a terror to those that do evil; as it is written,

Isai. 49.23. Rom. 13.3. The Lord hath signed this with the Promise of his Blessing, as before expressed.

The Spirit of God by the Apostle *Paul* asserting the Sovereignty of Christ, into which God the Father hath exalted him, *Phil. 2.9, 10, 11.* doth lay down this Exhortation, *vers. 12.* as drawn from the aforesaid consideration of his Sovereignty? *Wherefore, my Beloved, as ye have always obeyed not only in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out you own Salvation with fear and trembling.* As if he had said; wherefore, as ye have hitherto subjected yourselves to the Sovereignty of Jesus Christ, by Obedience to his Laws and Form of Government: so that not only in my presence, but also in my absence, you have been growing and increasing in the same: so let your careful endeavours be in a holy, awful, reverential fear & spirit of Humility, to be still growing & increasing with all perseverance in the Faith and Practice of all the Will of God: in as much as true Faith in Christ doth demonstrate, and shew forth itself by the fruits of sincere Obedience to Christ, and perseverance therein, hath the promise of Salvation thereunto annexed; as Christ himself did intimate unto those Jews that believed on him, *Joh. 8.31. If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my Disciples indeed; and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free.* O did we with *David* set the Lord Jesus Christ always before us, *Psal. 16.8.* having an Eye of Faith fixed on him, as in his Priestly Office, so also in his Kingly Office, executed in his giving forth Laws, Statutes, Ordinances and Order of Government, with Rules of Observation and Commands, and Examples for our better Obedience thereunto: see *Genes. 49.10. Isai. 9.6.* did we behold him, and seriously consider him the anointed and appointed King and Lawgiver, by the Father ordained Head over all things, to his Church in the great concerns of God's Worship and our Salvation, the alone exalted King of *Sion*, and Judge of the World, with a due consideration, *Isai. 33.22. Psal. 2.2. Act. 5.31, 32. Jam. 4.12.* doubtless we might thereby the more be induced, and the better behold the great concernment that lieth upon us, to quicken our motion in the use of the means appointed by God the Father for our better attainment unto Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord to his eternal Consolation: *for God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead,* *Act. 17.31.*

CHAP. VII.

Wherein is contained some considerations concerning the Prophetical Office of Christ, necessary to our better attainment of a Degree in the Ornament of Holiness.

Of all Wisdom demonstrated in or among the Sons and Daughters of Men, the Divine Wisdom of God in Christ is the most excellent and wonderful, most to be admired and desired.

Christ the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God, 1 Cor. 1.24. in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, Col. 2.3. in comparison whereof all the Wisdom of this world is but Foolishness in God's esteem, 1 Cor. 1.20. Of all cases that we are concerned to seek for Counsel in, the Case of our Souls for the Salvation thereof is our great concernment; and of all Counsellors for Advice in this case, we are most concerned to advise with Christ, and seek to him for Counsel herein: Lord (saith Peter) to whom else should we go? thou hast the Words of Eternal Life, Joh. 6.68. neither is there Salvation in any other, Act. 4.12. It was commendable Prudence in Mary, that she was careful in this case of great concernment: she sits at Jesus's Feet to hear his Words, and makes all other Concernments for to give place hereto, Luk. 10.39, 40, 41, 42. And what was the reason, think ye, that Mary was taken up in so high esteem with the Words of Christ? Doubtless this was one among the rest, the Virtue and Tendency of his Words was unto the Attainments of Holiness, and Heavens Happiness to her Soul, the words of Eternal Life.

This is that Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, and Root of *David*, that hath prevailed to open the Sealed Book, *Rev. 5.5.* even the Mysteries of the Kingdom, and way of Holiness, which from the beginning was hid in God: but now made manifest for the Obedience of Faith. This is that great Prophet of whom *Moses* spake, saying, *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you: and it shall come to pass, that every Soul that will not hear that Prophet, shall be cut off from his people, for I (saith the Lord) will require it of him, Deut. 18.18. Act. 3.22, 23.*

Whence note by the way.

First, That God the Father, according to his fore-determination and ancient Promise, hath raised up Jesus Christ, and ordained him chief Prophet to his People.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is here said to be a Prophet like unto *Moses*, that is, as *Moses* in that day did stand as a Mediator between God and his People, to receive the holy and lively

Oracles of the Mind and Will of God from the Mouth of God, and dispense the same unto the People in that Dispensation; so Christ is the Mediator between God and Man now under the New Covenant, to receive of the Father the lively Oracles of the Mind and will of the Father, and to communicate them unto the Sons and Daughters of Men in this Dispensation of the New Covenant.

Thirdly, a third thing to be noted here, is, the Injunction or Command of the Father: *Him shall you hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.*

Fourthly, the Danger that will ensue to that Soul that doth not hearken to this Prophet: *I will require it of him, saith the Lord, Deut. 18.19.*

Fifthly, One thing more is considerable, in *vers. 20.* that *if any Prophet shall presume to speak a Word in my Name, saith the Lord, that I have not commanded him, or that shall speak in the Name of other gods, that Prophet shall die.*

Would a poor Soul attain to Holiness, so as to have an Interest in that comely Ornament, then consider Jesus Christ in the Execution of his Prophetical Office, which standeth in a revealing, or discovering the Mind and Will of God the Father unto the Sons and Daughters of men, with Advertisements and Persuasions to a Reception of the same, and a walking answerable thereunto.

The Prosecution of which Office he did perform doctrinally in his own person in the days of his Humiliation, and in the days of his Exaltation, by his Spirit in his Apostles, by immediate Inspiration, whose Doctrine and Practice for Church-Constitution, Order of Worship and Discipline, he confirmed to all succeeding Generations with Signs and Wonders, and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, *Heb. 2.4.* and since more ordinarily by the ministry of the word *confirmed*, as aforesaid: I say, more ordinarily by the Offices and Officers; as Pastors and Teachers gifted for the work of the ministry, to teach those confirmed Truths of Jesus Christ, contained in his Gospel, unto the Sons and Daughters of Men, for their Conversion, Edification, Comfort and Confirmation of them in the Faith and Practice of all his holy Laws, Ordinances and Order of Government and Discipline, according to his own Institution, Pattern and Appointment, together with all those Promises and Privileges in his Word of Truth, given out to them that in Love and Loyalty unto him and his Sovereignty subject unto him, and walk with him in the same.

Hereunto doth the Holy Ghost, by the Apostle *Paul*, witness, *Eph. 4.8.* *When he ascended up on high, he led Captivity captive, and gave Gifts unto men: and, vers. 11. he gave some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the*

measure of the stature of the Fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more Children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ, Ep. 4.11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Some few things I would here note by the way:

First, that the Gospel-Dispensation is the lively and holy Oracles or Word of God the Father, which Christ by his Prophetical Office hath received of the Father, and made known to us the Sons and Daughters of Men, and confirmed to us by the witness of the Father, not only by the Resurrection of his Son, but also by signs and wonders, and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, for the Glory of his Name, and the Salvation of those that so embrace it as the Oracles of God so confirmed.

Secondly those Pastors and Teachers that, in Love and Obedience to the Lord, do make the Apostolical confirmed Doctrine and Practice their Rule and Ground of Doctrine and Practice for Conversion of Souls to Christ, Constitution of Churches, Admittance of Members, Order of Government and Discipline accordingly are such as Christ hath given and gifted as Ministers in his hand, *Rev. 1.20.* whereby he doth prosecute perseveringly from age to age his Prophetical Office, in order to Man's Salvation.

Thirdly, the natural Use, Virtue and proper Tendency of the Gospel Apostolically taught, observed and confirmed, as aforesaid, is the ordinary means, by the Father put into the Heart and Hand of Christ, for Man's Edification in the Knowledge of Christ, Unity in the Faith of Christ, a Participation of the Fulness of Christ unto an attainment of Perfection in Christ, together with Stability in Christ unto Salvation by Christ, through believing in Christ, and conforming to Christ in the Teachings and Administrations thereof wherefore, as I am upon an Use of Direction to the enquiring Soul after the way to *Holiness Attainments*, or the *Attainment to Holiness*; so I have set before thee Jesus Christ in his Offices, as an Object, whom thou art concerned to behold by an eye of Faith, and seriously to consider him with due consideration, as in his Humiliation, so also in his Exaltation in the Execution of his Offices; as in his Priestly and Kingly Offices, so also in his Prophetical Office; consider his Wisdom, his Love, and Faithfulness, made out to poor Sinners in the Execution of his Offices; consider his Ability and Sincerity herein: his Wisdom is infinite, it's the Wisdom of God; his Counsel is holy Counsel, 'tis heavenly Counsel, the Words of eternal Life: his Love is great Love, pure Love; 'tis such a Love that drew him forth to deny himself unto Death for Sinners: consider him in his Ability: he is Almighty, All-sufficient, full of Grace and Truth, able to save (to the uttermost) them that come unto God by him: consider him in his Sincerity; he is sincere and real-hearted in his words and actions, in all his Undertakings, and Dispensations unto poor Sinners, that look unto him, and advise with him for Counsel in their concerns for Holiness, and Heavens Attainments.

Man's Rejection of his Counsel is his Sorrow; he wept over *Jerusalem*: Man's Embracing of him is his Joy; there is Joy in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteth, that turneth to the Lord, to walk with him in his holy ways; he is real-hearted and sincere in his Word and Actions: therefore wouldst attain to Holiness, that comely Ornament, look unto Jesus, behold him in his Offices, as thy Prophet to teach thee by his Counsels, the King to govern thee by his Laws, and thy Priest to make an Atonement for thee by his Sacrifice: His Sacrifice is holy, his Laws are holy Laws; every Ordinance of Christ is holy; his Word and Counsel therein is holy: yea, all his ways are ways of Holiness; and all persons walking in the same with a due observation, are by the Holy Ghost owned for a holy People, holy and beloved.

O, wouldst thou look unto Jesus, so as to make him the Object in thine Eye, and the Subject of thy Meditations! doubtless it would be a means to direct thee in the way to holy Attainments, and quicken thy motion thereunto.

The Prophet *David* hath laid us down an example of his own Practice of this nature, *I* (saith *David*) *have set the Lord always before me*, *Psal* 16.8. as if he had said, I have beheld the Lord through Grace, an Object of great Excellency to my Soul: therefore have I chosen him to be the only Object, upon whom I desire always to exercise the Eyes of my Understanding and Faith, with Considerations and Meditations of his Word, his Laws, Statutes, Testimonies, his Counsels, loving Kindness and Faithfulness in the same; as he further expresseth, *Psal*. 119. *I have chosen the way of truth, thy Judgments have I laid before me: I have stuck unto thy Testimonies, O Lord, put me not to shame*, vers. 30, 31. *I have rejoiced in the way of thy Testimonies as much as in all Riches: I will meditate on thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways: I will delight myself in thy Statutes, I will not forget thy Word*, vers. 14, 15, 16. *thy Testimonies also are my delight and my Counselors*, vers. 24.

Thus did *David* set the Lord always before him: and behold the Privileges *David* reaped hereby unto himself: *He is at my right Hand*, (saith *David*) *I shall not be moved*, *Psal*. 16.8. Two general Privileges is here noted, in which is comprehended many particulars:

First, here is the Lord's presence with *David* in his aforesaid Exercise.

Secondly, here is *David's* Stability of Faith, Hope, Assurance and Confidence of attaining to the full enjoyment of the Lord in the state of Glory, through the presence of the Lord with him: *Thou wilt shew me the path of Life: in thy presence is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore*, *Psal*. 16.11. the sense and sight hereof fills *David's* heart with joy: *Therefore my heart is glad* (saith *David*) *and my Glory rejoiceth, my Flesh also shall rest in hope*: vers. 9.

So *Psal*. 34.5. *They looked to him, and were enlightened: and their Faces were not ashamed*: that is, they were not failed of their Expectations.

Wherefore, wouldst thou attain to Holiness, and Heaven's Happiness, look unto Jesus, advise with his Counsel in his Teachings, in his Word: exercise thine eyes of thy Understanding and Faith thereupon; it is thy great concernment in order to thy Attainments in the Ornament, Holiness: yea, so look unto him, as to consider him as aforesaid.

Consideration and Meditation are of great use in the way of Holiness: *Samuel* speaking a word of Exhortation unto *Israel*, to fear the Lord, and serve him with all their heart; the more to engage them, and make his Exhortation prevailing with them, he puts them upon the act of Consideration upon the great things that God had done for them: *For, consider* (saith he) *what great things God hath done for you*, 1 Sam. 12.24: as if a due consideration of God's Mercies were of great concernment, to produce an awful Reverence of God in the heart of a people, and of great use to beget motion in his Service.

And, doubtless, did we exercise our considerations seriously upon the Lord Jesus Christ in his Offices; & consider how great things the Lord hath done and doth do for us thereby: did we consider God's End therein, with the use and Benefits thereof unto poor, fallen, enslaved, sinful man through believing; it would, through the Blessing of God, prove to be of an engaging nature, to engage us to press after the Attainment of Holiness; and of a directing nature, to direct us in the way; also of an encouraging nature, to encourage against all difficulties lying in the way; and of a quickening nature, to quicken our motion towards the perfecting of Holiness in the Fear of God.

It was the great complaint of the Lord against *Israel*, even their want of Consideration, *Isa. 1.3. The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.* So in *chapt. 5.12.* the Lord by the Prophet complaineth, saying, *The Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and the Pipe, and Wine are in their Feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the Operation of his hands.*

And may it not be the great complaint of the Lord against the men of this Generation, as to the generality of them? that although the Lord is the owner of them, not only by Creation, but also by Purchase and Price paid; and although the Lord hath created Man with that noble Faculty of Rationality, above others of his Creatures, to the end they might be considerate of his Word and works of Divine concernment, to the glory of his Name; and although he hath furnished the Master's Crib, even Jesus Christ and his Word, with the excellent Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, Gifts and Graces, for Soul-nourishment in holy and heavenly Attainments, for the Glory of his Name, and the eternal Consolation of the Soul: yea although the Lord doth many times work and operate by his Word in the ministry thereof, upon the Mind, Affections, and understanding Faculties, both to will and to do according to his good pleasure; and that by his loving Invitations and persuading Arguments, Exhortations and Promises: yet

notwithstanding what Ignorance of God, and Fruitlessness in the things of God, what little strength of Grace remains in the greatest part of the men of this Generation.

And what's the reason thereof? *Surely (saith the Lord) Wine and Music is in their Feasts* (i. e.) they give themselves up to the Vanities of this world, in the Profits and Pleasures thereof, to fulfil the fleshly lustings of a carnal Heart; but they regard not the Works of the Lord, neither consider the Operation of his Hands. Surely, would we seriously consider the great Work of God in Jesus Christ, and the Operation of his Word and Works manifested in this our day; how useful would it be unto us for Direction unto Holiness, and to quicken our motion thereunto?

CHAP. VIII.

Containing some Directions tending to our better Attainment of that comely Ornament Holiness, by putting on of Jesus Christ; and abiding in him.

Great Care and Cost is exercised by many for the putting on upon the Body, not only such Raiment necessary for the Preservation of its Health and Modesty, but also for such Attire that they think may most beautify and adorn it to an esteem in the Eyes of Men; meanwhile that Attire that is of greatest concernment for the adorning of both Body and Soul, to make them comely and delightful in the sight of God, is laid by, disregarded, as Ornaments out of fashion.

Holiness is the comely Ornament, well becoming God's House, God's People.

As I am upon a Use of Direction to the inquiring Soul for its Attainment to Holiness, and in the foregoing Chapters have laid some Directions before you, in order to that Attainment, by an Act or Exercise of the Eyes of the understanding Faculties upon Jesus Christ in his Offices, as King, Priest and Prophet, anointed and appointed thereunto by the Father.

Also an Act of Consideration; to consider him in the prosecution of the said Offices, with the Use, End and Tendency thereof towards the Sons of Men; as the Eye-Salve for the clearing the Eyes of the Understanding, to behold the way of Holiness, and the Excellency of its Attainments.

Now in further prosecution of this Use of Direction, I shall propose a further Action, in order to our perfecting Holiness in the fear and way of God.

The which is, to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Would we attain to an Estate in the Ornament of Holiness: then our great concernment is, to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a piece of Divine Counsel, not mine, but the Lord's, given by his Spirit, whose Office it is to lead Souls into all truth.

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 13.14.

Three things are here liable to be proposed in way of Inquisition, by the enquiring Soul: as first, wherein persons are concerned to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, how persons are concerned to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, why persons are concerned to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to that Attainment of Holiness.

To the first Proposal, wherein Christ is to be put on: and that is in a threefold respect, in order to that Attainment:

First, in respect to his Offices.

Secondly, in respect to his Qualifications.

Thirdly, in respect to his Walkings.

To the second Proposal, how Christ is to be put on in respect to his Offices, Qualifications and Walkings: And,

First, to his Offices.

And that is, by an Act of Faith adheringly and dependingly; as when a Soul beholding God the Father tendering his Son in all his Offices, as King Priest and Prophet, to the Soul: the Soul is hereby moved to accept and take (by Faith) Jesus Christ with all his Offices, so as wholly to confide in him, and depend on him, and on him alone, for a free pardon and a full Remission of its sins, and for its acceptation with the Father, through his Atonement and Satisfaction made, by Virtue of his Priestly Office.

Secondly, to confide in him, and depend upon him, in order to his Kingly Office, as the only Lawgiver, unto whose Laws the Subjection and Obedience of the Creature is due, and ought to be performed, and as its great Protector to eternal Bliss.

Thirdly, adheringly, by applying and relying, by confiding in him, and depending upon him in his Doctrine, teaching Advice and Counsel contained in his Word, as the only Rule and Guidance of a Soul into the paths of Holiness and way of Salvation, by Virtue of his Office Prophetical.

Thus to put on Christ, doth put a Soul into possession of most excellent Privileges: as,

First, Christ's Merits, obtained by virtue of his Priestly Office, doth become the Soul's Righteousness and Justification unto the Father's Acceptation.

Secondly. Obedience to the Laws of Christ, as King, is attended with many Blessings from the Father, who accepts it as Honour done, as unto his Son, so also unto himself.

Thirdly, by a Soul's putting on of Christ as its Prophet: the Soul is put into possession of a sure word of Prophecy, an infallible Counsel for Direction how to steer its Course both in Word and Action, so as to please God, and to possess his favour, *in whose favour is Life*, saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 30.5.*

Secondly, the second thing proposed, wherein persons are concerned to put on Jesus Christ, is in his Qualifications of Grace: It is not enough for persons to hear the Word of Christ, nor to act in the visible Ordinances of Christ; but also to endeavour so to improve the Word and Ordinances of Christ, by an Application of Christ in the same to the Heart through believing, that by the Power of the Word of Christ in our Hearts we may attain to the Qualifications of Christ, in their proper nature; ruling in our Hearts by the Dominion and Power thereof, to the enabling of us to subdue the Qualifications of Corruption, and to bring our Thoughts, Words and Actions, our Minds, our Wills and our Affections into a conformity unto Christ.

And for Testimony hereunto, that persons are concerned to put on Christ in his Qualifications, and wherein these Qualifications do consist, I shall call in two or three Scripture Evidences among many, which that infallible Spirit of Truth, proceeding from the Father and the Son, hath recorded, *Phil. 2.1. If there be therefore any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies, fulfil ye my Joy, that ye be like minded, having the same Love, being of one accord, of one Mind: let nothing be done through Strife, or Vain-glory; but in lowliness of Mind: let each esteem others better than themselves: let this Mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus, &c.*

See here is a Unity of Qualifications required between Christ and his People; the same Mind, the same affectionate Love, the same bowels of Compassion and Mercies, the same Humility, the same Patience in the Quality, though we cannot reach the Quantity.

To this purpose is that Divine Exhortation, *Coloss. 3.12. Put on therefore, as the Elect of God, holy and beloved bowels of Mercies, Kindness, humbleness of Mind, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye; and above all things put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectness:* as if he had said, And above all things put on a real Love unto the Lord, and unto one another for the Lord's sake; and let all your Actions flow from that Original, and be therewith compounded.

This is my Commandment (saith Christ to his Disciples) that ye love one another, as I have loved you, Joh. 15.12.

O see Christ and Christians Oneness in the matter of Qualifications, according to what Christians do or ought to press after, in order to the Attainment of Holiness.

Those Souls that would attain to Holiness must put on Christ in his Offices, also in his Qualifications.

Thirdly, as it is the great concernment of Souls, to put on Christ in his Qualifications and Offices, in order to Holiness, so also in example of walking suitable to those Qualifications. It is not enough to receive Grace, and to have the Qualifications of Grace wrought in us; but there must be a bringing forth the Fruits thereof, by a visible motion and action in all those ways wherein the Glory of God and the Benefit of his People is concerned, after the example of Christ, according to our measure received.

Jesus Christ in the days of his Humiliation was active to administer Grace unto poor Sinners, for their Conversion, Edification and Salvation, according to what he had received of the Father: so Divine Counsel doth require every man, *as he hath received the Gift, so to administer the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Graces of God, 1 Pet. 4.10. Edify one another, as also ye do, 1 Thess. 5.11. building up yourselves on your most holy Faith, Jude 20. exhort one another, Heb. 3.13. admonish one another, Col. 3.16.* forewarn and reprove in the case of Sin: These are some of the footsteps of Christ, that he had his motion and walking in; these are some of the footsteps of the Flock of Christ, wherein they are by Divine appointment to follow Christ in: and *he that saith, he abideth in Christ, ought so to walk even as he walked, 1 Joh. 2.6.* It was commendable in the believing *Romans*, that they so improved the Word of Christ to an increase of Grace and Knowledge to an ability to admonish one another, *Rom. 15.14.* The *Thessalonians* were under Commendations for their edifying and comforting one another in things of God, while the *Hebrews* lay under Reproof, in that they, for the time that they had received the Gospel, ought to have been Teachers of others, they

were become such as had need to be taught again the first Principles of the Oracles of God, *Heb. 5.12.*

The *Corinthians* were commended for keeping the Ordinances to them delivered; but at the same time reprov'd for not observing of them in manner and form, according to the order of the first Institution or Delivery: therefore *he that saith, he abideth in Christ, ought so to walk even as he walked:* To this agreeth those words of *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, *Be ye Followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*, 1 Cor. 11.1. even so, not otherwise, Christ must be the Pattern for Matter, Manner and Form; Christ walked in the observation of all the Laws and Ordinances in Matter, Manner and Form, wherein his Father's Will, his Worship and Service was concerned; *he that saith he abideth in him ought so to walk even as he walked.* Should I by the way give one instance of Christ's Observation in that holy Ordinance of Divine Institution unto a holy Use and End, that in these days is by most people laid aside, and by many violently opposed and abused, calling it a low, carnal, empty thing, a Shadow without a Substance, and a Shell without a Kernel, and the like, or worse, and the Observers of it had in great reproach; the which Ordinance is that Baptism where a Gospel-Minister is the Administrator, and the Subject a Believer demonstrating Faith in Christ, and much Water the Matter, and both going down into the Water, the Administrator dipping or overwhelming the Subject in the Water, in the Name of the Father, Son and holy Ghost, the Manner and Form. This Baptism, as low as some would lay it, is from Heaven, appointed by God the Father as a Branch of his Mind and will. To this Ordinance of Baptism in water did Christ the Son of God, and Head of his Church, submit unto, in obedience to his Father's will, as an act of Righteousness, thereby confirming it as the will of God, and an act of Righteousness unto his People, for to observe and do in obedience to the will of God; the which Ordinance Christ hath ratified and confirmed unto his Church, and every Soul exercising Faith in him, by his Authority and Command, as a standing Ordinance, to be observed in its place, and to its Ends & Uses, for and during the time of the Gospel-Administration; the which is like to be until time shall be no longer, *Rev. 10.6.* or the great and terrible day of the Lord come, in which the Lord will judge all men, and those living under the Dispensation of the Gospel, according to their embracing or rejecting of his Counsel contained in the Gospel: as it is written, *The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power*, 2 Thess. 1.7, 8.

Therefore seeing the afore-recited Baptism was by God the Father instituted as a Branch of his Will and an Act of Righteousness for Believers to observe and do; and Christ his Son hath confirmed it unto us by his personal Act therein, and also by his word of Command and Counsel thereunto: *He that saith, he abideth in Christ, ought so to walk*, so to observe the same, it being by Divine Authority made one of the footsteps of the Flock of God.

But here is one thing liable to the Inquisition of the enquiring Soul, unto which I would say something before I pass this particular.

Quest. *What is the End and Use of Baptism.*

Ans. Baptism is an Appointment of God, to stand as a visible sign or token of his Covenant of Grace made in Christ for the Remission of Sins, and Acceptation of Persons, that through a supernatural Illumination do see themselves sinners & lost by sin, and their Redemption from the gift of Sin, and their Justification unto Life, to consist in Christ, by virtue of his Death, Burial and Resurrection, as a Propitiation and Atonement by him made, unto his Father's satisfaction, and acceptation, upon the conditions of Faith and Repentance; that is to say, upon their embracing of him believingly unto a dependency upon his Merits alone for their Justification from Sin unto Life, and Repentance unto a purpose of Heart to live to Christ in his Laws and Counsel contained in his Word: and hence it is, that Baptism is sometimes called *the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins*: Luk. 3.3.

First, because by God's Requirement it is to be attended with Repentance in the Subject unto a purpose of heart, to live to God, as contained in the Covenant.

Secondly, because by Baptism God doth visibly signify both unto the Believer acting in Baptism, and also his Church, that he accepts that person unto a free Remission of its Sins, and also to all his Church-Privileges contained in his Covenant.

Thirdly, because a Believer in Baptism doth signify both to God and Man its Acceptance of Christ, and Repentance unto a purpose of Heart to live to Christ, by whom he receiveth the Atonement contained in the Covenant.

Fourthly, because a Believer doth in Baptism resemble Christ in his Death, Burial and Resurrection, by which our Atonement was obtained: *Therefore* (saith the Apostle) *we are buried with him in Baptism into Death, that like as Christ was raised up by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of Life: for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his Death, we shall be also in the likeness of his Resurrection; knowing this, that our Old Man is crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve Sin*, Rom. 6.4, 5, 6.

Whence note, that the Gospel-Baptism is a Resemblance of the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ unto Believers: Christ descended down into Death and the Grave, taking upon him the weight and Burden of the Sins of sinful Men that went astray: a Believer descendeth (in Baptism) down into the Water, an Element of Death, where it gaineth power, and is therein by the Administrator buried or overwhelmed, taking upon the Command and the

Example of Christ for its Rule thereunto; his Will for to obey, and taking upon him the Merits of Christ, whereby his Sins are done away.

Christ ariseth out of the Grave by the Glory of God the Father, purposely to live unto the Glory of God the Father: but one thing here, among the rest, I mind: He leaves his heavy Burden of Sin behind.

The Believer ariseth up out of the Water, as out of a Grave, by the Glory of God the Father's Grace, with purpose of heart to live unto the Glory of God the Father, through the power of Grace: and here one thing, as before, I mind: He leaveth all his former Sins behind, all done away by virtue of Christ's Blood, by Faith applied in this similitude.

And now (saith Ananias to Saul) why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized: and wash away thy Sins, calling on the Name of the Lord; Act. 22.16. not that the Water in itself washeth away Sin; but the particular application of Christ's Death, Burial and Resurrection, with the Ends, Use and Efficacy thereof by Faith, as they are to the Eye of Faith represented by the Act of Baptism, with three Motions in the Water; as going down into the Water, buried in the Water, and arising up out of the Water, as aforesaid: the which Baptism, with the form of Words thereto, is the Gospel-Baptism, approved by the Divine Counsel of God, to be the visible sign and token of his Covenant made in Christ unto Believers, wherein God signs to them his Acceptation of them unto the Privileges of his Covenant: they sign to God their Acceptation of the Covenant, and Christ the Mediator thereof, to live to him according to his Mind and Will contained in the Covenant.

The Apostle *Peter*, speaking of *Noah's* Ark, and eight Souls therein, saved by water, saith, *Like Figure whereunto even Baptism doth now save us, not the putting away the filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

Two things are here laid down as Instruments of *Noah's* Safety, the Ark and the Water: *They get into the Ark, and the Water carrieth up the Ark above the deluge, to their preservation:* But we are principally concerned to look unto the original Ground of their Preservation, which was,

First, God's Command and Counsel to *Noah* discovered.

Secondly, *Noah's* Faith in embracing, and acting accordingly. *Noah* believes God makes Preparation, and gets into the Ark: and therefore *Hebrews* 11. attributes their Safety unto God's Command and Counsel, and to *Noah's* Faith: *By Faith Noah being warned of God, &c.*

Noah herein had the Answer of a good Conscience towards God, he acted suitable to his Will revealed, and was preserved: *Like Figure whereunto Baptism now saveth us, saith Peter,*

not the washing away the filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Three things are here considerable in these words of *Peter*.

First, Baptism is here said to be of a saving nature.

Secondly, wherein it cometh so to be of a saving nature: and that is said, to consist in the Answer of a good Conscience towards God.

Thirdly, how it cometh to be of a saving nature: and that is, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But why by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?

First, because that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is a sure confirmation to us, that Jesus Christ hath suffered Death, shed his Blood, for the obtaining a free and full Remission of Sins unto a Justification from the Guilt thereof, and from the Condemnation thereunto belonging, even to as many as believe on his Name.

Secondly, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ we have a sure Confirmation,

1. That he ever liveth to be a Mediator between God the Father and Man, as the chief Prophet to his People.

2. That he ever liveth to make Intercession for his People, as their High-Priest.

3. That he ever liveth to be the sole Head, King and Lawgiver, for Rule and Government unto his People, for their Direction, Protection and Preservation into a full possession of Salvation, according to the Covenant.

Thirdly, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ we have sure Confirmation, that he ever liveth to raise us up out of the Grave, 1 *Thess.* 4.14. 2 *Cor.* 4.14. by his power unto an estate of Immortality and eternal Life; we being on him, and conforming to him, according to the conditions of the Covenant: *Herein God commended his Love unto us* (saith the Apostle) *in that while we were yet Sinners Christ died for us, much more than being now justified by his Blood we shall be saved from Wrath through him: for if when we were Enemies we were reconciled by the Death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his Life:* that is to say, by his Life, whereunto he is risen again, will he much more carry on the Management of every Branch of the Covenant, which on his part is to be performed to the crowning of all his reconciled ones with eternal Salvation, even as the Resurrection of Jesus

Christ is an evidence of assurance unto all men, that God will by the Man Christ Jesus judge the World, *Act. 17.31.* so is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ a sure evidence of Confirmation, that Jesus Christ ever liveth to perform every Branch of the Covenant unto Believers, as aforesaid, by virtue of his Offices.

Now, as it is the Counsel and Requirement of God, that persons should through the Gospel-Ministration, believe on Christ, and conform to Christ, as aforesaid; so also is it the Counsel and Requirement of God, that persons so embracing of Christ by Faith, with purpose of heart to conform to him, should visibly confess their Faith in Christ, and visibly put on the Profession of Jesus Christ by Baptism, in the way of Christ, confirmed unto us in the Gospel, *Gal. 3.27.* the which Baptism, although with Water administered, doth unto the Eye of Faith comprehend figuratively the Ark of Safety, with the Mercy Seat also (*i. e.*) Christ Jesus, with the Covenant of Grace in him, which carrieth the Soul (through Faith) above the deluge of Sin and Condemnation for the same, wherein the ungodly world do sink and perish, while the Believer remaining in the Ark doth dwell in safety. Would you know the Reason why the Eunuch, when baptized, went away rejoicing? *Act. 8.39.16.34.* Surely he was by Faith gotten into the Ark, wherein he did behold his security from the aforesaid deluge of Sin and Condemnation; and set into a state of peace with God unto his consolation: *we joy in God* (saith the Apostle) *through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the Atonement,* *Rom. 5.11.*

Noah in believing God's Word, and improving the Means by God appointed according to his Advice and Counsel, doth therein answer a good Conscience towards God; and answered his Conscience with peace and security, to his great joy and consolation: so a Believer in embracing God's Word, and improving it according to his Advice and Counsel, doth therein answer a good Conscience towards God, and God doth in the said Improvement answer the Conscience with peace, and the Soul with preservation, to its great joy and consolation.

A Believer by being baptized doth thereby visibly justify God in the truth of his Word, and God does by Baptism visibly signify his justifying of the Believer unto a participation of all his Church-privileges, according to his Covenant.

The Publicans (saith Christ) *justified God being baptized with the Baptism of John: but the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the Counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him: Luk, 7.29, 30.*

The Publicans, it seemeth, did apply the Word of God believingly: the Pharisees and Lawyers gave not so much credit thereunto.

Where the Word of a King is (saith Solomon) *there is Power:* But the Administration of the Gospel of Christ is not only the Word of a King, but it is the Word of the King of Kings

and Lord of Lord's, in whose Word Baptism standeth both by Command and Promise, *Matt.* 28.19. to Believers by Command, for their Observation, and by Promise to their Consolation and Salvation.

He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, Mark. 16.16, the Word of this King is a Word of Power: it is the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth, Rom. 1.16. yea it is a Word of Power also to the Unbeliever, for to judge him unto Condemnation for rejecting the same: as, saith Jesus Christ, He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my Words, hath one that judgeth him: the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day: (his Reason is) for I have not spoken of myself; but my Father which sent me, he gave me a Commandment what I should say, and what I should speak, And I know that his Commandment is Life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak, Joh. 12, 48, 49, 50.

Here behold a faithful Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus; he brings nothing to the Sons of Men, but what is the Mind and Will of God the Father, for them to believe, observe and do accordingly: and as Baptism is equally confirmed to us, with the rest of Gospel-Doctrine, for to be believed, and observed in its place: so it doth greatly concern all persons exercising Faith in Christ, to observe it so as to answer the Will of God, and a good Conscience in the Administration and improvement of the same, in order to its End and Uses: and withal consider, that if it doth become a Shell without a Kernel to any persons, it is for want of Faith in the Subject upon whom it is administered: to behold the Kernel, and to feed thereon: and indeed it is the Wisdom and good Pleasure of Almighty God to order the preaching of the Word unto all people, for to beget Faith in them, and those converted to the Faith unto a visible Demonstration of the same, to be meet Subjects for Baptism and visible Church-membership by the same.

And whereas some persons do pretend they are baptized with the Spirit, and therefore slight Baptism with Water, as too low an Ordinance for them to observe in the administration of it, and rather plead the cessation of it than the observation of it.

In answer whereunto, consider that if any persons might have been exempted from Baptism upon that Plea, of being baptized with the Spirit: then doubtless, Christ, and also those persons spoken of *Act. 10.* might have been exempted, inasmuch as they were extraordinarily inspired with the Spirit and Gifts thereof: yet these must put on the Administration thereof, as an act of Righteousness in submission to the Will of God.

Whence note, that the highest Attainments of the Spirit and spiritual Gifts of Grace, we can attain unto in this Life, doth not exempt or free any person from, but rather obligeth the

more unto, and maketh them the more meet for action in those Ordinances of Baptism and Bread and Wine in their several places, ends and uses.

And indeed it is a question, whether those persons pretending the abovesaid Plea, for their Omission and Opposition of the afore-recited Ordinances, are at all partakers of that Spirit whereunto they do pretend: forasmuch as it is the Office of the Spirit of Truth to lead Souls into the Observation of all Truth, and not into the Omission or Opposition of the same.

In the next place consider, that although I have proceeded so far upon this point of Baptism, in order to the Vindication of it, and Believers in the Observation of the same: yet have I not digressed from the Matter of Direction to the enquiring Soul, in order to its Attainment to Holiness: forasmuch as Baptism, as before considered, is a holy Ordinance, instituted by the holy God unto holy ends and uses; neither is it of the Matter of putting on of Christ, as before asserted, in order to the Attainment of Holiness, but is comprehended in the same; that is to say, his Offices, Qualifications and Example of Walkings:

In order whereunto, consider those Words asserted by the Apostle *Paul*, Gal. 3.27. *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ:* and so I shall proceed to the next particular; which is, *to abide in him.*

Fourthly, as we are concerned to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, as aforesaid, in order to our Attainment unto Holiness, so also we are concerned to abide in him.

It is a piece of Divine Counsel delivered by our Lord and blessed Saviour Jesus Christ unto his Disciples, *Joh. 15.4, 5. 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; 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.* Sometimes in Scripture we have this abiding in him set forth by the terms *continuing* and *persevering*: The Apostle *Paul*, putting the *Colossians* in mind of the End of Christ's Death for them, which was,

First, to reconcile them unto himself, and unto the Father in him.

Secondly, to present them unto the Father holy, unblameable and unproveable in his sight, he addeth this proviso, *If ye continue in the Faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard.*

Whence note by the way, that a well-grounded Faith in Christ, attended with stability therein, according to the Apostolical Ministration, is the principal way to attain to Holiness, to the Father's acceptation: such will Christ adorn with the holy Robes of his own Righteousness; and therein justify them to the Father's acceptation unto Life eternal.

Therefore, as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with Thanksgiving, Col. 2.6. I may not omit Saint John's Exhortation and Advice in his first Epistle, chap. 3.24, 25, 28. Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning: if that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you: ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father: and this is the Promise that he hath promised us, even eternal Life. And now little Children abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

Whence note by the way,

First, that as persons are concerned to put on Christ in order to Holiness and Heavens Attainments: so it is their stability or abiding in it that crowns them with the same: *Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy Crown, Rev. 3.11.*

Secondly, note that a person near conformity to and abiding in the Apostolical Doctrine, in all things wherein the Faith and Practice of a Christian is concerned, is the best visible Demonstration of a Souls being and abiding in the Father and the Son: see *2 Joh. v. 9.*

Thirdly, note that a people abiding in the Gospel-Doctrine, and so in the Father and the Son by Faith: they do thereby much augment the joy, comfort and confidence of the true Gospel-Minister (in the day of Christ's second appearing) under whose ministry they have been conducted into that estate.

And now, little Children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him, at his coming. 1 Joh. 2.28. For what is our Hope or Joy, or Crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? for ye are our Glory and Joy: for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord, 1 Thess. 2.19, 20. chap. 3.8.

Thus having briefly laid down these four Rules for the enquiring Soul, to observe in its progress towards the Attainment of Holiness: as,

1. That he look to Jesus with an eye of Faith, as he is held forth in the Gospel-Administration.
2. To consider him in his Undertakings for us, and in his Benefits to us.
3. To put him on in the particulars afore premised. And
4. To abide in him.

Now whereas there was three particulars proposed, in order to the putting on of Christ: as,

1. Wherein he is to be put on.
2. How he is to be put on: and
3. Why he must be put on in order to that Attainment.

Having laid down something to the first and second, it remains that something be said to the third, Why Christ must be put on by those that would attain to Holiness? And,

First, because he is the Center in whom all the means appertaining to Holiness is by the Father centered: *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him*, Coloss. 2.9, 10. Christ's Person is holy, his Word is holy, his Works are Holy, his Name is holy, his Nature is holy, his Laws, Ordinances, Government, Council; yea all in himself, and proceeding from himself is holy; he is the Fountain of Holiness, full of the Springs of God.

Secondly, Persons must put on Christ in that Attainment; because it is the Will of God, and his fore-determination and appointment from Eternity, that in Christ should that Attainment of Holiness be unto all persons, through believing or putting on him as aforesaid. There is no other way standing in the Election or Counsel of God to attain unto Holiness, but only in Jesus Christ, as saith the Apostle, *According as he hath chosen us in him, before the Foundation of the World, that we should be Holy and without blame before him in love*, Ep. 1. 4. Wherefore would we attain unto an Estate in the Ornament of Holiness; would we have Christ formed in us, and we transformed into his likeness, so as to bare his Image, his Name and Nature? Would we answer God the Father's Predestination, Election, and Calling? Would we have the assurance thereof sealed unto our Souls, and have an entrance into his Kingdom? Then put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and abide in him as afore considered; in his Offices, Qualifications, and Example of walking; it is the great design of God in Christ from Eternity; it is the joy of every faithful Gospel-Minister to behold such effects wrought in a people; *fulfil ye my joy* (saith the Apostle) *that ye be like minded, having the same love*. It is the Beauty of a Christian; the very quintessence of Christianity; the honour of Religion, to the glory of God.

O put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and abide in him, and make not provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof.

CHAP. IX.

Containing a use of Reprehension and Admonition unto several sorts of men in this Generation; who notwithstanding the Excellency of Holiness, and the great concernment thereof, to the advancing of God's Glory, and the Creature's Comfort, and Eternal Consolation, do willfully neglect, or carelessly improve the way and means for the attainment thereof, as if it was an Ornament altogether out of fashion, and of no use, nor comeliest to be found in it.

Of these Persons, are first

The Ignorant Soul that sitteth down contentedly in an Estate of Ignorance, making the Custom of their Country, and the Traditions of their Ancestors, the only rule and ground for their chiefest actions; but as for the matter of Holiness, with the way and means of its attainment, the poor Creatures are merely strangers: The Estate and Condition of such Souls is much to be lamented, in that so much means of knowledge is afforded, and so much ignorance remaining under the same, by reason of a careless negligence of applying the rational faculties of the Soul in the diligent use of the means afforded by a serious search into the revealed will of God, with due consideration and meditation of the same, thereby to gain the knowledge of him, acquaintance with him; to glorify his name, and to the establishing of the Soul in the knowledge of its Salvation.

The Spirit of God in Scripture reckoneth the said carelessness and negligence in this matter, under the notion of *folly*, and indeed it is a point of the greatest folly in the world, and to be admired, that God having given forth such excellent means of Knowledge and Salvation in the same, and the Creature not esteem it worth the improving.

Solomon was a man endued with great Wisdom, and yet he seemeth not to reach the depth of the Creature's negligence herein; or at least, God's great mercy in affording such excellent means unto the Creature, and waiting upon him in the same: *Wherefore* (saith he) *is there a price in the hand of a Fool to get Wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it*, Pro. 17.16. yet *Solomon* layeth the cause of a person's not attaining to Wisdom, in his not improving the means; and his not improving the means, to be his folly, as we may understand him in his expressions, *Prov.* 24.7.

Wisdom is too high for a Fool (saith *Solomon*): and why? *He openeth not his mouth in the gate*; as if he had said, The way and means in which Wisdom is attainable, is by him neglected.

As without Knowledge the Mind cannot be good, so doubtless it is generally possessed with Carnality; *the which, as saith the Apostle, is Enmity with God, Rom. 8.7. and, through Ignorance is alienated from the life of God, Eph. 4.18.* It were much to be desired that every Soul in this Estate, would take Counsel of the Spirit of God, given out by *Solomon*, to cry after Knowledge, and lift up the Voice for Understanding; to seek for her as for hid Treasures; implying a diligent search into God's Word, with earnest supplications to the Throne of Grace for the attainment thereof; *Then (saith the Text) shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the Knowledge of God; for the Lord giveth Wisdom, out of his mouth cometh Knowledge and Understanding, Pro. 2.2, 3, 4, 5, 6.*

I shall only present two or three Scriptures more to the consideration of those persons that sit down as satisfied and contented under this Estate of *Ignorance*, and so leave them to the good pleasure of the Almighty; the first Scripture is recorded in *Pro. 24. ver. 3, 4. Through Wisdom is an House builded, and by Understanding it is Established, and by Knowledge shall the Chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant Riches.* These words admit of a spiritual sense and meaning, as it may be thus: The House builded, to signify a Person or People built up in the Faith of Christ, and observation of his Truth, as Saint *Peter* teacheth in his first Epistle, *chap. 2. vers. 5. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual House, &c.* to this sense are those words of *Jude*; *But ye beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy Faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, &c. Jud. 20.*

Secondly: You have the means by which the building is reared up, and that is here said to be through *Wisdom*, intimating the divine Wisdom and Counsel of God contained in his Word.

Thirdly: The way of Establishment, and that is said by *Understanding*. As if a right understanding of the Mind and Will of God, or the Truth, as it is in Jesus, were the only way to a Soul's Establishment therein; *Give me Understanding (saith David) and I shall keep thy Law, yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart, when Wisdom entereth into thy heart (saith Solomon) and Knowledge is pleasant unto thy Soul, Discretion shall preserve thee, Understanding shall keep thee, to deliver thee from the way of the evil man, &c.*

Fourthly: It is said, by *Knowledge*, shall the Chambers be filled with all pleasant and precious Riches, intimating the inward and uppermost Rooms of the Soul, as the Mind, the Will, Affections; yea, all the rational faculties of the Soul, shall through the true knowledge of God in Christ, be filled and furnished with the precious qualifications of divine grace, according to Christ Jesus, in a measure, and with the pleasant and comfortable manifestations of God's love in Christ, wherein is satisfying Joy and Pleasures for ever-more.

This is Eternal Life, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, Joh. 17.3.

Hereunto agreeth those words of *Peter* in his second Epistle, recorded in the first Chapter, ver. 3. whose words are these; *Grace and Peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ our Lord, according as his Divine Power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto Life and Godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to Glory and Virtue; whence we may note these particulars by the way.*

First: The gift given unto us of God, and that is, all things that pertain to Life and Godliness.

Secondly: The way of conveyance of these things unto the Soul; and that is said to be through the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thirdly: The effects wrought in the Soul by the means received in knowledge, and that is an Estate of Godliness and assurance of Eternal Life, and also preservation in this Estate: Whence we may observe, that an Estate of Holiness, or Godliness, and Eternal Life, with all things appertaining thereunto, is the free and proper gift of God, and is highly to be prized, and carefully improved to the Glory of God, by every Soul that desires his own well-being in the knowledge and enjoyments of God, wherein the true felicity and comfort of the Soul doth consist; the which attainments is enjoyed through a true knowledge of God in Christ. To this agreeth those words of *St. Paul*, Col. 3.10. *The new Man is renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that Created him, in Righteousness and true Holiness*, Eph. 4.24. Whence note also by the way, that in, and through a true Knowledge of God in Christ, are the Mortifications of the Old Man of Sin, and the qualifications of Grace wrought in a Soul.

O what's the Reason that there is so little Renewedness in the qualifications and Conversations of many people in our days, and so much abusing of the Sacred Name of God, by Swearing and Cursing, and many profane speeches! as also the abuse of the Creatures by Drunkenness, and the like excess: Also the many vain carnal, loose, licentious practices, acted and observed with delight therein. Is it not the want of this Knowledge of God in Christ? Is not Ignorance the Mother of such Profaneness and Impieties? and what's the Reason that God's dear Children are many times hated and reproached, reviled and vilified? *Yea*, saith Christ, *the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think they do God Service*. Christ gives us this Reason; *All these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me*, Joh. 16.3.

O consider, all ye that content yourselves in an Estate of *Ignorance*, and solace yourselves in Carnal and Worldly *Vanities*, and are careless and negligent in applying and improving the means of *Knowledge*; to the end you might glorify God, and thereby be enabled to answer the end of God in your Creation; his end in giving his Son to die for your Redemption; and his spiritual Word, Counsel, and Advice therein for your Sanctification; that thereby in a good

improvement of the same, you might be made meet to glorify his Name, and to enjoy his glory! O consider the loss and damage that you hereby sustain, by slighting or carelessly neglecting such precious means, granted forth unto such gracious ends for a little Carnal Vanity!

Consider how you will answer it in the day of account, when for all these things God shall bring thee to Judgment.

O! how do many Parents in this case not only prejudice their own Souls, but also the Souls of their Children, and those within their jurisdiction; whereas it is the requirement of God, that Parents should lay up the words of God in their hearts, and teach them to their Children, that they might know the Lord, and set their hope in God; they not only neglect this great concernment, but also by their own vicious lives & evil example, rather teach them the Vices of Swearing, Cursing, Drunkenness, and much Profaneness, to God's dishonour, and their own ruin both of Body and Soul; not considering that God will require it of them, and bring them to Judgment for the same.

O how many Parents, although not so vicious and profane, yet are so earnest in their pursuit after this worldly interest, to gain for themselves, and enrich their Children with great Portions of this earthly Treasure, as wholly to give up themselves thereunto, not minding those Treasures that are Divine, and of a more greater concernment to the gaining an interest in Christ, either for their selves or Children, by instructing of them thereunto, until death seize upon them, and summon them to the Grave; and then perhaps send for a Minister to pray for them: the which I do not condemn, because I know God is merciful; yet I know that God is also just, and will bring Souls to Judgment, and then whither God will accept this last Sacrifice for the whole, I shall leave to the only wise God to determine.

But know and consider that it is the undoubted Will and Requirement of God, that Parents should Treasure up the word of God in their hearts by Consideration, Meditation, and Application, believingly and diligently endeavour to plant the same word of God in the hearts of their Children, as they come to be capable of the teachings of it, to the end, that they might know the Lord, and reverence his Holy Name, observe his Will, and place their hope in him. To this purpose see and consider *Deut.* 6.6, 7, 8. *Deut.* 11.18, 19, 20. *Deut.* 4.9, 10. *Psal.* 78.5, 6, 7. to these Testimonies of the Will of God do those words of the Apostle *Paul* bear witness, *Eph.* 6.4. *Solomon* saith, *by Humility, and the Fear of the Lord, are Riches and Honour, and Life.*

Would we have our Children truly Rich and Honourable, and live Everlastingly, so then lay up the Word of Grace in our own hearts, treasure it up there; *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all Wisdom,* Col. 3.16. Secondly: Let your diligent endeavours be to answer God's Will in making forth the same unto your Children, to their Edification, to the planting

of that Immortal Seed of the Word in their hearts, that they may set their hope in God, and fear before him, and humbly walk with him in the way of his Commandments: *Train up a Child in the way that he should go, and when he is Old, he will not depart from it.* Pro. 22.6.

[Objection.] If God hath Elected me, or my Children unto Salvation, he will one time or other bring us to an Estate of Salvation? But if God hath not Elected us thereto, all my labour in that kind will be to little purpose; for if there be a particular Election of persons, as there seemeth to be, then what I do in that case, is but needless, or to strive against the stream.

[Answer.] That there is an Election, is certain; and that God hath placed this Election in his Son Christ, is as certain; see *Eph.* 1.4. and that persons do partake of, and witness this Election in themselves, as they embrace Christ, believingly, and conform to him in holy Sanctity, is also true: See 1 *Thes.* 1.3, 4. 2 *Thes.* 2.13.

And therefore so much the rather should you give diligence to make your Calling and Election sure, by a growth and increase of Grace unto an attainment of the qualifications of grace wrought in you, according to the qualifications of Jesus Christ, and as the Apostle teacheth, *Giving all diligence (saith he) add to your Faith, Virtue; and to Virtue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, Brotherly-kindness; and to Brotherly-kindness, Charity.* 2 Pet. 1.5, 6, 7.

And, as there is an Election in Christ unto Salvation, through believing in Christ, and conforming to him in the way of Holiness, attainable through a careful applying and improving the means thereunto appointed; so also is there a Reprobation determined and decreed of God from Eternity, unto those persons that in love to their Lusts, and carnal, and worldly Vanities, do obstinately persist in opposing, or carelessly neglecting, do slight the means afforded, so as not to embrace it in the love thereof, and carefully improve it to the glory of the Lord; that like as they reject God's Counsel, and his Love and Mercy in the same, to satisfy their Lusts in worldly and sinful Vanities; so the Lord hath determined that in their Unrighteousness, he will reject them, and leave them to Satan's delusions, that divine Justice may be satisfied in their Condemnation.

To this purpose consider well some Testimonies (among many) given out by God's Spirit in his Servants of old; as in 2 *Thes.* 2.10, 11, 12. the Epistle of *Jud.* 4. Here observe, they are persons turning the grace of God into Lasciviousness, denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ; and withal observe, that this denial is not to be confined only to such Atheists that say there is not any God; but also those persons are herein comprehended, that in words do acknowledge there is a God and Christ, but yet although they live under the dispensation of God's gracious word, and word of grace, yet refuse to live in God's Counsel therein contained, to live in those ways & works that their own ungodly Lusts do lead them to; and such are those

persons that *Paul to Titus* speaketh of, that confess *they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work, Reprobate*, Tit. 1.16. and with these Scriptures consider Wisdom's Voice, *Prov. 1. ver. 20.* to the end of the Chapter: Wherefore all ye that lie down securely upon the bed of Ignorance and Profaneness, solacing yourselves in Carnal Vanities, and the Mammon of this world: O look unto the Lord, who desires the Knowledge of God rather than burnt Offerings, *Hos. 6.6.* and obedience to his Will, rather than Sacrifice. Look up and behold, it is not Ignorance and Profaneness, but Holiness that leads to Happiness; It is not the qualifications of the Old Man, as Hatred, Malice, Envy, Evil-speaking, Back-biting, and Devouring, nor any Profane and Carnal Vanities; but the qualifications of love to Christ, his Truth and Members, yea love to Enemies, to all men as they are the Creatures of God, the workmanship of his hands; with Peace towards all men, Mercy, Pity, and Compassion towards the Oppressed and Distressed; Meekness, Patience, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, and Temperance; with joy and delight in the exercises of Piety and Charity, *that leads to Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord*; against such (saith the Apostle) *there is no Law*: And they that are Christ's, have Crucified the Old Man or the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts. Neither is it Ignorance, but a true Knowledge of Christ, through which the Old Man is Crucified, and these divine graces or qualifications of Christ are begotten, conceived, nourished, and preserved in the Soul, and brought forth into action, to the perfecting Holiness in the fear of God. Neither is it, a Mind, and Meditations exercised chiefly in temporal things; but a diligent and careful exercising the mind and meditations in the divine Precepts, and Counsel of God, contained in his word; with a wrestling at the Throne of Grace, for a sanctified use thereof unto the Soul, whereby the true Knowledge of Christ, and the truth in him is obtained. Wherefore, wouldst thou have Heaven for thy Inheritance? press after Holiness. Wouldst thou be Holy? suffer not the Old Man to lie Uncrucified in thee; but press hard after the attainments of the divine qualifications of Christ, so as to have them ruling in thee; and from that principle, let all thy actions flow both towards God and men. And wouldst thou attain to this degree? press after a right knowledge of Jesus Christ and God in him. And wouldst thou attain to a right knowledge of God in Christ? Take the Testimonies of the Mind and Will of God contained in his Word for thy Counsellors: Advise therewith, by a diligent exercise of thy mind, and meditations therein; waiting upon God with supplications, for a blessing thereupon. *Wherewith (saith David) shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto, according to thy Word, Psal. 119.9.*

As if he had said, by making the Word of God his chief Counsel, and regulating his thoughts, words, and actions by that rule. *Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way; I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me.*

O that every Soul in an Estate of Ignorance and Profaneness, would in time consider *David's* foot-steps, and the foot-steps of all the flock of God; and consider the experienced Benefit they did attain unto, by walking in the Counsel of the Lord contained in his word; and

by way of imitation, turn their feet, their affections, unto the Testimonies of the Lord, *and up and be doing, while it is called to day, before the night cometh, when no man can work. He that gathereth in Summer, is a wise Son (saith Solomon), but he that sleepeth in Harvest, is a Son that causeth shame, Prov. 10.5.*

These words in the spiritual sense of them, giveth us this note, or observation by the way; That it is a point of excellent wisdom in a person, or people, diligently to improve opportunities and means for Heavens Attainments, while the season serveth; but shame and contempt are the attendants of a person or people careless and negligent in improving opportunities and means for Heavenly attainments in their season, or while they are afforded to them.

If thou beest wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself, Prov. 9.12. Thy diligence in season shall redound to thy own advantage and eternal benefit. But if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it; for God hath not called us to Uncleanness, but unto Holiness, 1 Thes. 3.7, 8. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, at whose Wrath the Earth shall tremble, and the Nations shall not be able to abide his Indignation, Jer. 10.10. A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished, Prov. 22.3. In the fear of the Lord is strong Confidence, and his Children shall have a place of refuge, Prov. 14.26. Surely he scorneth the scorner; but he giveth grace unto the lowly; The Wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of Fools, Prov. 3.34, 35. The heart of the Prudent getteth Knowledge, and the ear of the Wise seeketh Knowledge, Prov. 18.15. The words of the Lord are pure words, Psal. 12.6. They are the words of Wisdom, Knowledge, & Understanding; they proceed from the Fountain of Wisdom, Knowledge, & Understanding; & God doth give Wisdom, Knowledge, and Understanding thereby, unto such as embrace his Counsel in the same, and improve it accordingly, waiting upon him therein in love thereunto, as saith David; Thy Word is pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it, Psal. 119.140. Thou, through thy Commandments, hast made me wiser than mine Enemies, Psal. 119.98. for they are ever with me; the entrance of thy words giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple, Psal. 119.130. David experiencing the truth of the words of God, and the virtue, use, and efficacy of the same unto his Soul, doth here set forth the excellency thereof to the praises of God, and to the encouragement of others, to prove the excellency thereof by an embracement adheringly; Every word of God is pure (saith Agur) He is a Shield unto them that put their trust in him, Prov. 30.5.

Every word of God is pure, his Testimonies, his Commands, his Promises, his Invitations, Exhortations, Admonitions and Reproofs; yea, all his whole Counsel is pure, flowing from a pure God, given out to pure ends, to bring defiled Sinners to a state of purity; every word of God is pure in itself, and pure in the esteem of every true Child of God; the sanctified heart: *I esteem all thy precepts in all things to be right, saith David, Psal. 119.128. Wisdom is justified by her Children, saith Christ, Math. 11.19. Poor Publicans justify God, Luk. 7.29. by esteeming*

and embracing of his Counsel: but *have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on him?* Joh. 7.48. *The Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the Counsel of God against themselves,* Luke 7.30. They would not justify God by esteeming and embracing of his Counsel, as held forth by his Authority, although God witnessed to the same by his mighty hand: The Poor, the Lame, and Maimed, come in at the invitation, and partake of the benefits, while the worldly interested persons slight the invitation, and the loving kindness of the Inviter for their worldly interest sake, to the procuring to themselves the displeasure of the Inviter, the Lord, and to their loss of a participation of the benefits.

And so by observing *lying Vanities*, they forsake their own mercy, that they happily might have had upon their embracing and improving what they were invited to.

Wherefore, consider all ye that act the Prodigal's part in Rioting and Drunkenness, and other profane and vicious Vanities, to the wasting of your precious time and opportunities, your temporal Estates and Wits, and all in the service of sin, to the impoverishing of your poor souls, and the souls of your Children, for want of Education in the knowledge of God; unto the Condemnation of your own souls, and the souls of your Children by your evil Example, as much as in you lieth. O consider, that by reason hereof, not only your Children, but also your Wives and other Relations; yea, the whole land of your Nativity is forced into mourning; and especially, when God shall visit for these things; as saith the Lord by his Servants the Prophets: see one Testimony among many, *Hos. 4.* where it is said, that the Lord had a controversy with the Inhabitants of the Land: the cause seemeth two-fold first, They lay aside truth, and the knowledge of God by the same, and acts of mercy (which the knowledge of God and truth leadeth to), as things out of request and estimation with them: Secondly, as effects ensuing, and demonstrations thereof, they fall into those great and gross abominations of Swearing, Lying, Killing, Stealing, and committing Adultery, and all excess, even unto blood; and therefore shall the Land mourn, &c. O that every such Soul would consider and act the Prodigal's part in his return, and that timely, while the Father's arms of mercy are open to embrace them: *O (saith the Lord) that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my Commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their Children for ever,* Deut. 5.29. *Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the holy one of Israel, I am the Lord thy God, that teacheth thee to profit, that leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go: O that thou hadst hearkened to my Commandments, then had thy peace been as a River, and thy Righteousness as the Waves of the Sea,* Isa. 48.17, 18. Note, God's desire is that Sinners should return and live to him: Note, Those that hearken to God's Commands, so as to walk therein, are those that live to God, and are blessed of him; *Blessed are all they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of life, and may enter in thorough the Gates into the City, for without are Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers, and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie,* Rev. 22.14, 15. I, but what Estate shall these without possess, and where, the same Author tells us, *chap. 21.8.*

But the Fearful, and Unbelieving, and the Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Liars, shall have their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second death, Rev. 21.8. I Jesus have sent mine Angel to testify these things unto the Churches; I am the root, and the off-spring of David, the bright and morning Star, Rev. 22.16.

Secondly: A word to the industrious Worldling.

O consider ye, in whose hearts the world hath full possession, that cannot spare one corner to give entertainment to the word of God by way of meditation and contemplation thereupon, although God requires the whole heart unto himself: Consider ye that are in an immoderate pursuit after this earthly treasure: *Take heed* (saith our Saviour Christ) *and beware of Covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth.* Here me-thinks, I should hear some say, that as to matter of Covetousness, I think I am clear; for although I am industrious in my pursuit after the things of this world, yet I have not taken any thing from any man, but what I pay for; neither do I wrong any man, but pay every man his own; and therefore I think I am not guilty of Covetousness.

But then the question is, whether we can say as much in the case between ourselves and God; and between us and our Souls; and between us and our Relations? and first, Let us consider a little as in the matters of God; have we not in our earnest pursuit after our worldly interest, spent the most part of that time that God hath required for his Service, upon our worldly interest? have not our minds and affections been exercised upon our worldly and carnal interests, when they should be exercised by meditations and contemplations, with love and delight in God, his word and works, and celebrating praises unto his name? do we not by our earnest pursuit after this world's interest, make our bodies and spirits so dull, drowsy, and unfit for God's Service, that if we appear but one hour in a week therein, we spend the most part thereof in sleep?

Do we not by our earnest pursuit after this world's interest, deprive our Children of that Soul-Education that is due unto them from us by God's requirement?

Do we not by our earnest pursuit after this world's interest, with-hold more than is meet from the Poor and Needy, as in acts of Mercy, Charity, Pity and Compassion by God's commanded?

And if so, is it not Covetousness? yea, is it not Covetousness which is Idolatry, when that our time, our strength, meditations, considerations; our wills and affections are so dedicated to the world, whereby God wants that Honour and Service that is due unto him; and our Souls want that nourishment that is of its greatest concernment; and our Children want that Soul-Education that is their right and due from us to be performed to them; and the poor and needy

eyes want that refreshing, that of right by God's requirement, and the bond of Nature, and the bond of Charity, we ought to communicate unto them? *There is that scattereth (saith Solomon) and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to Poverty: The liberal Soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth, shall be watered also himself, Prov. 11.24, 25. The merciful man doth good to his own Soul, but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh, Prov. 11.17.* The sense of these words is made out, and confirmed by the Apostle Paul to Timothy, 1 Epist. 6.17, 18. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches; but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal life, verse 19.*

O consider ye that have the world chief in your hearts, that sins of Omission are condemning sins, as well as sins of Commission. See *Matt. 25.* where you have a large description of several under the sentence of Condemnation, only charged with Omissions; as the foolish Virgins, for omitting the time and season for providing themselves of Oil; and the slothful Servant, that improved not his Talent to the advantage of his Lord; and the hard-hearted, and close-handed, that did not visit, relieve, and shew mercy unto the poor, distressed, and oppressed Members of Jesus Christ. Wherefore consider, and *Sow to yourselves in Righteousness, that you may Reap in Mercy, break up the fallow ground of your hearts, for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain Righteousness upon you, Hos. 10.12.*

Thirdly: A word to the more knowing and seeming Religious; yet acting the qualifications of the Old Man.

Is Holiness of such concernment, as before considered; and the way of its Attainment is by putting on of Christ in his offices, qualifications, and example of walking? It may administer a word of Reprehension and Admonition unto those of us in particular, and also all persons that have attained a great measure of knowledge in the Doctrine of Christ; yea, in the foundation-principles of Christianity, and yet do not persevere to the putting on of Christ in his qualifications of grace, and example of walking, to the Crucifying of the qualifications of the Old Man. O how doth Pride abound in many knowing people, whose knowledge should teach them humility? how many Professors, even men of great knowledge, do suffer their desires to run on in an immoderate pursuit after the riches and honours of this world, whose knowledge should lead them to covet earnestly the best gifts? O how is self-love and self-endedness abounding in this Generation, and that among knowing persons, whose knowledge should lead them to deny themselves more in worldly things, to follow Christ in the way of holiness; but as if those words of Paul were made good in our days, *Phil. 2.21. All seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ's.*

O how doth that old deformed qualification of the Old Man, even Envy, Hatred, and Malice, shew itself unmortified among many knowing people, bearing the denomination of Christians, only upon the account of some differing opinions, about ceremonial circumstances; or it may be some difference in Judgment in the manner of Church-constitution, or observation of Ordinances, or order of Discipline, to the exposing one another unto the devouring jaws of Cruelty; by Imprisonment, loss of Estate and Life, for not conforming the one to the other in an outward conformity, although in judgment and conscience there is no union, as experience doth manifest in the dealings of the *Papists* with the *Protestants*, and the *Protestants* one towards another in the case of non-conforming outwardly in religious worship, in those things that in judgment and conscience they cannot act Faith in, as to be agreeable to the will of God; whereas, if Christians in name would be Christians in nature, and act one towards another in the qualifications of Christ; if difference in judgment should cause a dividing in the matter of assembling in religious worship for conscience-sake; yet *Ephraim* need no more envy *Judah*, nor *Judah* vex *Ephraim*, but each enjoy his own privileges and liberty of Conscience in Religious Worship, without any more hailing into Captivity, or complaining in our streets, by reason of the tender Conscience being oppressed?

Obj. But we are commanded to contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints; & the more, because of certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this Condemnation, *Ungodly men turning the grace of God into Lasciviousness, and deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*, Jude 1.4.

Ans. First: We are to consider the persons concerned in the duty, of contending, to be Christians called into a Church Assembly in the faith and order of the Gospel.

Secondly: For what they should contend, and that is said to be for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, or the Doctrine of the Gospel, and the observation thereof accordingly.

Thirdly: With whom they should contend; and those are gain-sayers of corrupt principles, and gain-sayers of corrupt practices.

Fourthly: The manner of the management of this contention also is considerable, and that is two-fold, as 1. Respecting persons without the Church, as not being Church-members: 2ly. Persons within the Church, as Church-members. As to persons without, there is no way of contending with them, to bring them into an embracement of the Gospel and Church-membership thereby, but the management of the word of God unto them, and the example of a Godly life; and if they will not be won thereby, there is no other forceable means upon Gospel-record approved, that the Church of Christ should by temporal penalties force them into Church-membership, before, through Faith in Christ, they are made willing thereunto; for temporal penalties may force the body into a way of worship, but they cannot force the spirit;

and God requireth no such worship, for *the time is come* (saith Christ,) *that they that worship the Father, must worship him in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him,* Joh. 4.23, 24. And *Paul* asserteth his remembrance of the believing *Romans* in his Prayers, with this testimony; *God is my witness* (saith he) *whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Son, that without ceasing, &c.* Note here, *Paul's* Spirit and Gospel-truth are joined together in the worship of the Father; such the Father seeks to worship him: Now Club-law cannot beat these two together, although laid on by human might and power. As saith the Lord concerning Christ, and his building of his Gospel-Church under the denomination of his *Zerubbabel; not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,* saith the Lord, *Zach.* 4.6, 7. Hereunto agreeth those words of the Apostle *Paul,* 2 Cor. 10.4. *The Weapons of our warfare are not Carnal, but mighty through God, to the casting down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ:* the which weapons he doth further explain, *Ep.* 6.14. *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with Truth and the breast-plate of Righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, taking the shield of Faith, and the helmet of Salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance.* These, and the like weapons, are the weapons of the holy Catholick Church, that believeth aright, and is universal in the truth, by which, they manage their contention with those that are without; and those that withstand that means, are to be left out of the Church in the world, during the pleasure of the Almighty, and to be judged by that means they have rejected and condemned with the world, in the day that God shall judge the world by Jesus Christ.

But secondly: The text saith there are certain men crept in unawares, *ungodly men, &c.* It seemeth that there were some in those times, that by pretending Faith in Christ, were admitted into Church-membership, which afterwards discovered themselves by an ungodly lascivious life: These it seemeth had no right unto Church-membership, although a right to the hearing of the Word by virtue of Christ's Commission, yet not unto Church-membership; *they crept in unawares:* that is, their counterfeit Faith was not discerned, until afterwards that it appeared by error in opinion or practice.

But how must the Church contend for the Faith with these persons, and carry on the management thereof?

First: In a respective love to their persons, tendering the good of their souls, but with a hatred of their sin; and in love to their souls, to reprove and admonish them; laying before them that part of God's Law, against which the crime is acted; that thereby, they may the better be convinced and reform, and so by the sword of the spirit, the word of God, to deal with them, if possible, unto a Reformation. But in case no Reformation doth appear, then to proceed in the severity of Justice against them by Excommunication, according to Christ's rule and order; and

thereby cast them out of the Church into the world again, as not to have any further privilege in the Church than what the Lord affords the world, which is admittance to hear the Word for their Conversion. But what is the end of this severity? There are divers ends; as first, To signify God's severity against sin and obstinate sinners, that as they are justly, for sin, cast out of Communion with his Church, and the gracious privileges thereunto afforded here on Earth: So assuredly, without timely Repentance unto a Reformation, such persons are by God's determination, and shall be by the sentence of the just Judge of all the world, excluded from Communion with the Church triumphant, and all her glorious privileges in her glorified state.

Secondly: To the end, that the Sinner may consider and see his sin, be humbled for it, and ashamed of it, and repent unto a reformation, that the soul may be saved in the day of the Lord: see 1 *Cor.* 5.

Thirdly: To the end, the Church may preserve her own purity and holy-state, from being defiled with those sins, which if suffered, may get into other members and corrupt them, and it becometh a sin unto the Church in her neglect of duty; see the Church of *Corinth*, chap. 5. the Church of *Pergamos*, and the Church of *Thyatira*, *Rev.* 2. all under reproof here upon the neglect of this duty.

Neither is the Church in general, nor the Officers thereof in particular, to make Edicts of their own devising, and enjoin them as parts of God's worship, and to be observed, which are not Apostolically confirmed as to be the will of God, nor to Excommunicate any person for not observing the same, without defiling their holy state with the guilt of sin; for saith Christ unto those persons that stood steadfast in the Apostolical Observations, and received not the contrary, *I will put upon you* (saith Christ) *none other Burden, but that which ye have already; hold fast till I come*, *Rev.* 2.24, 25.

Whence note by the way; First, That it is the will of Christ that his people should observe that way of Church-constitution, Doctrine, order of Worship and discipline, which was Apostolically confirmed without diminishing ought therefrom, until the second coming of Christ.

Secondly: That it is not the will of Christ that any Innovations or Additions to that order of Worship should be brought in, or imposed upon the Consciences of his people, but that the Innovators, & Observers, shall bear their sin, and in retaining the Observations of the said Innovations, do thereby cease from being Catholick, or a people universal in the Truth.

But in case Innovations are brought into the Church, and maintained by the power of the Church, and imposed upon the Members; and some of the Members cannot in Conscience bear them, what way may they take to secure themselves from the guilt of sin, that attends the Church in the Observations of such Innovations, and not sin against God? Answer, first: By

contending against them, by the rule of truth, that if by any means the Church may be convinced of their Evil; and if this will not prevail, then to answer the call of God and his Counsel therein; which is, *To come forth from among them, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you*, saith the Lord, 2 Cor. 6.17. *Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her, be ye clean ye that bear the Vessels of the Lord*, Isa. 52.11. *Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues*, Rev. 18.4.

The which call of God, I do presume was justifiable in *Luther* and *Calvin*, and other Protestants, who for the abominable Innovations of the *Roman Church*, did dissent and separate from her; which although she was once a true Church of the Gospel-Constitution and Order, as the Apostle *Paul* in his Epistle giveth Testimony of them, calling them *Beloved of God*, and giveth thanks to God that their Faith was spoken of through-out the whole world, as in chap. 1.7, 8. *And I myself* (saith *Paul*) *also am persuaded of you my Brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another*, chap. 15. 14.

Yet notwithstanding, in process of time, she hath much corrupted herself by her own Edicts and Innovations, contrary to the rule of Truth, as to become a Mystery, a *Babel* of Confusion, rather than the Catholick Church of Jesus Christ. And whereas she doth contend with her dissenters by the temporal Sword, by Fire and Fagot, and Imprisonment, and the like, she seemeth to sit on the scarlet-coloured Beast, making herself drunk with the blood of Saints, as it is written, *Rev. 18*. The which way of contending, Jesus Christ hath not allowed to his Church in all the dispensation of the Gospel, that Tares (although Tares) should be plucked up out of the world, lest they pluck up Wheat also. And if in case the Protestant Churches that have cast off the Supremacy of the Romish Church, and shall yet retain some of her Innovations and Ceremonial Circumstances, or bring in and impose other of their own, which are not warranted by Gospel-testimony, to be agreeable to the will of God, to the satisfying of tender Consciences, and shall exercise the like power to force the said Impositions upon the Conscience in the matters of God's Worship; then, if any persons shall in Love and Loyalty to the Lord, hearken to the call of God, and come forth and separate, to the end they may set their feet in the holy ways of God, and worship him in his holy appointments, exposing themselves to the bearing of the Cross for Jesus sake; then let the said Protestant Churches blame themselves, and not those that separate from them unto the aforesaid end; for Christ's Sheep will hearken for the voice of Christ to warrant their undertakings in the matters of their God; they must worship him in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him, wherefore *worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness*, according to the pattern in the Mount, or that which is Apostolically set forth unto us: wherefore, according to the exhortation given by the Apostle *Peter*, *Let us every one lay aside all Malice, Guile, Hypocrisies, Envyings, and Evil speakings; and as new-born Babes desire the Milk of the Mothers breast, and feed thereon for its natural nourishment*: So let every one of us desire the sincere Milk of God's Word, so as to

feed thereon for our spiritual nourishment and growth in the knowledge of Christ, and qualifications of grace, till we have Christ formed in us, as the Apostle saith, *Gal.* 4.19. And we conformed to his Image in Righteousness and true Holiness, according to the fore-Predestination or Appointment of God, *Rom.* 8.29. That when he shall come as a Bridegroom, to receive his Spouse unto himself, and to settle her in his Heavenly Mansions, which he is now preparing for her, we being found in those Wedding Robes, may be accepted of him, and received by him into Communion with him to the participation of his choicest Loves, in that inheritance which fadeth not away; and in the meantime, let us (as the Holy Ghost saith) follow after those things that make for peace, and things whereby one may Edify another; and as the Apostle saith, *Let all your things be done in Charity*, 1 Cor. 16.14. *For although* (saith the Apostle) *I speak with the tongues of Men and Angels, and have all the gifts of Prophecy; understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge, and all Faith to remove Mountains; give all my Goods to feed the Poor, and my Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profits me nothing*, Cor. 13.1, 2, 3.

Knowledge and gifts not sanctified with the qualifications of the graces of Christ, *puffeth up* (saith the Apostle) 1 Cor. 8.1. *But Charity edifieth, Love worketh no ill to his Neighbor, therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13.10. Surely if this grace of Love in Jesus Christ was so rooted and grounded in our hearts, as to become the qualification in us, and principle from whence our words and actions both towards God and men did proceed, how would peace and unity adorn our habitations, and holiness shew forth itself to the praise and glory of God the Father? how would our knowledge, gifts, and all enjoyments be sanctified to us in the use thereof; and Envy, Strife, and Contention dissolve and fly away? But I must hasten to another Use that my Doctrine leads me to, and that is a Use by way of caution unto the Saints, or those that have attained unto a good degree in the *Ornament of Holiness*.

CHAP. X.

Containing a Use by way of Caution unto the Saints, or those that have attained unto a good degree in the Ornament of Holiness.

It is a common thing among most people, that when they have cast off their old Garments, and put on new that are comely and fashionable, credible, and profitable, to be very careful and cautious, and take great heed of them lest they should be defaced with spots and stains of pollution; and it is Wisdom so to do, and a point of prudence; and if the Children of this world are so wise in their Generation, for the preserving of their temporal concerns, how much more are the Children of God concerned to exercise much wisdom and prudence, in being very cautious (with great heed and care) that their credible, fashionable, and comely Ornament of Holiness be preserved from the stains and pollutions of sin? All sin is of a defiling nature, and doth much stain and pollute the Soul, together with its Ornaments of Holiness and Sanctity, whereunto it hath attained, and especially when they are committed against Knowledge and Grace received, as the Apostle saith to the *Galatians*, chap. 4.8. *How be it then, when ye knew not God, ye did service to them that were no God's; but now after ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again? &c.* As if he had said, But now after God hath so known you, as to communicate unto you of his free grace in his Son, and the Truth, as it is in him to the comfort of your Souls, *how turn ye again? &c.* Signifying, that sins against Knowledge and Grace are of a deep defilement, and very hard to be washed out; requiring not only the hot water, or tears of true Penitence, but also a measure of infinite mercy to clear the stains thereof. O how was poor *David* fain to struggle at the Throne of Grace, with tears and fears again and again, for Infinite Mercy to come into his help, to wash out those crimson stains; and until mercy came in, all that he could do, would not clear the stains thereof! still the complaint was, *My Sin is ever before me.*

*When sin doth stand before the Actors face,
The cry thereof is Judgment, with disgrace:
If Mercy come not in, the stain to clear,
How greatly is the Soul possessed with fear?
That for its sin, it should condemned be,
And bear the Wrath that's due Eternally.*

When *Peter's* sin was set before his face, how did the sight and sense thereof cause him bitterly to weep, and wash his stain with the Laver of brinish tears, and lamenting sorrow; yet had not infinite Mercy come in to his help, how had he been foiled under the same, wherefore admire God's Mercy, but presume not upon the same for any allowance to sin; for he hath said, *Rom. 9.15. I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy. Esau* found no place of Repentance, although he sought it carefully with tears, *Heb. 12.*

*Therefore of Sin, in time beware,
If you'd prevent an after care.*

But Secondly: All ye that have begun in the spirit, and set your faces *Sion*-wards, O be very cautious, and take great heed, and be very watchful against sin; because as it is of a defiling nature, so is it also of a depriving nature: Sin in God's people, many times deprives them of many comfortable enjoyments, which otherwise they might happily enjoy: Sin depriveth Angels of their Heaven, Man of his Paradise, *Israel* of his *Canaan*, and many a poor soul of the manifestation of God's favour, both in temporal and spiritual enjoyments, as is evidenced by the word of the Lord in many Testimonies: whereof let us consider one testimony, *Jer. 2.2. Thus saith the Lord concerning Israel, I remember thee, the kindness of thy Youth, the love of thine Espousals, when thou wentest after me in the Wilderness, in a Land that was not sown. Israel was Holiness to the Lord, and the first-fruits of his increase; all that devour him shall offend, evil shall come upon them saith the Lord.* In which words the Lord puts them in mind of their former kindness and love unto him, and their walking with him in that their former state, then *Israel was holiness unto the Lord*; and yet in the next verses, the Lord is taking up this complaint against them; *What Iniquity have your Father's found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after Vanity, and become vain*; and in chap. 5. he saith, *Your sins have with-holden good things from you.*

From which words we may note four particulars.

First: That God's people are very apt to decline from their first degree of holiness, obtained in their first Illuminations and Experiences of God. They were holiness to the Lord in their first Espousals, but now become vain, and gone from God; the Church of *Ephesus* was eminent for God, but now fallen from her first love, *Rev. 2.*

Secondly: Note, that the people of God are usually most holy, and walk most close with God, when they have but little of these outward things to depend upon: *When thou wentest after me in the Wilderness, in a Land that was not sown, then Israel was Holiness to the Lord.*

Thirdly: Note, that the more close God's people keep to him in the way of Holiness, the sooner shall their Adversaries in their enterprises be defeated: *All that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord.*

Fourthly: Note, that God's people declining the way of Holiness, deprive themselves of comforts very great, and not their Enemies, but themselves do oft thereby defeat, *Hos. 8.3. Israel hath cast off the thing that is good, the Enemy shall pursue him.*

But Thirdly, by way of Caution.

As God's people are greatly concerned to take heed, and be very cautious of meddling with sin, because it is of a *defiling* nature, and also of a *depriving* nature, so is it also of a *destroying* nature: Sin suffered in the Creature, and not washed out by true Repentance and

rich Mercy as aforesaid, and especially when entertained with delight: O how will it not only stain our Ornaments of Grace and Holiness, but also eat up and destroy by degrees, like the Moth in the Garment, and the Worm in the Nut, the very life, marrow, and quintessence of Christianity or power of Godliness; even that love, zeal, reality, and sincerity of heart, with all those gifts and spiritual endowments and enjoyments formerly attained, until there be nothing left but an out-side form of Godliness, if that; so that the Creature becometh as to spiritual performances, and acts of grace in the life and power thereof, but like unto a man whose soul is departing, or departed, little left but an out-side Carcass; and if a little, yet but weak in motion, as the Holy Ghost doth seem to testify, concerning the Estate of the Church of *Sardis*, Rev. 3.1, 2. *I know thy works* (saith the Lord) *Thou hast a name that thou livest, but art dead; be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, and are ready to die.* Whence observe, here was only a name; that is to say, an out-side form, or shew of Godliness; but as for the power of Godliness, the very marrow and quintessence of Christianity, that was as it were even at the last gasp, in a dead or a dying condition; and this seemeth to be the state of most in that Church, *excepting a few names* (saith the Lord) *that have not defiled their Garments;* from whence we are given to understand, that the main ground and reason that the life and power of Godliness were thus destroyed in them, was their want of watchfulness against sin; but suffering it to grow and increase in them, either by omission of duties required, or committing sins forbidden, or both, they being allowed and continued, without a true Repentance to a Reformation. To this doth the Estate of the Churches of *Ephesus* and *Laodicea* witness, as also many other presidents in holy Scripture; the which, to run over so large a field, my present time and occasions will not permit; wherefore let us be very cautious how we meddle with it, but watch against it, take heed and beware of it, and the occasions thereof, whether they be sins of Omission or Commission; all sins are of a destructive nature, and especially sins against Knowledge and Grace received, being allowed and approved of, or winked and connived at: How plentifully doth the Scripture set forth the destructive nature of sin, and particularly those Grandees, Infidelity, Hypocrisy, Heresy, Drunkenness, and Gluttony, profane Swearing, and Blasphemy, Whoredom and Adultery, Covetousness and Idolatry, Pride, Presumption, and Oppression, and the like: The which sins are (with many other) not only destructive to soul and body, gifts and graces, but also unto Families and Church-fellowships, Cities and Countries, Kings and Kingdoms, as the Scriptures do plentifully evince, as saith the Lord by *Samuel*, chap. 12.25. *But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both you and your King;* in which words are intimated as to *Israel*, so to us; that if a people do live in such a wicked vicious life, as highly to provoke God's Justice against them, that then God would consume them with such Judgments, as they, nor their King should be able to withstand.

Whence note by the way, that men of a wicked vicious Conversation, thereby endeavour ruin to their King & Nation; concerned therefore is the King's Authority for to suppress such wickedness and grand impiety.

Secondly: Note by the way, that men in whom is civil honesty, and Godly sincerity, are the best Subjects; for whose sake many times the tranquility of a City or Nation is prolonged; wherefore all ye that have any respect unto your Native Country, King and Kingdom, or unto your own souls, and yet are solacing yourselves in wicked vicious ways, let *Daniel's Counsel* find acceptation with you, *To break off your Sins by Righteousness, and your Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor, if it may be a lengthening of your own tranquility, and of your Country, King and Kingdom, Dan. 4.27.*

And all ye that are Discipled to Christ, and by confession of Faith and Baptism, have joined yourselves into a Congregational way of Church-communion, to live to Christ, and to walk with him in all his holy appointments contained in his word; remember Christ's Counsel by way of caution to you: *Take heed (saith he) unto yourselves, that your hearts be not overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares; for as a snare shall it come upon all them that dwell upon the face of the whole Earth: Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of man, Luk. 21.34, 35, 36.* O consider, the Caution is a piece of Divine Counsel, *take heed therefore:* And as Surfeiting and Drunkenness is become a part of the abounding sins of this Age and Nation, and many temptations and opportunities thereunto are presented, and many evils thereby doth ensue; take heed therefore, watch and pray against the temptations, occasions, and evils thereof; and consider, that as Drunkenness disables and makes a man unmeet for divine Contemplations and Religious Services, so also the immoderate cares of this life makes persons unfit and unmeet for the same, and also unmeet for the enjoyments of glory: *Therefore take heed, and beware, watch and pray* against the same; also consider what dishonour it is to God, what reproach to religious profession, what grief to the spirit and spiritual persons, and wounds to your own Souls attend thereupon: Take heed therefore, watch and pray always, that ye may escape these things; once again consider, that unto you that are Christians by profession, these sins are sins against divine Love, Light, and Knowledge received; sins against rich grace, sins of a deep defilement, sins against Covenant-mercies and obligations, which if after we have escaped such corruptions through divine Illuminations and Experiences of God in Heavenly concernments, and shall again therewith be entangled and brought in bondage, may not the last state be worse than the first? *Therefore take heed, watch and pray,* that ye may be able to withstand all temptations, and to stand before the Son of man. If our first Parents *Adam* and *Eve*, in their estate of Innocency, did, by yielding unto one temptation against the known Law of God, so corrupt themselves and Posterity, as to stain and pollute their Ornaments of Holiness and Righteousness, and thereby disable themselves to withstand many other temptations without a divine assistance; how do we know, but we, by yielding unto one temptation, to transgress allowingly the Law of God known unto us, may thereby disable ourselves to withstand Satan in many other of his wiles? one sin may give advantage to another; and therefore *take heed, watch and pray* for divine assistance, that ye fall not in temptation; and as we are to take heed

of viciousness of life, so also of corruptness of judgment in the points of Faith by false Doctrines, which are likewise some of Satan's baits and subtle wiles, wherewith he lieth in wait to deceive; *take heed therefore, watch and pray* against the same, try before ye trust, and prove them by the word of Christ before ye embrace; *If any bring not the Doctrine of Christ, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God's speed, for he that biddeth him God's speed, is partaker of his evil deeds:* As saith Saint John in his second Epistle, *vers. 9, 10, 11. Take heed* (saith Christ our Saviour) *for many shall come in my name, and shall deceive many:* Take heed therefore, watch and pray, that ye may obtain a firm Faith in Christ, and a well-grounded judgment in his Counsel, contained in his Word, his Testimonies, Commands and Promises to the enabling of you to live therein, and according thereunto, to the perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Plentiful is the Scripture of Cautions upon this account, whereunto I shall refer you, and proceed unto a further prosecution of this Use by way of Caution, considering that omission of Duties required, is sin of dangerous consequence as well as actual transgression. Take heed, and beware of neglect of duty, and particularly the omission of action in the Word of God and Prayer: The Word or Doctrine of Christ is sometimes called the word of Faith, because it is the ordinary means in the ministration of it to beget Faith, and to nourish Faith, and to complete Faith in a Soul towards Jesus Christ: It is sometimes said to be *the power of God to Salvation unto every one that believeth;* because the tendency, use, and efficacy of it, is to the directing, leading, and nourishing of Souls up to the attainments of Salvation by Jesus Christ: And as it is the requirement of God, that the Sons and Daughters of men should harken diligently unto his Word in the ministrations of it, and to meditate therein, and to apply it, and improve it to the glory of his Name, and to their attainments unto holiness and happiness, so it becomes a duty incumbent upon us to be active therein; *Therefore take heed and beware* of neglect in this great duty, and our omission thereof become our great sin, and the Word that we have omitted, become a witness against us to our Condemnation: And let those that through grace have received ministerial gifts, and employed in the work of the ministry, take heed of omitting willingly or carelessly what the Lord requires at their hands in order to their feeding of the Flock of God; take heed therefore of omitting, but watch and pray for opportunities to the work, and for divine assistance in the work, that ye stain not your Ornaments of Holiness by the sin of Omission.

And in the duty of Prayer, take heed of Omission, lest it become sin unto us; *God forbid* (saith Samuel) *that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you,* 1 Sam. 12.23. God's People are required to pray for an increase of Labourers in the work of the ministry, and for an increase of gifts and qualifications suitable to the work in those that are already employed: And if Paul did stand in need of, and required the Prayers of God's People, who was extraordinarily gifted; how much more ordinary gifted-Ministers? Paul required the Prayers of the Christians, in order to his preservation from the hands of wicked and unreasonable men: And herein Christians ought to be active at the Throne of grace in behalf of Gospel-Ministers now, and especially when the storms of Persecution arise against them.

Christians are required to pray for the civil Magistrate, for Kings, and all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godliness and honesty, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. The Office of Magistracy is an Ordinance of God, appointed to execute Justice against evil doers; but for the praises and protection of them that do well; the Office is weighty, and of great concernment, and requires not only human Wisdom and Counsel, but divine also, to the well management thereof; therefore it is of concernment that God be sought unto, both by the Magistrate, and also by the Subjects on the Magistrates behalf, for divine assistance in Wisdom, Understanding, and Faithfulness of heart; for the well management of the civil Laws, according to the Will of God, and the glory of his Name, and the Subjects privileges: Wherefore, as Gospel-injunction doth require the duty, take heed of omitting the same, lest it become a sin, defiling and staining the Ornament of Holiness in your attainments thereof.

Also, consider that this duty of Prayer is extended as the duty of every Christian, not only for themselves, but also for one another, and for Enemies and Persecutors: Therefore take heed, omit not the duty, lest it become sin unto us of a deep pollution; *Continue in Prayer, and watch thereunto with thanksgiving*, Col. 4.2. *Note*, Here is a further duty to be joined with Prayer, for Christians to be active in, and that is Thanks-giving: All our enjoyments are said to be sanctified to us by the Word of God and Prayer, and are to be received with thanks-giving. *He that offereth praise, glorifieth me*, saith the Lord: Praises and thanks-giving to God, is a Heavenly exercise, a work requirable here in the Kingdom of grace, and more perfectly performed in the Kingdom of glory by Saints and Angels in their glorified state. God that hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, is worthy of all praise and thanksgiving to the glory of his Name; from him we receive all our spiritual and temporal enjoyments, and unto him belongeth praise and thanksgiving to the glory of his Name: Every mercy enjoyed, calls for a return of praise to the Lord, from whom it doth proceed: Therefore let us be careful here, take heed of omitting this great duty, lest we be found deep in sin, and our Ornaments of Holiness be defiled: Ten Leapers were cleansed by Christ, but where are the nine? only one returned to praise the Lord.

Take heed therefore, watch and pray, that you may be sensible of God's mercies afforded, and not forgetful of your returns: I cannot here stand to number up the mercies afforded to us, they are great and large; yet here is one among the many I would say something to.

It is not long, since a strong, rough, East wind did blow upon us for several years; it may be the Lord had a good end in it, as to sift us, to prove and try the reality of our hearts towards him in our undertakings, to blow away the Chaff, but to preserve the Wheat; so that although tried, yet the Lord in measure did debate with it; so that although under the left hand of affliction, yet upholden by a right hand of mercy: So that as the Apostle saith, *We were troubled on every side, yet not distressed; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed*. Herein are we to behold God's hand with much thankfulness, and to take heed that we forget

not his Providences, under which rough dispensation, we may remember that we did set several days apart to seek the Lord by Fasting & Prayer, laying our condition & cause before him: And for as much as it hath pleased the Lord suddenly to turn back the rough stormy wind, and to bring a calmy Southern serene refreshing gale upon us, in such a way as was unexpected by us, although our hope in him was for a deliverance in his time, and which way should seem good unto himself, for the glory of his name; and indeed, as the Lord is admirable in all his works and ways, so in this; that by the same hand he did chastise us, by the same hand he should deliver us: as if the Lord was minded to seal the truth of those words of *Solomon* unto us; that, *the Kings heart is in the hand of the Lord; as the rivers of water he turneth it whither soever he will*, Prov. 21.1. O who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counselor; did we think such a thing, or did our Prosecutors expect it? may not we herein say with the Psalmist? *When the Lord turned again the Captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream*: Rather question whether it was a real thing, or a feigned, then readily to believe it.

But for-as-much as it hath pleased God thus admirably to answer our poor Petitions put up unto him in the name of Jesus Christ, beyond our deservings or expectations; let us in these ensuing particulars be very cautious, and take heed, and beware.

First: That we do not omit the attribution of this our deliverances to the Lord, to the glory of his Name, as the original Author thereof, and to the King as an instrument in his hand, lest the omission hereof become sin unto us, and a stain unto our holy Achievements; but rather with *Ezra*, say, *Blessed be the Lord, that hath put such a thing as this in the Kings heart*.

Secondly: That we be very cautious, and take great heed, and beware of omitting our duty in a return of praises suitable to the benefits we receive by the Lord's answering us in our requests unto him. O let it not be said of us as once of *Hezekiah*; *But he rendered not again, according to the Benefit done unto him*, 2 Chron. 32.25. And of *Israel*, that when he slew them, *Then they sought him, and enquired early after God, and they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer*, Psal. 78.34, 35. *but they soon forgot his works, they waited not for his Counsel*, Psal. 106.13. But rather so apply and improve his benefits herein, as to make them the greater obligation to us to love the Lord, to trust in him, and to wait upon him in his holy appointments as long as we live, as saith the Psalmist; *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplication; because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live*, Psal. 116.1, 2.

Thirdly: Let us be very cautious, and take heed unto ourselves, and beware, that by Carnal security we abuse not our liberty and privilege of prosperity by acts of vanity, and neglect of our duties in true Christianity, and so make our privilege of liberty and prosperity to become of greater damage to us than ten or twelve years of Persecution hath ever yet done; for as much as we shall sin under the greater Mercies, and so must expect the greater Judgments from the

Lord: There is, in a day of Prosperity, more danger of a people's growing into Carnal Security, and forgetting of their God, than in a day of affliction, if we take not heed; as the Lord said to *Israel* of old, *When ye shall come into the good Land, and have Houses builded, and Vineyards, and Olives planted, and your Cattle multiplied, and ye have eaten and are full; then beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his Commandments, and Judgments, and Statutes, which I Command thee this day, that then thou forget not the Lord thy God that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage*, Deut. 6.12.

Whence *note*, that God's People that have had great experiences of God, are in times of peace and plenty very apt to forget the Lord, and to turn aside from a due observation of his ways, and thereby defile themselves with the sins of ingratitude, and great disobedience under eminent mercies, highly provoking the Lord: would we be a holy people unto the Lord? Let *Israel's* and other's sins, and punishments for the same, make us timely to beware lest we stain our chiefest Ornaments thereby, and watch and pray against such ingratitude; the neglect whereof, may cause God to neglect us of those supplies of grace necessary to uphold us; and in all our approaches to the Lord, we are also to take heed, and be careful that our end be right; that we might glorify God in our act of Prayer, and our end of asking any thing of God, may be for our better glorifying of his Name; the end many times crowns the action; as the words of Saint *James* doth imply; *Ye have not, because ye ask not; and ye ask, and have not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your Lusts*, Jam. 4.2, 3. Wherefore would we have God to supply and support us, let us not omit our duty in seeking to him; would we have him answer us in our seeking to him? then let us take heed that we omit not a right end in what we seek unto him for.

The omission of one thing more I would present, to mind, that we take heed of (lest it should become sin unto us), and that is, of omitting the ministering of our temporal things unto such as perform the Office of ministering unto us in spiritual things, especially if it be by the Minister required; for as much as the Lord hath so required and ordained that they that Preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel: The Apostle *Paul* would have the Churches know their duty in this point, and the Ministers power to require it, although he voluntarily would rather work with his hands, than to be chargeable to the Churches: But as for me, as I have not been chargeable hitherto in that nature, for what hath by me been done upon that account, so do I not desire to make the Gospel chargeable to any, except the greater necessity; yet as *Paul* would, so would I have Christians know their concernment in this point, as well as other points of Christianity, and to take heed, lest Omission here do not become a sin of deep pollution, since it is doubtless the requirement of God: see 1 *Cor.* cap. 9. *Gal.* 6.6. And let the Minister on the other hand take heed, and beware, that he make not temporal means and honour the chiefest end and master-wheel of his motion in the work of the ministry, and it became a pollution of the Ornaments of holiness unto him.

Also take heed and beware of omitting actions of charity towards the poor, and it became our sin; *For as much* (saith Christ) *as ye have not done it to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have not done it unto me; go ye therefore into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels; but he that giveth to the Poor, lendeth to the Lord, and he will repay it: Blessed is the man that considereth the Poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble.*

And so I shall conclude this Use by way of Caution, with those words of *Deut. 4.9. Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy Soul diligently, lest thou forget the things that thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy Sons, and thy Son's Sons.*

CHAP. XI.

Containing a Use of Encouragement unto Believers, to Press after the attainment of Holiness, and to Persevere therein.

The first consideration I shall propound for Encouragement in the prosecution of this design, for an Estate of Holiness, is, the warrantableness of the design; it is highly approved of God, insomuch that God doth command the prosecution of this design: *Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.* Persons prosecuting this design for holiness in God's way, out of which there is no attainment, they do hereby answer God's Will, and a good Conscience, the which is a good encouragement in the prosecution of a design; a good issue and success thereof may be expected: But Secondly,

A second ground of encouragement in the prosecution of this design, may arise upon the consideration of the promise of assistance in the management of this design for holiness, made to the prosecutors of the said design.

A man having a design for his advancement in this world, either for the obtaining some great Estate of Land, or place of Honour and Dignity, and having the word of a King for his assistance, by his Countenance, his Court and Counsel, his Laws and Authority for the accomplishment thereof; how doth this raise up, and enlarge the heart of this man with

encouragement in the prosecution of his design, and confirm his hope of attaining his end therein? How much more may the Christian-Soul be raised up with confidence, and his heart enlarged with encouragements in his design for holiness, and hope of attaining unto the perfection thereof? Considering he hath not only the command, but also the promise of him who is the King of Kings, the Omnipotent, Immortal, and Omni-present Majesty of Heaven and Earth, with all his Heavenly Court and Counsel, Laws and holy Appointments to protect and assist us in the management of this great design for our attainments unto holiness; *without which no man shall see the Lord.*

O what an assistance is this, for a poor Soul to have the whole Court of Heaven to assist him in his design and management thereof, where God the Father by his holy appointment doth ordain his holy Word and Counsel therein, to inform us, his holy Spirit to enable us, his holy Angels to encamp about us, to minister security to us in the said design, and his holy Son, Jesus Christ, to Crown us with the perfection of Holiness in himself; considering also that he is faithful that hath promised, who also will do it.

O what great encouragement is this that the Lord hath laid before us? What rich grace is this, that God doth not only command us to be holy, because he is holy, but attends upon us with all holy means appertaining to the attainment of an holy state; that we in a good improvement of the means, according to his Counsel against Sin and Satan, and our own Corruptions for the attainment of a holy life; we might both Plow in hope, and Sow in the hope of Reaping a sure and certain Estate of holiness in its perfection, to the great joy and consolation of the Soul, in the sweet enjoyments of Communion with the Lord: But Thirdly,

As we may be encouraged in this design, by the warrantableness of it, God highly approving of it; and secondly, from the promise of God to assist us in the management of the design: So thirdly, we may be much encouraged upon the consideration of the faithfulness of him that hath promised assistance to us; *Know therefore (saith Moses) that the Lord thy God, is God, the Faithful God which keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him, and keep his Commandments to a thousand Generations, Deut. 7.9.* This is an excellent encouraging argument and attribute of God, to strengthen the courage and confidence of a Christian in his design, for the perfecting holiness in the fear of God; if a Christian in the management of this design, do meet with temptations and oppositions by the Lusts of the flesh, the Devil, or Wicked men, here is a special ground of courage and confidence; *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also, make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. 10.13.*

Should a Christian in his management of this design be possessed with some fear or jealousy of its own Imperfections and Weaknesses, that by reason of the same it shall not attain unto an estate of Holiness, to stand acceptable without blame in the sight of God: Here in this

Case consider, that *God is faithful who hath Called you unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who will also confirm you unto the End: that ye may be blameless in the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ:* Wherefore thou Christian Soul pressing after the attainment of Holiness, consider God's faithfulness as a remedy against any fears, doubts, or jealousies, that may arise upon the sight or sense of thy own weakness and imperfections: hath God also called thee unto the fellowship of his Son, to walk with him in his holy Laws and Council contained in his Word, striving against Sin, for to attain unto an Holy state? God hath also called thee unto the fellowship of his Son, in the participation of his Righteousness and true Holiness; in which Robes he will accept thee as unblameable in his sight: *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it,* 1 Thes. 5.24. Therefore press after Holiness, but against the defilements of sin, depending on Christ for perfection therein, who Crowns Saint's endeavours, and adds to their store, his own perfect purity; to acceptance evermore.

Thou hast a few names (saith the Lord to the Church of Sardis) *That have not defiled their Garments.* It seemeth these few persons did carefully endeavour in the use of the means, to keep up and nourish the life and power of Godliness in them, so as not to allow themselves in that deadness and slothfulness that others were found in, nor in those false doctrines and opinions that were on foot among others; neither in those loose and lascivious practices and abominations of the times; but their hearts being real to the Lord, and their careful endeavours was to keep themselves undefiled from the sins of the times.

So the Lord Jesus Christ doth record them here, according to their careful endeavours and integrity of their hearts, although they might have failings and imperfections, without which there is no man on this side the grave; yet they being not allowed but endeavoured against, the Lord seems to take not any notice thereof, nor layeth any thing to their charge on that account; for as much as such souls, thus conscientious of sin, do in the sense of their own imperfections, the more humble themselves before the Lord, admiring his mercy, and judge themselves unworthy of the same. Well, but what of these few; *They* (saith the Lord) *shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.* Note, here for encouragement in this design for holy attainments, two things especially laid down in promise to such: First, Union with Christ in his white robes of Innocency, Righteousness, and Holiness in the perfection thereof; Christ will cover the failings and imperfections of such souls with his own perfections. Secondly: Here is Communion with Christ, Christ accepts them in Communion with himself; *They shall walk with me in white:* Christ puts his perfections upon them, as aforesaid, and makes them meet-Companions for himself; *They shall walk with me:* O what rich grace is this? what an encouragement is here to press after such attainments, when Christ hath engaged himself to make up our wants with his own fulness; our imperfections, with his own perfections, and thereby make us meet for fellowship with himself; *They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.* Note, Here Christ seems to attribute a worthiness in them of these privileges, although in all that they have done, is but their duty, and not deserving at the hand of Christ so

great privileges; but such is the gracious goodness of the Lord, that he will not let the gift of a *cup of cold water*, Math. 10.42. that is given to one of his Disciples, for his sake, go unrewarded; how much more respects will he freely show towards those that for his sake in love to him, do improve his Counsel unto a denial of themselves in all *ungodliness and worldly* (Tit. 2.11, 12.) *Lusts and Vanities*, to walk with Christ in his Counsel, confessing his Name, and professing his truth, in opposition to Sin, the World, and the Devil, to the management of this design of perfecting holiness in the fear of God, to the glory of his Name: Yea, so doth Christ respect such souls, that he confirms his former words with a second Confirmation; *He that overcometh the same, shall be Clothed with white Raiment, and I will not blot his name out of the book of Life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his Angels*, Rev. 3.5. O what great encouragements hath the Lord laid before us! if we are upon the management of this design for holiness in the way of Christ's Counsel, He will Clothe us with his own Robes, and keep our names clear in the book of Life; and confess our names, and bear his Testimony for us before his *Father*, and before his *Angels*, as he also testifieth, *Math. 10.32*.

O behold the faithfulness of God, that as he hath commanded us to be holy, so hath he graciously promised his assistance to us in our endeavours, by his Divine Counsel in his Word to inform us, by his Spirit to enable us, his Angels to secure us; and by his Son, to Crown our weak performances with his own perfections, to his gracious acceptation; *He hath made us accepted in the beloved*, Eph. 1.6.

Thus having briefly presented three general grounds, comprehending many particulars, for encouragement to the Christian soul, that in love and loyalty to the Lord, entereth a design for holy attainments. As first: The warrantableness of the design, God manifesting his approbation of it by his command thereunto. Secondly: God's promise of assistance. Thirdly: His faithfulness in performing of his Promise. I shall only present a fourth ground of encouragement, which is as followeth.

A fourth ground of encouragement in this design, is, The sure reward that is annexed by promise unto those souls that in the way of God, do manage a design for the attainment of a holy state; unto such souls there is a sure reward, as saith the Spirit of God by *Solomon: The Wicked worketh a deceitful work; but to him that soweth Righteousness, is a sure reward*, Prov. 11.18.

This Reward, is sometimes in Scripture called the Reward of Inheritance, as in *Col. 3.24. Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing, that of the Lord ye shall receive the Reward of Inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ*; also this Inheritance is said to be an Eternal Inheritance, *Heb. 9.15.* and an *Inheritance incorruptible*, 1 Pet. 1.4. Sometimes it is called a Kingdom; as in *Matt. 25.34.* and in *Luk. 12.32. Fear not little Flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom, a Kingdom that cannot be moved*,

Heb. 12.28. Sometimes in Scripture, this Inheritance or Kingdom is called Eternal Life, as in *Joh. 10.28. My Sheep hear my Voice, and they follow me, and I give unto them Eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand:* See further *Matt. 25.46. Rom. 6.23.*

Quest. But where is this Inheritance or Kingdom, saith the enquiring soul, that I may behold it?

Answ. The Apostle *Peter* tells us, *It is reserved in the Heavens, for you that are kept by the power of God through faith unto Salvation,* 1 Pet. 1.4, 5. Note, it is by the power of God, that ye are kept thereunto; the power of God in the operation of his Word, and efficacy of his Spirit, working in, and by the Word; therefore love the Word, delight therein, hold it fast, *it is the power of God unto Salvation, unto every one that believeth,* Rom. 1.16. Note also, it is through faith; therefore look well to your faith, make not shipwreck of faith, but keep up faith in its due exercise, for ye are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. The Servants of God, of old, did behold the promised Inheritance by faith, to their great comfort and encouragement, as saith the Author to the *Hebrews*, chap. 11. These all died in faith, not having received the Promises; but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth: *Moses* by faith, beheld this recompence of reward, and in respect thereunto, he chose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; for he had respect to the Recompence of Reward.

Quest. But when will it be that this promised Inheritance and Reward shall be possessed by the Believer, pressing after holiness? many have been in the expectation of such a thing indeed, but *since the Father's fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation,* 2 Pet. 3.4.

Answ. The Apostle *Peter* affirmeth, *That the Lord is not slack, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance,* 2 Pet. 3.9. It may be that God hath some people yet to Convert, and to add unto his Church, that his coming is prolonged: *But the day of the Lord will come as a Thief in the Night, in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat; the Earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up:* Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness? Nevertheless, we according to his promise, look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness. It is enough for us that we have the word of promise made out, and confirmed to us by the Eternal and Infinite God to exercise our faith and hope upon; and it is our duty to wait upon him in faith and patience, for the performance of the same unto us in his time: It is his own free gift, not our deserts, and that

he will at last accomplish it to any soul, it is infinite mercy to be admired. The spirit of God hath signified unto us, that it will be performed at the second coming of Christ personally, as in *Col. 3.4. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in Glory*; whereunto agreeth the words of *Paul to the Thessalonians*, chap. 4.16, 17, 18. which words are these; *For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Arch-angel, and with the Trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord, wherefore comfort one another with these words*; and in chap. 5. *Comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do*, vers. 11. Whence *Note* by the way, that it is the duty of Christians, and the property of souls, espoused to Christ, so to apply and improve the promise of Christ's second personal coming, as to make it a ground of comfort and encouragement one to another, of edification in, and the observation of all his holy appointments perseveringly.

Our Saviour Jesus Christ, a little before his sufferings, being conversant with his Disciples, and foreseeing the sorrow and trouble that would attend them after his departure; he, for their better support, encouragement, and comfort under the same, leaveth them this Cordial to feed upon; *Let not your hearts be troubled, (saith he) ye believe in God, believe also in me; in my Father's House are many Mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, ye may be also*, Joh. 14.1, 2, 3. The Lord hath furnished the holy Scriptures with plenty of provision of this nature, as if his faithful Servants were likely to have great need of encouragements, support, and comfort after his departure, by reason of the many troubles and oppositions the world would raise against them in their faithful obedience unto him; so that, as the reward of Inheritance is sure, and certain to the faithful; so the more full accomplishment thereof, will at the second coming and glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, be performed.

But of the day and hour knoweth no man, saith our Saviour, no not the Angels in Heaven, but the Father only, Matt. 24.36. But as a Thief in the Night, will it come suddenly upon all that dwell upon the Earth; the which doth invite every soul to a diligent *watchfulness* in the way of God, and a patient waiting in the expectation thereof, *Matt. 24.42*.

The Husband-man (saith Saint James) waiteth with long patience for the precious fruits of the Earth, until he receive the former and latter Rain: Be ye also Patient, stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, Jam. 5.7. *Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward, for ye had need of Patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise, for he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry*; now the Just shall live by Faith, &c. *Heb. 10.35, 36, 37*. *Saint John saith, he saw under the Alter the Souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and the Testimony that*

they held; crying, how long Lord, wilt thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the Earth; and white Robes were given to every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest for a little season, until their fellow Servants also, and their Brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled, Rev. 6.9, 10. It may be the Lord hath some of his Servants yet to suffer for his sake, that his coming is yet prolonged: And white Robes were given them, and it was said, that they must rest for a little season, &c. whence Note, first, That Innocent blood cryeth for the hastening of Christ's coming to judge and revenge its cause against its Persecutors; and the Lord will assuredly in due time answer the cries thereof. Secondly, Note, That Christ's Perfection, with the Reward of Salvation, being sealed and assured to a Soul by the influences and operations of the spirit of Christ, as a pledge of the Father's love and special favour, should be unto every such soul of an inducing nature, to move and draw forth the soul to exercise faith and patience, to wait upon the Lord, with a dependency upon him to plead its cause, and to revenge its wrongs, and to perform the accomplishment of all his promises in his own time; he that believeth, maketh not haste, he waiteth God's time as the best time.

Wherefore, considering that the management of a design for holy attainments, is attended with such encouragements, as God's Approbation and Command, and his promise of assistance in the way of attainment, and his crowning our endeavours with perfection in his Son, and with a Reward of an Eternal Inheritance, to be fully possessed by the holy people, the Saints of the most high God, at the second coming of Christ, personally bringing his reward with him; therefore Beloved, *Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life, Jude v. 20.*

CHAP. XII.

Containing a Use of Comfort and Consolation unto those persons that are industrious in the management of a design for holy attainments in the way of God's Counsel.

Christian Friends, having related something in the former Chapter, concerning a Reward of Inheritance or Kingdom, to be possessed by the holy people at the second coming of Jesus

Christ personally, as a matter or ground of encouragement unto Holiness; so for a ground of Consolation, I would put into consideration something of the privileges the heirs of this Inheritance shall possess in the possession thereof: But I must confess that my capacity is too narrow to comprehend, and tongues of Men and Angels too short to declare the excellencies of those privileges in the latitude thereof: But when we shall come to experience the privileges of that Inheritance, by a full possession thereof in the glorious presence of the Majesty of the Eternal Deity in the Heavenly Mansions, we may with admiration say as the Queen of *Sheba*, concerning *Solomon's* Wisdom and Magnificence, that the one half had not been declared to us.

And as the Queen of *Sheba* was, by the report she had heard drawn forth to make an experiment of *Solomon's* Magnificence, by putting herself upon a Journey to his Court: So hoping that some souls may be provoked to put forth itself upon a journey towards the Heavenly Court in the paths of Holiness, upon the report of the excellent privileges thereof, to an experiencing of the Magnificence of the same, although not the one-half be declared. Consider with me these few particulars as privileges appertaining to the heirs of the aforesaid Inheritance or Kingdom, to be experienced by a perfect possession at the second coming of Christ personally.

The first general privilege including many particulars, we shall consider to consist in that excellent and glorious change of the body which at that day shall be effected in the Resurrection thereof, with a uniting of body and spirit; in which glorious change the body will be Immortal, no more subject unto death; a spiritual body, no more subject to hunger, thirst, cold, sickness, nor any putrefaction whatsoever; an Incorruptible body, no more subject to sin, temptations, sorrow, fears, tears, nor terrors, neither from the apprehensions of any oppression by man, nor any displeasure of Almighty God; but a glorious body, altogether capable of beholding the glorious Essence, & beatifical presence of the glorious Majesty of the Lord, which excelleth the beholding with a mortal eye; for evidences hereunto, see 1 *Cor.* 15. *Rev.* 7.16. *Rev.* 21.4. *Our Conversation is in Heaven* (saith the Apostle) *from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile bodies, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself,* Phil. 3.20, 21. *We know* (saith Saint John) *that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,* 1 Joh. 3.2. *Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know as we are known,* 1 *Cor* 13.12.

He that hath this hope, purifieth himself even as he is pure: O thou that art in the management of a design for Holy Attainments, here is a ground of comfort, encouragement and consolation to thy soul, although men may kill this vile body, and cut thee off in the way, they cannot deprive thee of thy end; thou shalt be raised again, a glorious body like unto him,

who is able to subdue all things unto himself, and be made capable of that glory, that no mortal eye is able to behold, nor tongue express: But Secondly,

As the body shall at that day admit of a glorious change, as to be like his glorious body, so the will, the affections, with every faculty of the soul, shall in this reunity, be transcendently glorious with the Image of God: That soul, that in this life, by some beams and influences of Christ's love, is drawn and contracted in love to Christ, and holy longings after further Communion with him, shall then have its desires accomplished in the glorious presence of her Beloved; then will that glorious Marriage between Christ and his Spouse, be gloriously, solemnized with the glorious presence of God the Father, and Christ the Bridegroom, attended with an innumerable company of Angels; then shall souls Espoused to Christ here in this day of grace, by some streams of Christ's love, be then filled with the Ocean of divine love from Eternity; then will Christ beautify and adorn his Beloved with the glorious beauty of himself, and make her beautiful and comely, and delightful unto himself; yea, in that day will Christ give his Spouse the right hand of fellowship, he will set them on his right hand with this sweet salutation; *Come ye Blessed of my Father, Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the World.*

O consider, if some drams of Divine Love in Christ will in this day of grace comfort and refresh a soul, and give cause of rejoicing, how much more will the soul be filled with joy and consolation, when it cometh to live in the full Ocean of Divine Love from Eternity? Surely this is joy unspeakable, and full of glory; but Thirdly:

A third privilege belonging to this Kingdom, or reward of Inheritance, may be considered, consisting of most excellent Associates, Companions in fellowship and communion together: That soul now pressing after holiness in this day of grace, and now delighting in such Companions, in whom evidences of grace appeareth, shall there live in the full enjoyment of Communion with God the Father of all our mercies, and with God the Son, the Redeemer of all our comforts, and with the Holy Ghost, God equal with the Father and the Son; the Illuminator of our understandings, the quickener of us in the life of grace, the sanctifier of us to the subduing of sin, the helper of our weaknesses and infirmities in our Christian duties, the seal of our Redemption, and witness of our Adoption; the soul's comforter in Tribulation, and director in all the paths of holiness; together with an innumerable company of Angels and glorious Saints, whose Communion of persons shall flow from a perfect union of spirit; solemnizing a perpetual Sabbath to the Lord, in Praises and Thanksgivings, in perfection of purity, and real-hearted sincerity in fulness of joy and consolation; while the Ignorant, and Profane, the Carnal Worldling, and the Voluptuous, with the Time-serving Formalist, that have spent the day of grace in pursuit of their own carnal interest, little minding the interest of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of the New Man, which is Created in Righteousness and true Holiness, shall have no part in the Resurrection with them that shall be counted worthy, or made meet

for these privileges, but shall be everlastingly excluded this Heavenly fellowship, with all the appurtenances thereunto belonging, having not so much as one dram of God's love and favour to abate the flames of those horrors and terrors ceasing upon their souls, through the sense of Sin and Condemnation for the same, in that Eternal Wrath and fiery Indignation of the Almighty, where the Worm of Conscience is always gnawing, with Accusations of disobedience to the just and holy Laws of a Righteous God, the Fire of whose Wrath, and Flames of Divine Vengeance never goeth out, but will be everlastingly burning in the soul, time without end; where the best Associates, and chiefest Companions will be the Devil's and damned Spirits in Hell, and the best harmonious melody will be Confusion of howlings for extremity of pain, and gnashing of Teeth in endless sorrows. But Fourthly:

A fourth privilege in this Reward of Inheritance, or glorious Kingdom, to be enjoyed by those persons that in this day of grace press after holy attainments perseveringly, may be considered consisting in a due proportion of the Inheritance and Heavenly Mansions, every one an Heir, joint-Heir with Christ; every one a free possession, and every one free in his possession; every one a full possession, and every one full of true content with his possession; every one a possession full of true delight, comfort, and satisfaction; and every soul taking a full delight, comfort, and satisfaction in his possession; every one a peaceable possession, and every one acting peaceably in his possession; every one a possession full of divine love, and every one acting in his possession in that principle of divine love, which worketh no ill to his Neighbour; every one a possession full of the glory of the Lord; and every one rendering glory unto the Lord in his possession. *He that overcometh shall Inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son, Rev. 21.4. And if Sons, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint-Heirs with Christ; if we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together, Rom. 8.17. And there shall be no more Curse, but the Throne of God, and of the Lamb shall be in the City of their Habitations, and his Servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his Name shall be in their foreheads, Rev. 22.3, 4.* But Fifthly:

A fifth privilege considerable in this Inheritance, may be in the perpetuity thereof: A man, Heir to an Earthly Inheritance, and entering into possession of the same, in considering the great benefit that it will be unto him, many times his heart is raised up with joy and delight therein; but considering again on the other hand, how soon death may take him away from it, or an Enemy by force and violence take it from him, or considering how soon he may be surprised with afflictions in body or mind, or in both; whereby the comfortable enjoyment of this possession may be taken off; he considering the uncertainty thereof, how doth this abate the delight and comfortable satisfaction that the poor Creature did seem to fancy to himself?

But as for this Heavenly Inheritance, it is perpetually sure to every soul possessed thereof; and therefore, as it is a possession yielding a fulness of true delight and comfort unto perfection of satisfaction in the first enjoyment of possession: So the consolation thereof, is no whit abated

or lessened by any fears, or doubts that may arise concerning a deprivation: There is no place left for fears nor doubts where the possession is so, surely founded and confirmed: *As for this Inheritance (saith Peter) it is incorruptible and undefiled, & that fadeth not away, it is a Kingdom that cannot be moved;* It is an Eternal Everlasting Inheritance, founded upon the Basis of Eternal love, even the infinite love of the Eternal God, and confirmed unto the Heirs thereof by the Eternal decree of the incorruptible & unchangeable God; & upholden, & maintained by the Omnipotency, Omniscieny, Omnipresence, Immortality, & Incomprehensibility of the same Eternal, Infinite, and Everlasting God; Everlasting in his love to those Souls in possession of this Inheritance; Everlasting in his peace which passeth all understanding; Everlasting in his glorious presence, that filleth all in all; *And there shall be no Night there, and they need no Candle, neither light of the Sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever, Rev. 22.5. Therefore, we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God, acceptably with reverence and Godly fear, Heb. 12.28.*

For as much as the Kingdom is Unmovable and Everlasting; so also is the joy and consolation of the Inhabitants thereof an Everlasting Joy and Consolation which neither Men nor Devils can deprive the soul of. Death cannot do it, there shall be no more death, no more sorrow, no more pain, no more hailing into Captivity, nor complaining in the Streets, by reason of Oppression; but all Violence shall be done away, and Everlasting Joy, Peace, Comfort, and Consolation, shall be as a Crown upon the heads and hearts of these Inhabitants: God shall be all in these souls, and these souls shall be all in God, by a Union of qualifications Divine, and the sweet enjoyments of his glorious benefits, the height, the length, breadth, & depth, whereof eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. Too narrow is the capacity of mortal man to comprehend, and the tongue of Men and Angels to express the Latitude thereof: *Wherefore gird up the loins of your minds; be sober, and hope to the end for the Grace that is to be brought unto you at the Revelation of Jesus Christ, as obedient Children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your Ignorance; but as he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation, because it is written, be ye holy, for I am holy, 1 Pet. 1.13, 14, 15, 16. But sixthly:*

A sixth privilege appertaining to the Heirs of this Kingdom, to be by them enjoyed at Christ's personal appearing at his second coming, may be considered herein, for to consist, that he that is their Head and Husband, with whom there is a unity of Affection and Covenant-Contract, and is the Recorder for his Espoused Souls, that puts their tears in his Bottle, and Records their sufferings in his book of Remembrance, and by whom, and for what, even for their love to him, and loyalty to his Supremacy in the observation of his Laws, and for rejecting the contrary. This is a great ground of consolation, that he that is their Recorder, their Head and Husband, is the only potentate King of Kings, and Judge of all the World, who will bring his Records with him, and make his personal appearance in the glory of his Majesty, and seat of Justice, attended with his glorious Angels, and glorified Saints to Judge the World in

Righteousness, who will not respect persons in Judgment, nor pervert Judgment for gifts nor reward; but in Righteousness will he Judge the cause of the Poor, and with Equity will he plead for the Meek of the Earth; who will then plead the cause of his people with a witness against those that in this time of their Pilgrimage have oppressed and persecuted them. A poor man being oppressed by one that is too potent for him, and being not able to relieve himself, he maketh his address unto the King, laying open his cause before him, resolving to wait with patience for his relief; at length the King ariseth, and taketh this poor man's cause into his hand, and pleadeth it with his Adversary, and rights him in his wrongs, and avengeth him of his Oppressor. O how doth this administer comfort to this poor man! O how doth this oblige and endear the affections of this Poor man unto his Prince, and fill his heart with joy and gladness, and thanksgiving for such a benefit; and shall not God avenge his own Elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them, they having committed their cause unto Him, and cast their Burden upon him? yea (saith our Saviour) *I tell you he will avenge them speedily*: O what Consolation doth this bring unto oppressed Souls in the cause of God, and especially when the Lord shall plead their cause with their Adversaries, what praises will it bring forth unto his Name: *I heard (saith Saint John) a great voice of much people in Heaven, saying Alleluia, Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power unto the Lord our God, for he hath Judged the great Whore which did corrupt the Earth with her Fornications; True and Righteous are his Judgments, for he hath avenged the blood of his Servants at her hand: and again, they said Alleluia, and her smoke rose up for ever and ever; in her was found the blood of Prophets and of Saints, and all that were slain upon the Earth*, Rev. 18.24.19.1, 2, 3. Note, the Heavenly Host rejoiceth when God pleadeth the cause of his people with their Adversaries: *And a Voice came out of the Throne, saying praise our God, all ye his Servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great: Babylon rejoiced in the day of Zion's troubles, and helped forward her Afflictions; and Sion must rejoice in the Lord's hand of Justice upon Babylon in the day of her Desolation: Wherefore all ye that in this day of your Pilgrimage are in God's way, pressing after holy Attainments, in order to the adorning of your souls for further Communion with your holy God, your Head and Husband, although many troubles may attend you, and many difficulties, oppositions and temptations compass you about; Yet cast not away your Confidence which hath great Recompence of Reward*, Heb. 10.35. But raise up your hearts, and labour to strengthen your Confidence in the Lord by a serious Meditation and Application of the Testimonies and Promises of God contained in his Word unto all long-suffering and patience; *For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10.37. For as sure as he was once offered to bear the sins of many, so, surely to them that look for him, will *he appear a second time without Sin unto Salvation*, Heb. 9.28.

And then assuredly will the Lord own a people, that now in this day of Grace press after Holy Attainments in the way of God for his People peculiarly, as Taught by him, Redeemed by him, Sanctified by him, and Justified by him; the effects of the Father's Election in himself, and the fruits of the Travels of his Soul in the sufferings of himself; his Beloved Espoused to

himself, his Inheritance Purchased with his own blood unto himself; and his Fellow-heirs to possess Eternal Glory with himself, unto whom, every wrong done, he taketh as done unto himself, (*Act. 9.4, 5.*) and Recordeth it, every Tear by them shed, through their Oppression, he bottleth up for a Witness against the Oppressor in the day of his Vengeance; when he maketh Inquisition for blood, he remembereth them; then will he not only take account of actions done against his people, but also of the omission of that good they might have done unto them, and should have ministered to them in the day of their distress; *In as much as ye have not done it to one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me*, Matt. 25. See this Omission is rewarded with *go ye Cursed*; with what reward then will the Act of Oppression be rewarded; the Lord hath spoken, he will also bring to pass; the Lord will perform, and none shall hinder his proceedings: *Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find Faith on the Earth?* Luk. 18.8.

True Faith in Christ, works by Love to Christ, a stability in the way of Christ; the which, by the words of Christ, is likely to be very rare, and scarce to be found among the Sons and Daughters of men in the latter days, immediately before his coming, unto which the Apostles in their holy writings do bear their Testimonies: Therefore, when ye shall see but little true Faith on Earth, as it were, but here and there a man, or a few that are steadfast in the Profession of Christ, as the truth is, in Jesus, according to the primitive Institution and Law of Love, but great instability in ways of worships, turning and twisting, soon this way, and soon that way, and but few performing obedience as to the Lord by the rule of God's Word; and when ye shall see the Iniquity of profaneness in actions, and erroneous opinions to abound, and the love of many to wax cold, and actions of *Charity* to be almost grown out of use, scarce here and there a man acting in the principle of true love to Christ, in obedience to him, neither towards God in his worship, nor the Neighbour in civil Courtesies; but almost all carried on by a self-ended principle of *self-love* in their actions, all which are evidences of want of true faith; then lift up your heads, for your Redemption draweth nigh; then behold, the Judge standing at the door, as it were ready to plead your Cause, and to revenge your wrongs, and to give you a full and free Possession of his glorious Kingdom: *He that shall come, will come; and will not tarry, even so come Lord Jesus: Now the Just shall live by Faith, but if any man draw back, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him*, saith the Lord, *Heb.10.37, 38.*

Wherefore (as the Apostle *Peter* teacheth) *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator; for we have not an high Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities, but was in all points tempted, even as we are yet without sin*, *Heb. 4.15.* *for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted*, *Heb. 2.18.* *Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*, *Heb. 4.16.*

O let every one of us, in this our present Pilgrimage, endeavour to have the word of Christ dwelling richly in our hearts, and Heaven's glory in our eye; and let us run with patience the holy Race for holy Attainments; considering that holiness is an Ornament ever becoming the people of God; to be found therein, is a matter of great concernment.

First: Because therein God's people do most resemble the Image of God, their Heavenly Father, and Christ their Redeemer.

Secondly: Because thereunto they were Elected in Christ from Eternity.

Thirdly: Because thereunto they are called with an holy calling.

Fourthly: Because thereunto they are enjoined by special Command.

Fifthly: Because holiness is a beautiful Ornament well becoming a Christian and Christianity.

Sixthly: Because God's people are a people to whom precious promises appertain.

Seventhly: Because holiness is an excellent Ornament in respect of its duration, the more made use of and improved, the more comely and perfect it is.

Eighthly: Because there is a great necessity of it; *for without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.*

Ninthly: Because there is a sure Attainment of a holy state, in pressing after it in the way of God.

Tenthly: Because thereunto is annexed a sure reward of an Eternal Inheritance.

Eleventhly: Because holiness puts a Soul in a capacity to see the Lord, and to enjoy Union and Communion with him in a state of glory to its Eternal Consolation.

Twelfthly: Because negligence and carelessness in improving the means appointed of God for holy Attainments, puts a Soul in a capacity of possessing God's great displeasure under his Eternal wrath.

Wherefore, dearly Beloved, having an holy God that requires holiness in us, and holy Services to be performed by us, in the way of his own holy appointments to the glory of his Name; and he having made out unto us such great and precious Promises in the same, Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of

God; always considering that holiness is an Ornament well becoming the House of God; his people for ever to be found therein, is a matter of great concernment and so with that Exhortation, 1 *Sam.* 12 24. I shall conclude: *Only fear the Lord and serve him in Truth with all your heart for, consider how great things the Lord hath done for you.*

A GLASS FOR THE UNREGENERATE TO BEHOLD

Their Heart-Conceptions:

OR,

A brief discourse,

tending to the Discovery and Removal

of some grand Obstructions to Spiritual Health,

and Heavens Attainments;

with some Directions and Motives necessary thereunto.

By *JOSIAS BONHAM*,

of *Byfield* in *Northamptonshier*.

And *Judah* said, the strength of the Bearers of Burdens is decayed, and there is much Rubbish, so that we are not able to build the Wall, *Neh. 4.10*.

Printed in the Year,

1674.

A Glass for the Unregenerate, to behold their Heart-Conceptions.

Certain *Articles* included and drawn from the foregoing Discourse, as the Judgment of the Author in brief.

First.

There is one God, Creator of all things, whose being is of himself; Glorious in Essence, Almighty in Power, Infinite in Wisdom, Wonderful in Providence, Perfect in Purity, Rich in his Mercies, Great in loving Kindness, Faithful in his Covenants, Free in his dispensation of Grace, Tender of Compassion, Long-suffering in Patience, Abounding in Goodness and Truth, Righteous in his Laws, Just in his Judgments, Jealous of his Truths, a Hater of Sin, a Revenger of Iniquity upon the Impenitent incomprehensible in himself; yet comprehending all things within his All-seeing Eye, his Understanding, Knowledge, and Almighty Power, having Dominion over all things, to order all things, and dispose of all, according to the good pleasure of his divine will, unto whom all Worship, Service, and Obedience is due, and is to be performed in his own way by the Sons of men; and what he is in himself, his Being and Attributes, he is Incorruptible, Immortal, & Eternally so: God blessed for ever, the hope, the help, the support, the consolation and salvation of all that put their trust in him, to whom be Glory, Honour, and Praise everlastingly. *Amen.*

Secondly,

The glorious God hath made forth himself unto the Sons of men by three denominations or distinction of names, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father is of himself, not made, created, nor begotten: The Son is of the Father, Begotten; not made, as he is God; yet made of a Woman, as he is Man, *Gal. 4.4.* The perfection of both Natures centered in him, that he was perfect God, and perfect Man: The holy Spirit is neither made, created, nor begotten; but is equally one, from Eternity in the God-head, with the Father and the Son, proceeding from both, man's heart to invade, to repair the great loss, the power of sin therein made.

Thirdly,

The Father from Eternity, before the world was, did determine, decree and purpose in himself, in time, to Create man; to be to the glory of his Name, & to enjoy him in a glorious state; and thereunto did fore-appoint, or predestinate him.

Fourthly.

The Father fore-seeing the Fall of Man by sin, and Man's Captivity under Satan's dominion thereby, and Man's corrupt and miserable state under the same; and Man's inability to recover himself therefrom, that the determined Counsel, decree, purpose, and predestination or fore-appointment of the Father might stand sure, and yet he be just: He also determines a free Redemption for Man-kind by his Son, and electeth or chooseth his Heirs of Glory in his Son, under justification of Life and Glory, through believing in his Son, and conforming to him; and herein God is just, and the justifier of them that believe on Jesus.

Fifthly.

The which power of believing, and act of conforming, was by the Father fore-appointed from Eternity, to be produced by, or the product of the spirit, which through its operation upon the heart, or inward man, should enable the Sons and Daughters of men, at least Some of them, to believe on his Son, and conform to him, and thereby be made meet to glorify God, and enjoy his glory; therefore is this believing and conforming in Scripture, called a New Birth, and the sanctification of the Spirit, because wrought by the spirit, sometimes extraordinarily by inspiration, or more ordinarily in and by the Word and ministry thereof: enlightening the understanding, quickening the apprehension, informing the judgment, rectifying the will, renewing the mind, regulating the affections, and persuading the heart to take Christ, to trust in Christ, to rely upon Christ, to obey Christ, and to suffer for Christ: It qualifies the heart with love to God, and joy in God, and zeal for God; with patience to wait upon God, with humility in its walking with God, with sincerity in the worship of God; sobriety in life, temperance in the use of the Creatures, with kindness to the Brethren, and a peaceable disposition and charitableness towards all men, together with an hatred and loathing of sin, but a love to, and delight in all the ways of Righteousness.

Sixthly.

The Lord Jesus Christ in his working out the Redemption of man, in order to the decrees and fore-appointments of the Father, did take upon him the human Nature, by a Conception in the Womb of a Virgin, through the over-shadowing of the Holy Ghost, as saith the Scriptures: And in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary* was he nourished for the time, and after the manner of Women, and became both God and Man; that the same nature that had sinned (being assisted

with the Divine) might make restitution unto justification of life, and so God be just, and the justifier of them that believe on Jesus.

Seventhly.

He taketh upon him the Execution of three offices imposed upon him by the Father, as King, Priest, and Prophet: And in the Execution thereof, he doth accomplish and complete the Redemption of man-kind unto justification of life, according to the eternal purpose and fore-appointment of the Father.

Eighthly.

He invadeth the Kingdom of darkness, and encountered the Prince thereof, the Devil that captivated man-kind, and brought them under his dominion; and by his two-edged sword, the word of God, he obtained Victory, and spoiled the Principalities and Powers of the dominion thereof.

Ninthly.

He answered the Law by a perfect obedience thereunto, whereby he brought in perfect Righteousness unto life, whereby he became the end of the Law for Righteousness to Believers, as they stand by faith in him, and whereby believers are wholly freed from the Accusations, Curse, and Condemnation of the Law.

Tenthly.

He answereth divine justice in his sufferings upon the Cross for man's transgression to a full satisfaction, whereby Believers, through faith in Christ, are wholly acquitted as from the accusations of the Law, so from the Executions of Divine Justice, and brought into an estate of peace, reconciliation, and acceptance with the Father.

Eleventhly.

He obtaineth a Conquest over Death and the Grave, those great Captivators of man-kind, by the power of his Resurrection, whereby Death and the Grave are become subject to him, to deliver up their Captives at his command, which is a Privilege to the Faithful, but a Woe to the Ungodly.

Twelfthly.

He Ascended to the right hand of power into the glory of the Father; where he further executeth the aforesaid Offices; as a Prophet he openeth the sealed book; the mysteries of the Kingdom, and the great salvation that the Father from Eternity hath placed in him for all that by faith subject to him, instructing and teaching the knowledge thereof.

Thirteenth.

Christ further executeth his Priestly Office, also now in the days of his exaltation, by presenting the performances of his Subjects unto the Father in the golden censor of his own Merits, making intercession for them unto the Father's gracious acceptation, and to the encouragement, comfort, and consolation of his Servants walking in his holy order of government contained in the Gospel.

Fourteenth.

As Christ did invade the Kingdom of darkness, and overcame the Principalities and Powers thereof, that held fallen man in Captivity thereby: So he as a King, is now in the execution of his Kingly Office in these days of his exaltation, as is demonstrated not only by his ordination, but also first in his giving forth his Laws, Ordinances, and Righteous order of Government, with commands of obedience thereunto. Secondly: By defending and upholding his said Laws and Government against all opposers. Thirdly: By his sending and gifting his Ambassadors with propositions of Pardon, Peace, Reconciliation, and Protection unto the Sons and Daughters of men upon their receiving of him, and conforming to him, his Supremacy, Crown, and Dignity by subjection to his Laws and Government accordingly, that man might become Servants to him in subjection to his Laws; and be brought into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God, and Heirs of Glory, according to the Father's fore-determination from Eternity.

Fifteenth.

It is the order and design of Christ in the dispensation of the Gospel, to gather Believers into Congregational Assemblies, otherwise called Churches, for the better accomplishing the fore-determined decrees and purposes of the Father; that is, that man might the better glorify God, and be edified and made meet for glory.

Sixteenth.

It is the way and order of Christ that Believers actively constitute, imbody, or congregate themselves into Church Assemblies by a personal confession of Faith and Baptism, answering the institution and order of Christ, their supreme Head and King.

Seventeenth.

It is the order of Christ, and the liberty and privilege of a Christian Congregation so gathered, so constituted as aforesaid, to elect their Church-Officers, men approved for gifts and qualifications suitable to the rule of truth, as near as they can, and to ordain them into Office by a solemn ordination of fasting, prayer, and laying on of hands of the Eldership, for the better promoting of the interest of divine worship, and that order of government that Christ hath left unto his Church upon Gospel-record, and for converting of the unconverted, and perfecting of the Saints in the Knowledge, Faith, and Obedience of Christ their King.

Eighteenth.

It is of divine requirement, and the Christian Church's duty to communicate unto the maintenance of their Minister in Office of their temporal concernments that ministereth to them in spirituals; for so hath the Lord ordained, that they that preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel; yet may a *Paul's* spirit make his ministry without charge for the Gospel-sake without sin, if he can subsist without the Churches maintenance.

Nineteenth.

It is the duty of Christians from the example of the primitive Apostolical Churches, to set apart, observe and solemnize the first day of the week peculiarly, to assemble together, to worship the Father, to honour the Son, and to edify one another in that holy order and divine rule of truth made known unto us by the Son, through the demonstrations of his Spirit in the Gospel, without adding or diminishing.

Human inventions cast aside,
For Christ in his Word hath them denied.

Twentieth.

That prayer with thanksgiving unto the Father, in the name of the Son, by the assistance of the spirit, and reading, preaching, and hearing with due attention the doctrine of God's word, and the due administration of the Ordinances of Baptism, and of bread and wine in that order; and to those ends which answer Christ's Institution, Pattern, or Example; as they are the essence and substantial of divine worship, so are they with actions of mercy and charity, the proper work of a Sabbath, or a day set apart to the Lord, and are to be continued in practice by the Church, until the second appearing of Christ personally.

Twenty-first.

That the Baptizing of Believers in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is a Divine Ordinance appointed as a visible token of God's Covenant made in Christ unto Believers, apprehended only by an eye of faith, through a supernatural illumination, and is to be administered unto subjects upon their confession of Faith in Christ, wherein Christ not only gives a Believer visible admittance into communion with his Church as a Member; but also engageth to the Believer (walking in faith and obedience to him) a performance of all the privileges and benefits promised to his Church in him, as he is King, Priest, and Prophet thereunto.

And also the Believer by Baptism, visibly testifieth to God, the Church, and the World, that he taketh Christ as his King, Priest, and Prophet; and thereby engageth with Christ to walk with him through his assistance in his holy order of government and rule of truth, made known in his word to be his will, in opposition to Sin, the World, and the Devil.

All persons have a right to the hearing of the Word Preached, and are to be admitted by virtue of Christ's Commission thereunto, whether Jews or Gentiles, Heathens, or Pagans, or whatsoever; but only Believers to Baptism upon confession of Faith, *Act. 8.37.*

Twenty-second.

The Ordinance of Bread and Wine instituted by Christ, is to be observed by his Church, consisting of Baptized Believers, until his second coming, as a representation of the body and blood of Christ, broken and shed for the remission of Sins, and of the Union of Believers in him thereby; as also a representation of that communion and fellowship Believers shall hereafter enjoy by virtue thereof; the which Ordinance, through a right application by faith, proveth useful for the preservation and confirmation of the Faith, Hope, Joy, and comfort of Believers acting in the said Ordinance in obedience to Christ their King.

Twenty-third.

It is the order of Christ, and the duty of Christians to reprove sin in their fellow-members upon the visible appearance of it; and to give in warnings and admonitions for reformation, as they tender the glory of God, the honour of Christ, their own duty, and the promotion of truths interest, the life of holiness, and the present and future good of the said fellow-member found in transgression.

Twenty-fourth.

It is the will of Christ, and the duty of Christians, being justly reprov'd for sin, that they take it patiently, and apply it penitently, and improve it reformingly with respect unto the

aforesaid ends, the glory of God, the honour of Christ, their own duty, truths interest, the life of holiness, and the present and future good of their own souls.

Twenty-fifth.

It is a divine order, given forth by Christ as a Statute-Law unto his Church, that in cases of difference, arising between Church-members; and the said difference cannot be composed by the parties in difference, or by one or two more, that then the judgment and determination of the Church should stand for a composer of the same; and the parties in difference to be satisfied there-with, as they respect the glory of God, the dignity of Christ, the credit of the Church, and their union in the bond of peace.

Twenty-sixth.

It is the order of Christ, and the duty of his Church in obedience to him, as their supreme Head and King, to put in execution the Ordinance of Excommunication against such Members that obstinately persist in wicked practices, or destructive erroneous opinions, after private and publick reproofs, admonitions, and exhortations given by the Church according to the rule of Christ's order; with a respect unto the dignity of Christ, and their duty to Christ, the purity of the Church, and the reformation of the person found in transgression.

Twenty-seventh.

As a Church-Member is by the order of Christ, and the Authority thereof given to his Church, justly excommunicated from communion with his Church in the holy Ordinance of divine representations; so assuredly in the purpose and determinations of God, he shall be excluded from the communion of Saints in glory, and be numbered among the Transgressors, except timely Repentance.

Twenty-eighth.

These persons that enter themselves visible Church-Members by Baptism, and walk in Church-communion in the use of all the external parts of divine worship, and under the dews of God's free grace in Christ, in the doctrine of the Gospel; and have not God's glory, and the mortification of their sins; the subduing of their corrupt Lusts, and the sanctifying of their hearts with the qualifications of grace to be their principal ends; and in order to those ends, do not strive carefully to apply, and faithfully to improve the aforesaid means thereunto; such persons are like to be as the man without the Wedding-garment, and his portion like to be their lot; for carnal ends, & an outside profession only establisheth in a man but the hope of the Hypocrite: but right ends often crowns the action with good success, although the action have many imperfections.

Twenty-ninth.

Those persons that in love to their corrupt Lusts and the world, in the pride, pleasures and profits thereof, do carelessly slight the means of grace, and live in the neglect thereof; and those that obstinately oppose the dignity of Christ in his Laws and Government, and subjects in the same; and those that willfully resist the motions and operations of the spirit of grace, and work of sanctification until death, without Repentance, are doubtless of that number that God from Eternity, hath through their corruptions ordained or predestinated unto eternal Condemnation.

Thirtieth.

The Office of Magistracy is an Ordinance of God, wherein God doth empower and appoint him to be an Executioner of his civil Laws of justice, to the terror of all vicious, profane, and wicked persons that will not be bridled and kept within the bounds of civility, by the power of God's word, nor light of nature; and also to countenance, maintain, and protect all civil persons within his jurisdiction, in their just rights and privileges: And also, not only to observe Christ's institutions and order of government and worship, without adding too, or diminishing from the truth, as it is in Jesus; with respect to the dignity of Christ, as the only Law-giver, sole Head and Governour of his Church; but also to promote and propagate the interest of Christ, and his People in the true worship and order of Gospel-government, as a nursing Father, to countenance, preserve, and protect by his power those that endeavour to walk peaceable in the same; *And herein he is the Minister of God to thee for good, Rom. 13.4, 5. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the Minister of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doth evil: Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience-sake:* And hence the Apostle exhorteth that prayers and supplications be made for all men, for Kings, and all that are in Authority, that we may lead a peaceable life in all Godliness and Honesty, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour: But if the Magistrate contrarily lay injunctions and impositions upon the Conscience of his Subjects, in the point of divine worship, which the Voice of Christ in the Gospel doth not own, either in matter, or manner of performance; so that it become inconsistent to the dignity of Christ, and the peace of a tender Conscience; then may a soul, lawfully, with the Apostles & Christians of old, choose rather to suffer the penalty, than to obey actively the command; & say with *Peter and John, whether it be right to obey God or man, judge ye, Act. 4.19.*

Thirty-one, Comprehending many.

The said Lord Jesus Christ shall once more appear personally in his Kingly power & glory, wherein the Father hath exalted him; the which power he shall then put in execution, to the dissolving of this world, & all the Principalities and Powers thereof, unto which power the

graves shall be subject, to deliver up their dead according to his will; the Saints in the first place with those his Saints then alive, all of them will he gather into one Assembly or Body in Communion with himself in their Immortal state; who with the Holy Angels, shall accompany him on the Throne of Majesty, and Seat of Justice, beholding, & giving their assent and consent unto the just proceedings of Christ, the Righteous Judge, in the execution of his Justice, against all the ungodly, both Men and Angels, who shall then be cast into eternal flames of the fiery Indignation and Wrath of the Almighty, as a just reward of their ungodly deeds.

But his Saints, shall be in the white Robes of his own Innocency, and Crown of Righteousness, present and deliver up unto the Father, as the effects of the Father's Election in the Son, and as the fruits of the faithful labours of the Son, unto the Father's great and gracious acceptance of them unto his Kingdom in the state of glory from Eternity, purposed, appointed, and promised unto them through faith and sanctification; there to dwell as Kings, triumphing in glory over all their Enemies, fears, sufferings, and sorrows; and as Priests, offering up their sacrifices and songs of deliverance unto him that sitteth on the Throne, and unto the Lamb eternally.

A Letter to my Beloved Children, Josias Bonham, Thomas, John, Samuel, and Elizabeth Bonham

Beloved Children,

Although in the last end of my Book reminded, yet in much respect are you upon my heart retained in the tender bowels of true Fatherly affection; wishing unto you, not only the blessing of me your Father, after the flesh, but more especially the blessing of him who is the Father of spirits unto your establishment in his grace, mercy, peace, and unity in the truth, as it is in Jesus, unto all perseverance through the knowledge of God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.

Where, as the influence of God's word upon my heart, written *Deut. 6.5, 6, 7. & chap. 11.18, 19.* and *Eph. 6.4.* hath heretofore drawn me forth to consult with the mind of God in his Testimonies, Commands, and Promises contained in holy Scripture for my better ability to perform my duty in answer to such a divine requirement; and having in a measure improved

my attainments thereunto, in my House and Family among you, for your edification, that you may set your hope in God.

And having found the Blessing of God in some good measure attending the same, to your growth in civility and piety, unto my greater comfort; to the praise of God be it spoken, and to the encouragement of others in such concernments.

Now considering that most of you are gone from me, and that Mortality is approaching near unto me; and considering the danger of these latter days, by the abounding of Iniquity, both in errors of Opinions, and vicious practices: Therefore to the end you might be preserved from the evils of the times, and the principles that have been communicated to you, be preserved in you, to an increase and growth in holy and Heavenly attainments: I would bequeath unto you as the best Legacy that I can bestow upon you, even this little Book, containing some few gleanings, which through grace I have gathered out of the Vintage of God; and for your sakes, in part composed, to the end, that these lines within contained, may be your Companions to consult with, as you have opportunities thereunto; and to remind you of your great concernments, and be some direction to you in the way of Holy and Heavenly attainments, when I have put off this my Tabernacle, and am Deceased from you: Wherefore let me remind you with the words of *David*, to *Solomon* his Son: *Know ye the God of your Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: If you seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will cast you off for ever, 1 Chron. 28.9.* Take this promise also along in your Considerations, which saith, *Then shall ye know if ye follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the Morning; he shall come unto us as the Rain, as the former and latter Rain upon the Earth, Hos. 6.3.* As the going forth of the Morning light expelleth the darkness of the Night away, and increaseth more and more unto the perfect day, so will the Lord with the light of the Son of Righteousness, the beams of his special favours in Christ, break forth upon your souls, to refresh, nourish, comfort, and rejoice your souls, and cause you to grow up unto a state of perfection in Jesus Christ, as the fruits of the Earth by the former and latter Rain: *For the Eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose hearts are perfect towards him, 2 Chron. 16.9.*

The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him, Nahum. 1.7. Wherefore eye the Lord in his providences, and wait upon him in his dispensations, praise him for all his Benefits, trust in him at all times, in all conditions; and confide in him for the performance of all his promises in Christ unto you; always remembering that he is faithful that hath promised. One Text more I would mind you of, which saith thus:

And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his Father David, and sought not unto Balaam; but sought to the Lord God of his Father, and walked in

his Commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. And now my dear Children, my desire is, that you would make my failings your warnings; and what you have heard and seen in me of good, make that exemplary for your imitation; and the God of peace be with you, and make you perfect in every good work to do his will; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.* So I commit you to the Lord, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among them that are sanctified; hoping in Heavenly glory You to see; enjoying of each other in felicity.

Your loving Father, *Josias Bonham.*

A word to my Book, and I have done.

*Behold, I send thee forth to the Church and World,
Not knowing in whose hands thou may'st be hurled:
As well as Friends, thou mayest meet with Foes
That will thy Plainness and thy Truth oppose.*

*Some may perhaps thee friendly entertain,
Whilst other-some behold thee with disdain.
But whether it be so, or whether not,
Thou may'st expect it as thy adverse Lot:*

*For this be sure, thou must expect to pass
Through good and bad report; for why? alas,
Who so God's Errand tells, must bare his Cross;
Deny himself to his external loss.*