

*Ri: Baxter*



RICHARD BAXTER  
(1615–1691)

# The Practical Works of RICHARD BAXTER

VOLUME 1



**Soli Deo Gloria Publications**  
An imprint of Reformation Heritage Books  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

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An imprint of Reformation Heritage Books

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Grand Rapids, MI 49512

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www.heritagebooks.org

*The Practical Works of Richard Baxter*, 4 vols.,  
was lithographed from the 1846 edition  
published in London by George Virtue.

SDG printing 2023

ISBNs

Vol. 1 978-1-877611-13-1

Vol. 2 978-1-877611-15-5

Vol. 3 978-1-877611-28-5

Vol. 4 978-1-877611-36-0

All 4 vols. 978-1-877611-37-7

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

### READERS,

THE book is so big that I must make no longer preface, than to give you this necessary, short account, I. Of the quality; II. And the reasons of this work.

I. The matter you will see in the contents: As Amesius's "Cases of Conscience" are to his "Medulla," the second and practical part of theology, so is this to a "Methodus Theologiæ" which I have not yet published. And, 1. As to the method of this, it is partly natural, but principally moral; that is, partly suitable to the real order of the matter, but chiefly of usefulness, *secundum ordinem intentionis*, where our reasons of each location are fetched from the end. Therefore unless I might be tedious in opening my reasons *à fine* for the order of every particular, I know not how to give you full satisfaction. But in this practical part I am the less solicitous about the accurateness of method, because it more belongeth to the former part, (the theory,) where I do it as well as I am able.

2. This book was written in 1664 and 1665 (except the Ecclesiastic Cases of Conscience, and a few sheets since added). And since the writing of it, some invitations drew me to publish my "Reasons of the Christian Religion," my "Life of Faith," and "Directions for Weak Christians;" by which the work of the two first chapters here is more fully done; and therefore I was inclined here to leave them out; but for the use of such families as may have this without the other, I forbore to dismember it.

3. But there is a great disproportion between the several parts of the book. 1. The First Part is largest, because I thought that the heart must be kept with greatest diligence, and that if the tree be good the fruit will be good; and I remember Paul's counsel, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee," 1 Tim. iv. 16. Nothing is well done by him that beginneth not at home: as the man is, so is his strength, and work. 2. The two first chapters are too coarse and tedious for those of the higher form, who may pass them over. But the rest must be spoken to; to whom that is unprofitable which is most suitable and pleasant to more exercised and accurate wits. The grand directions are but the explications of the essentials of christianity, or of the baptismal covenant, even of our relation-duties to God the Father, Son, (in several parts of his relation,) and of the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of Temptations is handled with brevity, because they are so numerous; lest a due amplification should have swelled the book too much; when a small part of their number maketh up so much of Mr. John Downname's, great and excellent treatise, called, "The Christian Warfare." The great radical sins are handled more largely than seemeth proportionable to the rest, because all die when they are dead. And I am large about Redeeming Time, because therein the sum of a holy, obedient life is included.

4. If any say, Why call you that a Sum of Practical Theology which is but the directing part, and leaveth out the explication, reasons, various uses, marks, motives, &c.? I answer, 1. Had I intended sermonwise to say all that might well be said on each subject, it would have made many volumes as big as this. 2. Where I thought them needful, the explication of each duty and sin is added, with marks, contraries, counterfeits, motives, &c. And uses are easily added by an ordinary reader, without my naming them.

5. I do especially desire you to observe, that the resolving of practical cases of conscience, and the reducing of theoretical knowledge into serious christian practice, and promoting a skilful facility in the faithful exercise of universal obedience, and holiness of heart and life, is the great work of this treatise; and that where I thought it needful, the cases are reduced to express questions and answers. But had I done so by all, many such volumes would have been too little; and therefore I thought the directing way most brief and fit for christian practice; for if you mark them, you will find few directions in the book, which may not pass for the answer of an implied question or case of conscience; and when I have given you the answer in a direction, an ingenious reader can tell what question it is that is answered. And so, many hundred cases are here resolved, especially in the two first parts, which are not interrogatively named.

6. And I must do myself the right as to notify the reader, that this treatise was written when I was (for not subscribing, declaring, &c.) forbidden by the law to preach, and when I had been long separated far from my library and from all books, saving an inconsiderable parcel which wandered with me, where I went; by which means this book hath two defects: 1. It hath no cases of conscience, but what my bare memory brought to hand: and cases are so innumerable, that it is far harder, methinks, to remember them, than to answer them; whereby it came to pass that some of the ecclesiastical cases are put out of their proper place, because I could not seasonably remember them. For I had no one casuist but Amesius with me. But (after about twelve years' separation) having received my library, I find that the very sight of Sayrus, Fragoso, Roderiquez, Tolet, &c. might have helped my memory to a greater number. But perhaps these will be enough for those that I intend them for. 2. And by the same cause the margin is unfurnished of such citations as are accounted an ornament, and in some cases are very useful. The scraps inserted out of my few trivial books at hand being so mean, as that I am well content (except about Monarchy, Part IV.) that the reader pass them by as not worthy of his notice.

# CHRISTIAN DIRECTORY.

## PART I.

### CHRISTIAN ETHICS:

OR,

DIRECTIONS FOR THE ORDERING OF THE PRIVATE ACTIONS OF OUR HEARTS AND LIVES,  
IN THE WORK OF HOLY SELF-GOVERNMENT, UNTO AND UNDER GOD.

#### THE INTRODUCTION.<sup>a</sup>

THE eternal God having made man an intellectual and free agent, able to understand and choose the good, and refuse the evil; to know, and love, and serve his Maker, and by adhering to him in this life of trial, to attain to the blessed sight and enjoyment of his glory in the life to come, hath not been wanting to furnish him with such necessaries, without which these ends could not successfully be sought. When we had lost our moral capacity of pleasing him, that we might enjoy him, he restoreth us to it by the wonderful work of our redemption. In Christ he hath reconciled the world unto himself; and hath given them a general act of oblivion, contained in the covenant of grace, which nothing but men's obstinate and final unwillingness can deprive them of. To procure their consent to this gracious covenant, he hath "committed" to his ministers the "word of reconciliation;" commanding us "to beseech men, as in the stead of Christ, and as though God himself did beseech them by us, to be reconciled unto God," 2 Cor. v. 18—20; and to show them first their sin and misery, and proclaim and offer the true remedy, and to let them know, that all things are now ready, and by pleading their duty, their necessity, and their commodity, to compel them to come in, Matt. xxii. 4; Luke xi. 17, 23.

But so great is the blindness and obstinacy of men, that the greatest part refuse consent; being deceived

by the pleasures, and profits, and honours of this present world; and make their pretended necessities or business the matter of their excuses, and the unreasonable reasons of their refusal, negligence, and delays, till death surprise them, and the door is shut; and they knock, and cry for mercy and admittance, when it is too late, Matt. xxv. 10—12.

Against this wilful negligence and presumption, which is the principal cause of the damnation of the ungodly world, I have written many books already.<sup>b</sup> But because there are many that profess themselves unfeignedly willing, not only to be saved, but also to be Christ's disciples; to learn of him, to imitate him, and be conformed to him, and to do the will of God, if they could but know it; I have determined, by God's assistance, to write this book for the use of such, and to give them from God's word those plain directions, which are suited to the several duties of their lives, and may guide them safely in their walk with God, to life eternal. Expect not here copious and earnest exhortations, for that work I have done already; and have now to do with such, as say they are made willing, and desire help against their ignorance, that skill and will may concur to their salvation. I shall labour to speak as plainly as I can, because I specially intend it for the ignorant; and yet to be competently exact in the directions, lest such readers lose the benefit by mistakes. And I must speak to many cases, because I speak to fami-

<sup>a</sup> Noverint universi quod præsens opusculum non aggredior, ut fidelium auribus prophanas aliquas vocum ingeram novitates, sed ut innocenter et sobrie de altissimo, &c. Ockam de Sacram. Alt. prolog. In zelo domus Domini, nunc persolvo debitum, vile quidem, sed fidele ut puto, et animam quibusque egregiis, Christi tyronibus: grave vero et importabile apostatis insipientibus: quorum priores ni fallor, cum lachrymis forte quæ ex Dei charitate profuunt, alii cum tristitia,

sed quæ ex indignatione et pusillanimitate deprehensæ conscientia extorquetur, illud excipiunt. Gildas Prolog. Excid.

<sup>b</sup> Habet, inquires, Britannia rectores, habet speculatores: Quid tu negando mutiri disponis? Habet, inquam habet, si non ultra, non citra numerum: sed quia inclinati tanto pondere sunt pressi, idcirco spatium respirandi non habent. Præoccupabant igitur se mutuo talibus objectionibus, &c. Gildas ib.



lies, where all are not in the same condition, and the same persons are not still the same. And therefore if I should not be brief in the particulars, I should be too long in the whole; and tediousness might deprive some readers of the benefit.

In families some are (too ordinarily) ungodly, in a carnal, unrenewed state; and some are godly, in a state of grace.<sup>c</sup> These are considerable as christians simply, with respect to God, or in their relations to others: these relations are either ecclesiastical, civil, or domestical (family relations).

Accordingly, my intended method is, 1. To direct ungodly, carnal minds, how to attain to a state of grace. 2. To direct those that have saving grace, how to use it; both in the contemplative and active parts of their lives; in their duties of religion, both private and public; in their duties to men, both in their ecclesiastical, civil, and family relations. And, by the way, to direct those that have grace, how to discern it, and take the comfort of it; and to direct them how to grow in grace, and persevere unto the end.

And if any reader should be discouraged at the number of duties and directions set before him, I entreat him to consider, 1. That it is God, and not I, that imposeth all these duties on you: and who will question his wisdom, goodness, or power to make laws for us and all the world? 2. That every duty and direction is a mercy to you; and therefore should not be matter of grief to you, but of thanks. They are

but like the commands of parents to their children, when they bid them eat their meat, and wear their clothes, and go to bed, and eat not poison, and tumble not in the dirt; and cut not your fingers, and take heed of fire and water, &c. To leave out any such law or duty, were but to deprive you of an excellent mercy; you will not cut off or cast away any member of your body, any vein, or sinew, or artery, upon pretence that the number maketh them troublesome, when the diminishing of that number would kill or maim you. A student is not offended that he hath many books in his library; nor a tradesman that he hath store of tools; nor the rich at the number of his farms or flocks. Believe it, reader, if thou bring not a malignant quarrelsome mind, thou wilt find that God hath not burdened, but blessed thee with his holy precepts, and that he hath not appointed thee one unnecessary or unprofitable duty; but only such as tend to thy content, and joy, and happiness.<sup>d</sup>

O let it be the daily, earnest prayer of me and thee, that our hearts prove not false and unwilling to follow the directions which are given us, lest we condemn ourselves in the things which we allow. Your practice now will show, whether it be through want of will or skill, if henceforth you unfaithfully neglect your duty. If you are willing, obey now what is plainly taught you, and show by your diligence that you are willing.

## CHAPTER I.

### PART I.

*Directions to unconverted, graceless Sinners, for the attaining of true saving Grace.\**

If ungodly, miserable sinners were as few, as the devil and their self-love would make themselves believe,<sup>b</sup> I might forbear this part of my work as needless. For the whole need not the physician, but the sick. If you go into twenty families, and ask them all, whether any of them are in an unsanctified state, unrenewed and unpardoned, and under the wrath and curse of God? you will meet with few that

will not tell you, they hope it is better with them than so; and though they are sinners, as all are, yet that they are repenting, pardoned sinners. Nay, there is scarce one of many of the most wicked and notoriously ungodly, but hope they are in a penitent, pardoned state. Even the haters of God will say they love him; and the scorners at godliness will say that they are not ungodly; and that it is but hypocrisy and singularity that they deride: and it were well for them, if saying so would go for proof, and he that will be their Judge would take their words. But God will not be deceived, though foolish men are wise enough to deceive themselves. Wickedness will be wickedness when it hath clothed itself with

<sup>c</sup> Duæ sunt viæ, duplicesque cursus animorum e corpore exeuntium. Nam qui se vitiis humanis contaminarunt et libidinibus se tradiderunt, iis devium quoddam iter est, seclusum à concilio deorum. Qui autem se integros castosque servarunt, quibusque fuit minima cum corporibus contagio, suntque in corporibus humanis vitam imitati deorum, iis ad illos à quibus sunt profecti, facile patet reditus. Soc. in Cic. 1. Tusc. Qui recte et honeste curriculum vivendi à natura datum confecerit, ad astra facile revertetur: Non qui aut immoderatè, aut intemperanter vixerit. Cicero de Univers. Improbo bene esse non potest. Id Par. Quod si inest in hominum genere, mens, fides, virtus, concordia, unde hæc in terras nisi à superis diffuere potuerunt? cumque sit in nobis consilium, ratio, prudentia, necesse est deos hæc ipsa habere majora: Nec habere solum, sed etiam his uti in optimis et maximis rebus. Cicero de Nat. Deor. 1. 2. p. 76. Quod si pœna, si metus supplicii, non ipsa turpitudine, deterret ab injuriosa facinorosaque vita, nemo est injustus; at incauti potius habendi sunt improbi. Callidi, non boni sunt, qui utilitate tantum, non ipso honesto, ut boni viri sint, moventur. Cicero de Leg. 1. 1. p. 289. Ut nihil interest, utrum nemo valeat, an nemo possit valere; sic non intelligo quid intersit, utrum nemo sit sapiens, an nemo esse possit. Cic. de Nat. Deor. 1. 3. p. 138. Cicero was afraid to speak what he knew of the Unity of the Eternal God, the Maker of all: Illum quasi parentem hujus universitatis invenire, difficile; et cum in-

veniris, indicare in vulgus nefas. Lib. de Univers. p. 2. And the same he saith, Lib. 2. de Nat. Deor.

<sup>d</sup> Vult Deus quodammodo pati vim; et hoc summæ est beneficentiæ, ut ad benefaciendum se pulsari sollicitarique velit. Jos. Acosta, l. 4. c. 12. p. 396.

<sup>a</sup> Leg. Danielis Episcop. Epist. ad Bonif. Mogunt. inter Epist. Bonif. 67. de Methodo convertendi Paganos.

<sup>b</sup> Hæsit tam desperati insulæ excidii, insperatique mentio auxilii, memoriæ eorum qui utriusque miraculi testes extitere: et ob hoc reges, publici, privati, sacerdotes, ecclesiastici, suum quique ordinem servarunt. At illis decedentibus, cum successisset ætas tempestatis illius nescia, et præsentis tantum serenitatis expers, ita cuncta veritatis ac justitiæ moderamina concussa ac subversa sunt, ut earum non dicam vestigium, sed ne monumentum quidem in supra dictis propemodum ordinibus appareat; exceptis paucis, et valde paucis, qui ob amissionem tantæ multitudinis, quæ quotidie prona ruit ad tartara, tam brevis numeri habentur, ut eos quodammodo venerabilis mater ecclesia in sinu suo recumbentes non videat, quos solos veros filios habeat. Quorum nequis me egregiam vitam omnibus admirabilem, Deoque amabilem carpere putet; si qua liberis de his, immo lugubrius, cumulo malorum compulsus, qui serviunt non solum ventri, sed et diabolo potius quam Christo. Gildas p. (mihi) 514. It was Pythagoras's saying, (which Ambrose saith he hath from the Jews,) Communem atque usitatam populo viam, non esse terendam.



the fairest names : God will condemn it when it hath found out the most plausible pretences and excuses. Though the ungodly think to bear it out in pride and scorn, and think to be saved by their hypocritical lip-service, as soon as the most holy worshippers of the Lord, yet "shall they be like chaff which the wind driveth away : they shall not be able to stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous," Psal. i. 4—6. And if God know better than foolish men, then certainly the flock is little to whom the "Father will give the kingdom," Luke xii. 32. And "wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat : because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," Matt. vii. 13, 14. When Christ was asked, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" he answered, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able," Luke xiii. 23, 24. But, alas! we need no other information than common experience, to tell us whether the greatest part of men be holy, and heavenly, and self-denying; that seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and love God above all, and will forsake all they have for the sake of Christ: and undoubtedly none but such are saved; as you may see Heb. xxi. 14; Matt. vi. 20, 21, 33; Luke xiv. 33.

Seeing then the godly are so few, and the ungodly so many; and that God will take nothing for holiness that is not such indeed; and seeing it is so terrible a thing to any man that hath his wits about him, to live one day in an unconverted state, because he that dieth so, is lost for ever; methinks it should be our wisdom, to be suspicious of ourselves, and careful lest we be deceived in so great a business, and diligent in searching and examining our hearts, whether they are truly sanctified or not; because it can be no harm to make sure work for our salvation; whereas presumption, carelessness, and negligence, may betray us to remediless misery and despair.

I do not here suppose the reader to have any such acquaintance with his heart, or care of his salvation, or obedient willingness to be taught and ruled by Jesus Christ, as is proper to those that are truly sanctified; for it is ungodly persons that now I am speaking to. And yet, if I should not suppose them to have some capacity and disposition to make use of the directions which I give them, I might as well pass them by, and spare my labour. I tell thee therefore, reader, what it is that I presuppose in thee, and expect from thee, and I think thou wilt not judge me unreasonable in my suppositions and expectations.

I. I suppose thee to be a man, and therefore that thou hast reason and natural free will, (that is, the natural faculty of choosing and refusing,) which should keep thy sensitive appetite in obedience; and that thou art

Presupposed, That thou art a man.

c Cum despiciere cœpimus et sentire, quid simus, et quid ab animantibus cæteris differamus, tum ea insequi incipimus ad quæ nati sumus. Cicero 5. de finib. See the proof of the Godhead, and that God is the Governor of the world, and that there is another life for man, in the beginning of my "Holy Commonwealthe," chap. 1, 2, 3. Commoda quibus utimur, lucem qua fruimur, spiritum quem ducimus, à Deo nobis dari et impartiri videmus. Cicero pro Ros. Quis est tam vecors, qui cum suspexerit in cœlum, deos esse non sentiat? et ea quæ tanta mente fiunt, ut vix quisquam arte ulla ordinem rerum atque vicissitudinem persequi possit, casu ferri putet? Cicero de Resp. Arusp. Read Galen's Hymns to the Creator, Li. de usu partium, præcipuè, l. iii. cap. 10. Nulla gens est tam immansueta, neque tam ferrea, quæ non etiã ignoret qualem Deum habere deceat, tamen habendum sciat. Cic. 1. de Leg. Omnibus innatum, et quasi insculptum est, esse deos. Id de Nat. Deor. Agnoscimus Deum ex operibus ejus.

capable of loving and serving thy Creator, and enjoying him in everlasting life.

2. I suppose that thou knowest thyself to be a man; and therefore that thy sensitive part, or flesh, should no more rule thee, or be ungoverned by thee, than the horse should rule the rider, or be unrul'd by him: and that thou understandest that thou art made on purpose to love and serve thy Maker, and to be happy in his love and glory for ever. If thou know not this much, thou knowest not that thou art a man, or else knowest not what a man is.

That thou knowest this: and what a man is.

3. I suppose thee to have a natural self-love, and a desire of thy own preservation and happiness; and that thou hast no desire to be miserable, or to be hated of God, or to be cast out of his favour and presence into hell, and there to be tormented with devils everlastingly: yea, I will suppose that thou art not indifferent whether thou dwell in heaven or hell, in joy or torment; but would fain be saved and be happy; whether thou be godly or ungodly, wise or foolish, I will be bold to take all this for granted: and I hope in all this I do not wrong thee.

That thou hast self-love and a desire to be happy.

4. I suppose thee to be one that knowest that thou didst not make thyself; nor give thyself that power or wisdom which thou hast; and that he that made thee and all the world, must needs be before all the world; and that he is eternal, having no beginning (for if ever there had been a time when there was nothing, there never would have been any thing; because nothing can make nothing); and I suppose thou dost confess that all the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the whole creation set together, is less than the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the Creator; because nothing can give more than it hath to give. I suppose, therefore, that thou dost confess that there is a God; for to be the eternal, infinite Being, and the most powerful, wise, and good, and the first cause of all created being, and power, and wisdom, and goodness, this (with the subsequent relations to the creature) is to be GOD. If thou wilt deny that there is a God, thou must deny that thou art a man, and that there is any man, or any being.

That thou madest not thyself: and that the first cause of all the being, power, wisdom, and goodness of all the creatures, hath (formally or eminently) more than all they. And therefore that there is a God.

5. I suppose thou knowest that God, who gave a being unto all things, is by this title of creation, the absolute Owner or Lord of all: and that he that made the reasonable creatures, with natures to be governed, in order to a further end, is by that title, their supreme Governor; and therefore hath his laws commanding duty, and promising reward, and threatening punishment; and therefore will judge men according to these laws, and will be just in judgment,

That the Creator of all is the Lord or Owner of all; the Ruler of the rational creature; and the Benefactor and End of all.

Cic. 1. Tusc. Nullum est animal præter hominem quod habet ullam notitiam Dei. Cic. 1. de Legib. Nulla gens tam fera, cujus mentem non imbuerit deorum opinio. Cic. 1. Tusc. "I had rather believe all the Legends, Talmud, Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind." Lord Bacon, Essay 16. "A little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism: but depth in philosophy bringeth men's mind about to religion." Lord Bacon, Essay 16. Stoici dicunt unum deum esse, ipsumque et mentem et fatum et Jovem dicunt: principio illum cum esset apud se, substantiam omnem per aerem in aquam convertisse—Quod autem faciat, Verbum Deum esse quod in ipsa sit. Hunc enim quippe sempiternum per ipsam (materiam) omnem singula creare. Mundum quoque regi et administrari secundum mentem et providentiam mente per omnes illius partes pertingente—Laert. in Zenone.



and in his rewards and punishments. And that he that freely gave the creature its being, and all the good it hath, and must give it all that ever it shall have, is the Father or most bountiful Benefactor to his creatures. Surely I screw thee not too high in supposing thee to know all this; for all this is no more than that there is a God. For he is not God, if he be not the Creator, and therefore our Owner, our Ruler, and Benefactor, our absolute Lord, our most righteous Governor, and our most loving Father, or Benefactor.

That this God must be obeyed and loved. 6. I suppose therefore that thou art convinced, that God must be absolutely submitted to, and obeyed before all others in the world, and loved above all friends, or pleasures, or creatures whatsoever. For to say, He is my Owner, is to say, I must yield myself to him as his own; to say, I take him for my supreme Governor, is to say, that I will absolutely be ruled by him; and to say, I take him as my dearest Father or chief Benefactor, is to say, that I am obliged to give him my dearest love, and highest thanks: otherwise you do but jest, or say you know not what, or contradict yourselves, while you say, He is your God.

That nothing is to be preferred before him. 7. I suppose that thou art easily convinced, that in all the world there is no creature that can show so full a title to thee as God; or that hath so great authority to govern thee, or that can be so good to thee, or do so much for thee, as God can do, or hath done, and will do, if thou do thy part; and therefore that there is nothing to be preferred before him, or compared with him in our obedience or love: nor is there any that can save us from his justice, if we stand out against him.

That he that ruleth the world by hopes and fears of another life, doth not rule them by deceit and lies, and that he hath rewards and punishments hereafter. 8. I suppose that as thou knowest God is just in his laws and judgments,<sup>d</sup> so that he is so faithful that he will not, and so all-sufficient that he need not, deceive mankind, and govern them by mere deceit: this better beseems the devil, than God:

and therefore that as he governeth man on earth by the hopes and fears of another life, he doth not delude them into such hopes or fears; and as he doth not procure obedience by any rewards or punishments in this life, as the principal means, (the wicked prospering, and the best being persecuted and afflicted here,) therefore his rewards or punishments must needs be principally hereafter in the life to come. For if he have no rewards or punishments, he hath no judgment; and if he have no judgment, he hath no laws (or else no justice); and if he have no laws, (or no justice,) he is no governor of man (or not a righteous governor); and if he be not our governor, (and just,) he is not our God; and if he were not our God, we had never been his creatures, nor had a being, or been men.

That man being bound to love and obey God above all, is bound to do nothing in vain, and that we cannot be losers by his service. 9. I suppose thou knowest that if God had not discovered what he would do with us in the life to come, yet man is highest bound to obey and love his Maker, because he is our absolute Lord, our highest Ruler, and our chief Benefactor; and all that we are to have is from him. And that if man be bound to spend his life in the service of his God, it is certain that he shall be no loser by him, no, not by the costliest obedience that we can perform; for God

cannot appoint us any thing that is vain; nor can he be worse to us than an honest man, that will see that we lose not by his service. Therefore that God for whom we must spend and forsake this life, and all those pleasures which sensualists enjoy, hath certainly some greater thing to give us, in another life.

10. I may take it for granted at the worst, that neither thyself, nor any infidel in the world, can say that you are sure that there is not another life for man, in which his present obedience shall be rewarded, and disobedience punished. The worst that ever infidel could say was, that he thinketh there is no other life. None of you dare deny the possibility of it, nor can with any reason deny the probability. Well, then, let this be remembered while we proceed a little further with you.

11. I suppose or expect that you have so much use of sense and reason, as to know the brevity and vanity of all the glory and pleasures of the flesh; and that they are all so quickly gone, that were they greater than they are, they can be of no considerable value. Alas, what is time! How quickly gone, and then it is nothing! and all things then are nothing which are passed with it! So that the joys or sorrows of so short a life, are no great matter of gain or loss.

I may therefore suppose that thou canst easily conclude, that the bare probability or possibility of an endless happiness, should be infinitely preferred before such transitory vanity, even the greatest matters that can be expected here; and that the probability or possibility of endless misery in hell, should engage us with far greater care and diligence to avoid it, than is due for the avoiding any thing that you can think to escape by sinning; or any of the sufferings of this momentary life. If you see not this, you have lost your reason; that the mere probability or possibility of a heaven and hell, should much more command our care and diligence, than the fading vanities of this dreaming, transitory life.

12. Well, then, we have got thus far in the clearest light. You see that a religious, holy life, is every man's duty, not only as they owe it to God as their Creator, their Owner, Governor, and Benefactor; but also, because as lovers of ourselves, our reason commandeth us to have ten thousandfold more regard of a probable or possible joy and torment which are endless, than of any that is small and of short continuance.

And if this be so, that a holy life is every man's duty, with respect to the life that is to come, then it is most evident, that there is such a life to come indeed, and that it is more than probable or possible, even certain. For if it be but man's duty to manage this life, by the hopes and fears of another life, then it must follow, that either there is such a life to come, or else that God hath made it man's duty to hope, and fear, and care, and labour, and live in vain; and that he himself doth tantalize and cheat his creatures, and rule the world by motives of deceit, and make religion and obedience to our Maker to be a life of folly, delusion, and our loss. And he that believeth this of God, doth

That no infidel can say, He is sure there is no life to come.

That you are sure of the brevity and vanity of this life: and that the probability or possibility of an endless joy or misery, should command all the care and diligence of a rational creature, against all that can be set against it.

Therefore that a holy life is every man's duty, were it but on the account of such a possibility or probability: and therefore that really there is such a joy and misery hereafter; because God doth not make our faculties in vain, nor make us to follow deceits and lies.

<sup>d</sup> *Mundus numine regitur, estque quasi communis urbs et civitas hominum. Cicero 2. de finib. Impiis apud inferos sunt pœnæ præparatæ. Cicero 1. de Invent. Impii apud inferos pœnæ luunt. Idem. Phil. et 1. de Legib. Jovem*

*dominatorem rerum, et omnia nutu regentem, et præsentem et præpotentem, qui dubitat, haud sanè intelligo, cur non idem, sol sit, an nullus sit dubitari possit. Cicero. de Nat. Deor. 2. p. 48.*



scarce believe him to be God. Though I have mentioned this argument in another treatise, I think it not unmeet here to repeat it for thy benefit.

That all the matters of this transitory life are to be estimated as they refer to the life to come.

13. And seeing I suppose thee to be convinced of the life to come, and that man's happiness and misery is there, I must needs suppose that thou dost confess, that all things in this life, whether prosperity or adversity, honour or dishonour, are to be esteemed and used as they refer to the life to come. For nothing is more plain, than that the means are to have all their esteem and use in order to their end. That only is good in this life, which tendeth to the happiness of our endless life; and that is evil indeed in this life, that tendeth to our endless hurt, and to deprive us of the everlasting good. And therefore no price or motive should hire us to sin against God, and to forfeit or hinder our endless happiness.

That no man can love God too much, nor make too sure of his salvation.

14. I may suppose, if thou have reason, that thou wilt confess that God cannot be too much loved, nor obeyed too exactly, nor served too diligently (especially by such backward sinners, that have scarce any mind to love or worship him at all); and that no man can make too sure of heaven, or pay too dear for it, or do too much for his salvation, if it be but that which God hath appointed him to do. And that you have nothing else that is so much worth your time, and love, and care, and labour. And therefore though you have need to be stopped in your love, and care, and labour for the world, because for it you may easily pay too dear, and do too much; yet there is no need of stopping men in their love, and care, and labour for God and their salvation; which is worth more than ever we can do, and where the best are apt to do too little.

That this life is given us for trial and preparation to the life to come.

15. I also suppose thee to be one that knowest, that this present life is given us on trial,\* to prepare for the life that shall come after; and that as men live here, they shall speed for ever; and that time cannot be recalled when it is gone, and therefore that we should make the best of it while we have it.

That man's thoughts should be serious and frequent about his future state.

16. I suppose thee also to be easily convinced, that seeing man hath his reason and life for matters of everlasting consequence, his thoughts of them should be frequent and very serious, and his reason should be used about these things, by retired, sober deliberation.

That you can tell, or may do, which way your hearts and diligence are bent, whether most for this life, or for that to come.

17. And I suppose thee to be a man, and therefore so far acquainted with thyself, as that thou mayst know, if thou wilt, whether thy heart and life do answer thy convictions, and whether they are more for heaven or earth; and therefore that thou art capable of self-judging in this case.

\* Non temerè, nec fortuito, sati et creati sumus; sed pro-  
fecto fuit quædam vis, quæ generi consuleret humano; nec  
id gigneret, aut aleret, quod cum exantlavisset omnes labores,  
tum incideret in mortis malum sempiternum. Cic. 1. Tuscul.  
Nec unquam bono quicquam mali evenire potest, nec vivo nec  
mortuo. Nec res ejus à Diis negliguntur. Idem. 1. Tusc.

† Abeunt omnia unde orta sunt. Cic. in. lat. Maj. Dii  
immortales sparserunt animos in corpora humana, ut essent  
qui terras tuerentur, quique cælestem ordinem contem-  
plantes, imitarentur eum vitæ modo atque constantia. Cic. in  
Cato Majore. Ex terrâ sunt homines, non ut incolæ, et habi-  
tatores, sed quasi spectatores superarum rerum atque cæles-  
tium; quarum spectaculum ad nullum aliud genus animan-  
tium pertinet. Cicero 2. de Nat. Deor. Sic hæreto; te non  
esse mortalem, sed corpus hoc. Idem. Somn. Scip. Cum  
natura cæteras animantes abjecisset ad pastum, solum homi-

Perhaps you will say, that while I am directing you to be holy, I suppose you to be holy first; for all this seemeth to go far towards it. But I must profess that I see not any thing in all these suppositions, but what I may suppose to be in a heathen; and that I think all this is but supposing thee to have the use of thy reason, in the points in hand. Speak freely: Is there any one of all these points that thou canst or darest deny? I think there is not. And therefore if heathens and wicked men deny them in their practice, that doth but show that sin doth brutify them, and that, as men asleep, or in a crowd of business, they have not the use of the reason which they possess, in the matters which their minds are turned from.

18. Yea, one thing more I think I may suppose in all or most that will read this book; that you take on you also to believe in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier, and that the Scriptures are the word of God. And if you do so indeed, I may then hope that my work is in a manner done, before I begin it: but if you do it but opinionatively and uneffectually, yet God and man may plead with you the truths which you profess.

That most among us profess to believe in Christ, and confess the gospel to be true, &c.

Having told you what I presuppose in you, I proceed now to the directions. But I again entreat and charge thee, reader, as thou lovest thy soul, and wouldst not be condemned for hypocrisy and sloth, that thou dost not refuse to put in practice what is taught thee, and show thereby, that whatever thou pretendest, thou art not willing to do thy part for thy own salvation, no not in the most reasonable, necessary things.†

*Direction I.* If thou be truly willing to be sanctified and a child of God, remain not in a state of ignorance; but do thy best to come into the light, and understand the word of God, in the matters of salvation.

If knowledge be unnecessary, why have we understanding?‡ and wherein doth a man excel a beast? If any knowledge at all be necessary, certainly it must be the knowledge of the greatest and most necessary things: and nothing is so great and necessary as to obey thy Maker, and to save thy soul. Knowledge is to be valued according to its usefulness. If it be a matter of as great concernment to know how to do your worldly business, and to trade and gather worldly wealth, and to understand the laws, and to maintain your honour, as it is to know how to be reconciled unto God, to be pardoned and justified, to please your Creator, to prepare in time for death and judgment, and an endless life, then let worldly wisdom have the pre-eminence. But if all earthly things be dreams and shadows, and valuable only as they serve us in the way to heaven, then surely the heavenly wisdom is the best. Alas, how far is that man from being wise, that is acquainted with all the punctilios of the law, that is excellent in the knowledge of all the languages, sciences, and

nem erexit, et ad cæli quasi cognationis, domiciliique pristini conspectum excitavit: tum speciem ita formavit oris, ut in ea penitus reconditos mores effingeret. Cic. 1. de Legib. Nisi Deus istis te corporis custodiis liberaverit, ad cælum aditus patere non potest. Cicero Somn. Scip. Animi omnium sunt immortales: sed bonorum divini. Cic. 2. de Legib. Bonorum mentes mihi divinæ atque æternæ videntur, et ex hominum vita ad deorum religionem et sanctimoniamque migrare. Idem. Animus est ingeneratus à Deo, ex quo vero vel agnatio nobis cum cælestibus, vel genus vel stirps appellari potest. Idem. 1. de Leg.

‡ Qui seipsum cognoverit, cognoscet in se omnia: Deum, ad cujus imaginem factus est: mundum, cujus simulachrum gerit; creaturas omnes cum quibus symbolum habet. Paul. Scaliger Thes. p. 722.



arts, and yet knoweth not how to live to God, to mortify the flesh, to conquer sin, to deny himself, nor to answer in judgment for his fleshly life, nor to escape damnation! As far as such a learned man from being wise, as he is from being happy.

Two sorts among us do quietly live in damning ignorance. First, abundance of poor people, who think they may continue in it, because they were bred in it; and that because they are not book-learned, therefore they need not learn how to be saved; and because their parents neglected to teach them when they were young, therefore they may neglect themselves ever after, and need not learn the things they were made for. Alas, sirs, what have you your lives, your time, and reason for? Do you think it is only to know how to do your worldly business? Or is it to prepare for a better world? It is better that you knew not how to eat, or drink, or speak, or go, or dress yourselves, than that you know not the will of God, and the way to your salvation. Hear what the Holy Ghost saith, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Darkness is unsafe and full of fears; the light is safe and comfortable. A man in ignorance is never like to hit his way: nor can he know whether he be in or out; nor what enemy or danger he is near. It is the devil that is the prince of darkness, and his kingdom is a kingdom of darkness, and his works are works of darkness. See Eph. vi. 12; Col. i. 13; 1 John ii. 11; Luke xi. 34, 35. Grace turneth men from darkness to light, Acts xxvi. 18, and causeth them to cast off the works of darkness, Rom. xiii. 12; because we are the children of light and of the day, and not of darkness or of night, 1 Thess. v. 5. They that were sometimes darkness, are light in the Lord, when they are converted, and must walk as the children of the light, Eph. v. 8. In the dark the devil and wicked men may cheat you, and do almost what they list with you. You will not buy your wares in the dark,

<sup>h</sup> Cum quem pœnitet peccasse pene innocens est: maxima purgationum pars est voluntaria pœnitentia delictorum. Scal. Thes. p. 742. Facilius iis ignoscitur qui non perseverare sed ab errato se revocare, moliantur; est enim humanum peccare, sed belluinum in errore perseverare. Cic. in Vat. Even Aristotle could say, that he that believed as he ought of the gods, should think as well of himself, as Alexander that commandeth so many men. Plutarch. de Tranquil. Anim. p. 155. Nullus suavior animo cibus est, quam cognitio veritatis. Lactant. Instit. l. i. c. 1. It is a marvellous and doleful case to think how ignorant some people live, even to old age, under constant and excellent teaching. Some learn neither words nor sense, but hear as if they heard not: some learn words, and know the sense no more than if they had learned but a tongue unknown; and will repeat their creed and catechism, when they know not what it is that they say. A worthy minister of Helvetia told me, that their people are very constant at their sermons, and yet most of them grossly ignorant of the things which they most frequently hear. It is almost incredible what ignorance some ministers report that they have found in some of the eldest of their auditors. Nay, when I have examined some that have professed strictness in religion, above the common sort of people, I have found some ignorant of some of the fundamentals of the christian faith. And I remember what an ancient bishop about twelve hundred years ago saith, Maximus Taurinensis in his homilies, that when he had long preached to his people, even on an evening after one of his sermons, he heard a cry or noise among the people, and hearkening what it was, they were by their outcry helping to deliver the moon, that was in labour and wanted help. His words are, Quis non moleste ferat sic vos esse vestræ salutis immemores, ut etiam cœlo teste peccetis? Nam cum ante dies plerosque cum cupiditate pulsaverim, ipsa die circiter vesperam tanta vociferatio populi extitit, ut irreligiositas ejus penetraret ad cœlum. Quod cum requirerem quid sibi clamor hic vellet? dixerunt

nor travel, nor do your work in the dark: and will you judge of the state of your souls in the dark? and do the work of your salvation in the dark? I tell you the devil could never entice so many souls to hell, if he did not first put out the light, or put out their eyes. They would never so follow him by crowds, to everlasting torments, by daylight, and with open eyes. If men did but know well what they do when they are sinning, and whither they go in a carnal life, they would quickly stop, and go no further. All the devils in hell could never draw so many thither, if men's ignorance were not the advantage of temptations.

Another sort among us that are ignorant of the things of God, are sensual gentlemen, and scholars, that have so much breeding as to understand the words, and speak somewhat better than the ruder sort, but indeed never knew the nature, truth, and goodness of the things they speak of:<sup>h</sup> they are many of them as ignorant of the nature of faith, and sanctification, and the working of the Holy Ghost in planting the image of God upon the soul, and of the saints' communion with God, and the nature of a holy life, as if they had never heard or believed, that there is such a thing as any of these in being. Nicodemus is a lively instance in this case: a ruler in Israel, and a Pharisee, and yet knew not what it was to be born again. And the pride of these gallants maketh their ignorance much harder to be cured, than other men's; because it hindereth them from knowing and confessing it. If any one would convince them of it, they say with scorn, as the Pharisees to Christ, John ix. 40, "Are we blind also?" Yea, they are ready to insult over the children of the light, that are wise to salvation, because they differ from the loose or hypocritical opinions of these gentlemen, in some matters of God's worship; of which their worships are as competent judges, as the Pharisees of the doctrine of Christ, or as Nicodemus of regeneration, or as Simon Magus, or Julian, or Porphyry, of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. These honourable, miserable men, will bear no contradiction or reproof: who dare be so unmannerly,

mihî quod laboranti lunæ vestra vociferatio subveniret; et defectum ejus suis clamoribus adjuvaret: Risi equidem et miratus sum vanitatem, quod quasi devoti Christiani Deo ferebatis auxilium. Clamabatis enim ne tacentibus vobis perderet elementum. tanquam infirmus enim et imbecillus, nisi vestris adjuvaretur vocibus, non posset luminaria defendere quæ creavit. It is cited also by Papius Massonus in vita Hilarii Papæ, fol. 67. Therefore popery is suitable to the children of darkness, and unsuitable to the children of light, because it greatly befriendeth ignorance, hindering the people from the Holy Scriptures, and quieting them with the opiate of an easy implicit faith, in believing as the Roman church believeth, though they know not what it believeth, or mistake, and think it believeth that which it doth not. Ockam. lib. de Sacram. Altar. cap. 1. citeth Innocent. Extra de Sum. Trin. to prove the great benefit and efficacy of implicit faith, that it would prove an error to be no sin: "In tantum, inquit, valet fides implicita, ut dicunt aliqui, ut si aliquis eam habet, quod scilicet credit quicquid Ecclesia credit, si false opiniatur, ratione naturali motus, quia pater est vel prior filio, vel quod tres personæ sint tres res ab invicem distantes, non est hæreticus, nec peccat; dummodo hunc errorem non defendat, et hoc ipsum credit, quia credit ecclesiam sic credere, et suam opinionem fidei ecclesie supponit. Quia licet sic male opinetur, non tamen est illa fides sua, immo fides sua est Ecclesie. This implicit faith, being nothing but to believe that the church erreth not, is not an implicit faith in God, (to believe that all that God revealeth is true,) which all men have that believe in God, as rational an excuse for ignorance and error, as a belief in the church of Rome? This is too short and easy a faith to be effectual to the true ends of faith. Si igitur tantæ sit efficacis fides implicita, ut excuset ignoranter errantem circa illa quæ in Scriptura canonica sunt expressa, multo magis excusabit ignoranter opinantem aliquid quod nec in Scriptura canonica reperitur expressum. Ockam. ibid.



disobedient, or bold, as to tell them that they are out of the way to heaven, and strangers to it (that I say not, enemies); and to presume to stop them in the way to hell, or to hinder them from damning themselves, and as many others as they can? They think this talk of Christ, and grace, and life eternal, if it be but serious, (and not like their own, in form, or levity, or scorn,) is but the troublesome preciseness of hypocritical, humorous, crack-brained fellows: and say of the godly, as the Pharisees, John vii. 47—49, "Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed."

Well, gentlemen or poor men, whoever you be that savour not the things of the Spirit, Rom. viii. 5—7, 13, but live in ignorance of the mysteries of salvation, be it known to you, that heavenly truth and holiness are works of light, and never prosper in the dark; and that your best understanding should be used for God and your salvation, if for any thing at all. It is the devil and his deceits that fear the light. Do but understand well what you do, and then be wicked if you can; and then set light by Christ and holiness if you dare! O come but out of darkness into the light, and you will see that which will make you tremble to live ungodly and unconverted another day: and you will see that which will make you with penitent remorse lament your so long neglect of heaven, and wonder that you could live so far and so long beside your wits, as to choose a course of vanity and bestiality in the chains of Satan, before the joyful liberty of the saints: and, though we must not be so uncivil as to tell you where you are, and what you are doing, you will then more uncivilly call yourselves, "exceedingly mad and foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures," as one did that thought himself before as wise and good as any of you, Acts xxvi. 11; Tit. iii. 3. Live not in a sleepy state of ignorance, if ever you would have saving grace.

*Direct. II.* Especially labour first to understand the true nature of a state of sin and a state of grace.

It is like you will say, that all are sinners; and that Christ died for sinners; and that you were regenerate in your baptism; and that for the sins that since then you have committed, you have repented of them, and therefore you hope they are forgiven.<sup>1</sup>

But stay a little, man, and understand the matter well as you go; for it is your salvation that lieth at the stake. It is very true that all are sinners: but it is as true, that some are in a state of sin, and some in a state of grace; some are converted sinners, and some unconverted sinners; some live in sins inconsistent with holiness, (which therefore may be called mortal,) others have none but infirmities which consist with spiritual life (which in this sense may be called venial); some hate their sin, and long to be perfectly delivered from it, and others so love it, as they are loth to leave it. And is there no difference, think you, between these?

It is as true also, that Christ died for sinners: (or else where were our hope?) but it is true also, that he died to "save his people from their sins,"<sup>k</sup> Matt. i. 21, and "to bring them from darkness unto light,

<sup>1</sup> Pœnitenti optimus est portus, mutatio consilii. Cic. Phil. 12.

<sup>k</sup> Bonum gratiæ unius hominis majus est quam bonum nature totius universi. Aquin. 12. q. 113. art. 9.

<sup>l</sup> Quicquid Deo gratum dignumque offertur, de bono thesauro cordis defertur. Intra nos quippe est quod Deo offerimus, omne viz. acceptabile munus: Ibi timor Dei—ibi confessio, ibi largitas, ibi sobrietas, ibi paupertas spiritus, ibi compassio, &c. Potho Prumiens. de Domo Dei, l. 2. De regno Dei quod intra nos est meditatur vanitates et insanias falsas,

and from the power of Satan unto God," Acts xxvi. 18, and "to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works," Tit. ii. 14, and "that except a man be born again, and converted, and become as a little child, (in humility and beginning the world anew,) he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," John iii. 3, 5; Matt. xviii. 3, and that even he that died for sinners, will at last condemn the workers of iniquity, and say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," Matt. xxv. 41, "I never knew you," Matt. vii. 23.

It is very true, that you were sacramentally regenerate in baptism, and that he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and all that are the children of promise, and have that promise sealed to them by baptism, are regenerate. The ancients taught that baptism puts men into a state of grace; that is, that all that sincerely renounce the world, the devil, and the flesh, and are sincerely given up to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the covenant of grace, and profess and seal this by their baptism, shall be pardoned, and made the heirs of life. But as it is true, that baptism thus saveth, so is it as true,<sup>l</sup> that it is not the "outward washing only the filth of the flesh" that will suffice, but the "answer of a good conscience towards God," 1 Pet. ii. 21; and that "no man can enter into the kingdom of God, that is not born of the Spirit, as well as of water," John iii. 5; and that Simon Magus and many another have had the water of baptism, that never had the Spirit, but still remain in the "gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, and had no part nor lot in that business, their hearts being not right in the sight of God," Acts viii. 13, 21, 23. And nothing is more sure, than that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ (for all his baptism) he is none of his," Rom. viii. 9; and that if you have his Spirit, you "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" and are "not carnally but spiritually minded," and are "alive to God," and as "dead to the world," Rom. viii. 1, 5—8, 10, 13, 14. Whether all that were baptized are such as these, when they come to age, judge you.

It is true also, that if you truly repent, you are forgiven: but it is as true, that true repentance is the very conversion of the soul from sin to God, and leaveth not any man in the power of sin. It is not for a man when he hath had all the pleasure that sin will yield him, to wish then that he had not committed it, (which he may do then at an easy rate,) and yet to keep the rest that are still pleasant and profitable to his flesh; like a man that casts away the bottle which he hath drunk empty, but keeps that which is full; or as men sell off their barren kine, and buy milch ones in their stead: this kind of repentance is a mockery, and not a cure for the soul. If thou have true repentance, it hath so far turned thy heart from sin, that thou wouldst not commit it, if it were to do again, though thou hadst all the same temptations; and it hath so far turned thy heart to God and holiness, that thou wouldst live a holy life, if it were all to do again, though thou hadst the same temptations as afore against it (because thou hast not the same heart). This is the nature of true repentance; such a repentance indeed is

dum interioribus animæ virtutibus, in quibus regnum Dei consistit, privati, ad exteriora quædam studia ducimur, et circa corporales exercitationes quæ ad modicum utiles esse videntur, occupamur, fructus spiritus, qui sunt charitas, pax, gaudium, &c. intus minime possidemus, et exterius quarundum consuetudinum observantias sectamur; in exercitiis tantum corporalibus quæ sunt jejunia, vigiliæ, asperitas seu vilis vestis, &c. regulam nobis vivendi quasi perfectam statuentes. Idem ibid.



never too late to save; but I am sure it never comes too soon.

Mark, now, I beseech you, what a state of sin, and what a state of holiness is.

He that is in a state of sin, hath habitually and predominantly a greater love to some pleasures, or profits, or honours of this world, than he hath to God, and to the glory which he hath promised; he preferreth, and seeketh, and holdeth (if he can) his fleshly prosperity in this world, before the favour of God and the happiness of the world to come. His heart is turned from God unto the creature, and is principally set on things on earth. Thus his sin is the blindness, and madness, and perfidiousness, and idolatry of his soul, and his forsaking of God, and his salvation, for a thing of nought. It is that to his soul, which poison, and death, and sickness, and lameness, and blindness are to his body: it is such dealing with God, as that man is guilty of to his dearest friend or father, who should hate him and his company, and love the company of a dog or toad much better than his; and obey his enemy against him: and it is like a madman's dealing with his physician, who seeks to kill him as his enemy, because he crosseth his appetite or will, to cure him. Think of this well, and then tell me, whether this be a state to be continued in. This state of sin is something worse than a mere inconsiderate act of sin, in one that otherwise liveth an obedient, holy life.

On the other side, a state of holiness is nothing else but the habitual and predominant devotion and dedication of soul, and body, and life, and all that we have, to God;<sup>m</sup> and esteeming, and loving, and serving, and seeking him, before all the pleasures and prosperity of the flesh; making his favour, and everlasting happiness in heaven, our end, and Jesus Christ our way, and referring all things in the world unto that end, and making this the scope, design, and business of our lives. It is a turning from a deceitful world to God; and preferring the Creator before the creature, and heaven before earth, and eternity before an inch of time, and our souls before our corruptible bodies, and the authority and laws of God, the universal Governor of the world, before the word or will of any man, how great soever; and a subjecting our sensitive faculties to our reason, and advancing this reason by Divine revelation; and living by faith, and not by sight: in a word, it is a laying up our treasure in heaven, and setting our hearts there, and living in a heavenly conversation, setting our affections on the things above, and not on the things that are on earth; and a rejoicing in hope of the glory to come, when sensualists have nothing but transitory, brutish pleasures to rejoice in.

This is a state and life of holiness: when we persuade you to be holy, we persuade you to no worse than this; when we commend a life of godliness to your choice, this is the life that we mean, and that we commend to you. And can you understand this well, and yet be unwilling of it? It cannot be. Do but know well what godliness and ungodliness, what grace and sin are, and the work is almost done.

*Direct. III.* To know what a life of holiness is,

<sup>m</sup> Nulla religio vera est, nisi quæ virtute et justitia constat. Id. *ibid.*

<sup>n</sup> Victor Utic. saith that the Arrian Goths tormented the devoted virgins, to force them to confess that their pastors had committed fornication with them, but no torment prevailed with them, though many were killed with it, p. 407, 408. lib. 2. Terrent præceptis feralibus, ut in medio Vandalorum nostri nullatenus respirarent: neque usque quaque orandi aut immolandi concederetur gentibus locus. Nam et diversæ calumniæ non deerant quotidie, etiam illis sacerdotibus, qui in his regionibus versabantur, quæ palatio tributo pendebant. Et si forsitan quisquam, ut moris est, dum Dei populum ad-

believe the word of God, and those that have tried it; and believe not the slanders of the devil and of ungodly men, that never tried or knew the things which they reproach.

Reason cannot question the reasonableness of this advice. Who is wiser than God? or who is to be believed before him? And what men are liker to know what they talk of, than such as speak from their own experience? Nothing more familiar with wicked men, than to slander and reproach the holy ways and servants of the Lord. No wisdom, no measure of holiness or righteousness, will exempt the godly from their malice; otherwise, Christ himself at least would have been exempted, if not his apostles and other saints, whom they have slandered and put to death. Christ hath foretold us what to expect from them. John xv. 18—21, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."

The truth is, wicked men are the seed and children of the devil, and have his image, and obey him, and think, and speak, and do as he would have them; and the godly are the seed and members of Christ, and bear his image, and obey him: and do you think that the devil will bid his children speak well of the ways or followers of Christ? I must confess, till I had found the truth of it by experience, I was not sensible how impudent in belying, and cruel in abusing the servants of Christ, his worldly, malicious enemies are.<sup>n</sup> I had read oft how early an enmity was put between the woman's and the serpent's seed, and I had read and wondered, that the first man that was born into the world did murder his brother for worshipping God more acceptably than himself; "because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous," 1 John iii. 12. I had read the inference, ver. 13, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you;" but yet I did not so fully understand, that wicked men and devils are so very like, and so near of kin, till the words of Christ, John viii. 44, expounded by visible demonstrations, had taught it me. Indeed the apostle saith, 1 John iii. 12, that Cain was of that wicked one, that is, the devil: but Christ saith more plainly, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him: when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." Here note, that cruel murdering and lying are the principal actions of a devil; and that as the father of these, he is the father of the wicked, who are most notoriously addicted to these two courses against the most innocent servants of the Lamb. How just it is that they dwell together hereafter, that are here so like in disposition and action: even as the righteous shall

moneret, Pharaonem, Nabuchodonosor, Holofernem, aut aliquem similem nominasset, objiciebantur illi, quod in personam regis ita dixisset, et statim exilio tradebatur. Hoc enim tempore persecutionis genus agebatur, hic aperte, alibi occultè, ut piorum nomen talibus insidiis interiret. N. B. Victor. Uticens. p. (mihi) 382. Abundance of pastors were then banished from their churches, and many tormented, and Augustine himself died with fear, saith Victor, *ib.* p. 376, when he had written (saith he) two hundred and thirty-two books, besides innumerable Epistles, Homilies, Expositions on the Psalms, Evangelists, &c.



dwell with Christ, who bore his image, and imitated his holy, suffering life.

I conclude, then, that if thou wilt never turn to God and a holy life, till wicked men give over believing and reproaching them, thou mayst as well say, that thou wilt never be reconciled to God, till the devil be first reconciled to him; and never love Christ, till the devil love him, or bid thee love him; or never be a saint, till the devil be a saint, or will give thee leave; and that thou wilt not be saved, till the devil be willing that thou be saved.

*Direct. IV.* That thy understanding may be enlightened, and thy heart renewed, be much and serious in reading the word of God, and those books that are fitted to men in an unconverted state, and especially in hearing the plain and searching preaching of the word.

There is a heavenly light, and power, and majesty in the word of God, which in the serious reading or hearing of it, may pierce the heart, and prick it, and open it, that corruption may go out, and grace come in. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart," Psal. xix. 7, 8. Moreover, "by them it is that we are warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward," ver. 11. The eunuch was reading the Scripture, when Philip was sent to expound it to him for his conversion, Acts viii. The preaching of Peter did prick many thousands to the heart to their conversion, Acts ii. 37. The heart of Lydia was opened to attend to the preaching of Paul, Acts xvi. 14. "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit," Heb. iv. 11. These "weapons are mighty through God, to the pulling 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," 2 Cor. iv. 5. Hast thou often read and heard already, and yet findest no change upon thy heart? Yet read and hear again and again: ministers must not give over preaching, when they have laboured without success; why then should you give over hearing or reading? As the husbandman laboureth, and looketh to God for rain, and for the blessing, so must we, and so must you. Look up to God: remember it is his word, in which he calleth you to repentance, and offereth you mercy, and treateth with you concerning your everlasting happiness: lament your former negligence and disobedience, and beg his blessing on his word, and you shall find it will not be in vain.

And the serious reading of books which expound and apply the Scriptures, suitable to your case, may, by the blessing of God, be effectual to your conversion. I have written so many to this use myself, that I shall be the shorter on this subject now, and desire you to read them, or some of them, if you have not fitter at hand; viz. A Call to the Unconverted;—A Treatise of Conversion;—Now or Never;—Directions for a sound Conversion;—A Saint or a

° The word itself exciteth reason, and preachers are by reason to shame all sin as a thing unreasonable. And the want of such excitation, by powerful preaching, and plain instructing, and the persons considering, is a great cause of the world's undoing. For those preachers that lay all the blame on the people's stupidity or malignity, I desire them to read a satisfactory answer in Acosta the Jesuit, li. iv. c. 2, 3, & 4. Few souls perish, comparatively, where all the means are used which should be used by their superiors for their salvation: if every parish had holy, skilful, laborious pastors, that would publicly and privately do their part, great things might be expected in the world. But, saith Acosta, Itaque præcipua

Brute;—A Treatise of Judgment;—A Sermon against making light of Christ;—A Sermon of Christ's Dominion;—Another of his Sovereignty, &c.

*Direct. V.* If thou wouldst not be destitute of saving grace, let thy reason be exercised about the matters of thy salvation, in some proportion of frequent, sober, serious thoughts, as thou art convinced the weight of the matter doth require.

To have reason is common to all men, even the sleepy and distracted: to use reason is common to all that have their senses awake, 1 Cor. xiii. 5; Psal. and fit to serve their minds: to use iv. 4—7; 1 Cor. xi. reason in the greatest matters, is 28. proper to wise men, that know for what end God made them reasonable.° Inconsiderate men are all ungodly men; for reason not used is as bad as no reason, and will prove much worse in the day of reckoning. The truth is, though sinners are exceeding blind and erroneous about the things of God, yet all God's precepts are so reasonable, and tend so clearly to our joy and happiness, that if the devil did not win most souls by silencing reason, and laying it asleep, or drowning its voice with the noise and crowd of worldly business, hell would not have so many sad inhabitants. I scarce believe that God will condemn any sinner that ever lived in the world, that had the use of reason; no, not the heathens that had but one talent, but he will be able to say to them, as Luke xix. 22, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest," &c. To serve God and labour diligently for salvation, and prefer it before all worldly things, is so reasonable a thing, that every one that repenteth of the contrary course, doth call it from his heart an impious madness. Reason must needs be for God that made it. Reason must needs be for that which is its proper end and use. Sin, as it is in the understanding, is nothing but unreasonableness; a blindness and error; a loss and corruption of reason in the matters of God and our salvation. And grace, as in the understanding, doth but cure this folly and distraction, and make us reasonable again; it is but the opening of our eyes, and making us wise in the greatest matters. It is not a more unmanly thing to love and plead for blindness, madness, and diseases, and to hate both sight, and health, and wit, than it is to love and plead for sin, and to hate and vilify a holy life.

Grant me but this one thing, that thou wilt but soberly exercise thy reason about these great, important questions; Where must I abide for ever? What must I do to be saved? What was I created and redeemed for? and I shall hope that thy own understanding, as erroneous as it is, will work out something that will promote thy good. Do but withdraw thyself one hour in a day from company and other business, and consider but as soberly and seriously of thy end and life, as thou knowest the nature and weight of the matter doth require, and I am persuaded thy own reason and conscience will call thee to repentance, and set thee, at least, in a far better way than thou wast in before. When thou walkest alone, or when thou wakest in the

causa ad ministros parum idoneos redit. Quæ namque est prædicatio nostra? quæ fiducia? signa certè non edimus; vitæ sanctitate non eminemus; beneficentia non invitamus; verbi ac spiritus efficacia non persuademus; lachrymis ac precibus à Deo non impetramus; imo ne magnopere quidem curamus. Quæ ergo nostra querela est? quæ tanta Indorum accusatio? lib. iv. p. 365. An ingenuous confession of the Roman priesthood. And such priests can expect no better success. But having seen another sort of ministers, through God's mercy, I have seen an answerable fruit of their endeavours.



night, remember soberly that God is present, that time is hastening to an end, that judgment is at hand, where thou must give account of all thy hours, of thy lusts, and passions, and desires; of all thy thoughts, and words, and deeds; and that thy endless joy or misery dependeth wholly and certainly on this little time. Think but soberly on such things as these, but one hour in a day or two, and try whether it will not once recover thee to wit and godliness; and folly and sin will vanish away before the force of considering reason, as the darkness vanisheth before the light. I entreat thee now as in the presence of God, and as thou wilt answer the denial of so reasonable a request at the day of judgment, that thou wilt but resolve to try this course of a sober, serious consideration, about thy sin, thy duty, thy danger, thy hope, thy account, and thy everlasting state: try it sometimes, especially on the Lord's days; and do but mark the result of all; and whither it is that such sober consideration doth point or lead thee? whether it be not towards a diligent, holy, heavenly life? If thou deny me thus much, God and thy conscience shall bear witness, that thou thoughtest thy salvation of little worth, and therefore mayst justly be denied it.

Would it not be strange that a man should be penitent and godly, that never once thought of the matter with any seriousness in his life? Can so many and great diseases of soul be cured, before you have once soberly considered that you have them, and how great and dangerous they are, and by what remedies they must be cured? Can grace be obtained and exercised, while you never so much as think of it? Can the main business of our lives be done without any serious thoughts; when we think it fit to bestow so many upon the trivial matters of this world? Doth the world and the flesh deserve to be remembered all the day, and week, and year? and doth not God and thy salvation deserve to be thought on one hour in a day, or one day in a week? Judge of these things, but as a man of reason. If thou look that God, who hath given thee reason to guide thy will, and a will to command thy actions, should yet carry thee to heaven like a stone, or save thee against or without thy will, before thou didst ever once soberly think of it, thou mayst have leisure in hell to lament the folly of such expectations.

*Direct. VI.* Suffer not the devil by company, pleasure, or worldly business, to divert or hinder thee from these serious considerations.

The devil hath but two ways to procure thy damnation. The one is, by keeping thee from any sober remembrance of spiritual and eternal things; and the other is, if thou wilt needs think of them, to deceive thee into false, erroneous thoughts. To bring to pass the first of these, (which is the most common, powerful means,) his ordinary way is by diversion;<sup>p</sup> finding thee still something else to do; putting some other thoughts into thy mind, and some other work into thy hand; so that thou canst never have leisure for any sober thoughts of God: whenever the Spirit of God knocks at thy door, thou art so taken up with other company, or other business, that thou canst not hear, or wilt not open to him. Many a time he hath been ready to teach thee, but thou wast not at leisure to hear and learn. Many a time he secretly jogged thy conscience, and checked thee in thy sin, and called thee aside to consider soberly about thy spiritual and everlasting state, when the noise of foolish mirth and pleasures,

<sup>p</sup> Even learning and honest studies may be used as a diversion from more necessary things. Saith Petrarck, in *Vita Sua*, Ingenio sui ad omne bonum et salubre studium apto; sed ad moralem præcipue philosophiam, et ad poeticam pronò.

or the bustles of encumbering cares and business, have caused thee to stop thy ears, and put him off, and refuse the motion. And if the abused Spirit of God depart, and leave thee to thy beloved mirth and business, and to thyself, it is but just; and then thou wilt never have a serious, effectual thought of heaven, perhaps, till thou have lost it; nor a sober thought of hell, till thou art in it; unless it be some despairing, or some dull, ineffectual thought.

O therefore, as thou lovest thy soul, do not love thy pleasure or business so well as to refuse to treat with the Spirit of God, who comes to offer thee greater pleasures, and to engage thee in a more important business. O lay by all, to hear awhile what God and conscience have to say to thee. They have greater business with thee, than any others that thou conversest with. They have better offers and motions to make to thee, than thou shalt hear from any of thy old companions. If the devil can but take thee up a while, with one pleasure one day, and another business another day, and keep thee from the work that thou camest into the world for, till time be gone, and thou art slipt unawares into damnation, then he hath his desire, and hath the end he aimed at, and hath won the day, and thou art lost for ever.

It is like thou settest some limits to thy folly, and purposest to do thus but a little while: but when one pleasure withereth, the devil will provide a fresh one for thee; and when one business is over, which causeth thee to pretend necessity, another, and another, and another will succeed, and thou wilt think thou hast such necessity still, till time is gone, and thou see, too late, how grossly thou wast deceived. Resolve, therefore, that whatever company, or pleasure, or business would divert thee, that thou wilt not be befooled out of thy salvation, nor taken off from minding the one thing necessary. If company plead an interest in thee, know of them whether they are better company than the Spirit of God and thy conscience;—if pleasure would detain thee, inquire whether it be more pure and durable pleasures, than thou mayst have in heaven, by hearkening unto grace;—if business still pretend necessity, inquire whether it be a greater business than to prepare thy soul and thy accounts for judgment, and of greater necessity than thy salvation. If not, let it not have the precedency: if thou be wise, do that first that must needs be done; and let that stand by that may best be spared. What will it profit thee to win all the world, and lose thy soul? At least, if thou durst say that thy pleasure and business are better than heaven, yet might they sometimes be forborne, while thou seriously thinkest of thy salvation.

*Direct. VII.* If thou wouldst be converted and saved, be not a malicious or peevish enemy to those that would convert and save thee: be not angry with them that tell thee of thy sin or duty, as if they did thee wrong or hurt.

God worketh by instruments: when he will convert a Cornelius, a Peter must be sent for, and willingly heard. When he will recall and save a sinner, he hath usually some public minister or private friend, that shall be a messenger of that searching and convincing truth, which is fit to awaken them, enlighten them, and recover them. If God furnish these his instruments with compassion to your souls, and willingness to instruct you, and you will take them for your enemies, and peevishly quarrel with them, and contradict them, and perhaps reproach

Quam ipsam processu temporis neglexi, sacris literis delectatus, in quibus sensi dulcedinem adbitam, quam aliquando contempseram; poeticis literis non nisi ad ornamentum reservatis.



them, and do them a mischief for their good will, what an inhuman, barbarous course of ingratitude is this! Will you be angry with men for endeavouring to save you from the fire of hell? Do they endeavour to make any gain or advantage by you? or only to help your souls to heaven? Indeed, if their endeavours did serve any ambitious design of their own, to bring the world (as the pope and his clergy would do) under their own jurisdiction, you had reason then to suspect their fraud. But the truth is, Christ hath purposely appointed his greatest church-officers to be but ministers, even the servants of all, to rule and save men as volunteers, without any coercive power, by the management of his powerful word upon their consciences; and to beseech and entreat the poorest of the flock, as those that are not lords over God's heritage, nor masters of their faith, but their servants in Christ, and helpers of their joy; that so whenever we deliver our message to them, they may see that we exercise not dominion over them, and aim at no worldly honours, or gain, or advantage to ourselves, but at the mere conversion and saving of their souls. Whereas, if he had allowed us to exercise authority as the kings of the gentiles, and to be called gracious lords, and to encumber ourselves with the affairs of this life, our doctrine would have been rejected by the generality of the world, and we should always have come to them on this great disadvantage, that they would have thought we sought not them, but theirs; and that we preached not for them, but for ourselves, to make a prize of them:<sup>9</sup> as the Jesuits, when they attempt the conversion of the Indians, do still find this their great impediment, the princes and people suppose them to pretend the gospel, but as a means to subjugate them and their dominions to the pope; because they tell them that they must be all subject to the pope, if they will be saved. Now when Christ hath appointed a poor, self-denying, entreating ministry, against whom you can have none of these pretences, to stoop to your feet, with the most submissive entreaties, that you would but turn to God and live, you have no excuse for your own barbarous ingratitude, if you will fly in their faces, and use them as your enemies, and be offended with them for endeavouring to save you. You know they can hold their tithes and livings by smoothing, and cold, and general preaching, as well as by more faithful dealing (if not better): you know they can get no worldly advantage by dealing so plainly with you: you know that they hazard by it their reputation with such as you; and they cannot be ignorant that it is like to expose them to your ill will and indignation.

And they are men as well as you, and therefore, undoubtedly, desire the good will and the good word of others, and take no pleasure to be scorned or hated: undoubtedly they break through much temptations and reluctancy of the flesh, before they can so far deny themselves as to endeavour your salvation on such terms: and seeing it is all for you, methinks you should be their chief encouragers; if others should oppose them, you should be for them, because they are for you. If I go with a convoy to relieve a besieged garrison, I shall expect opposition from the enemy that besiegeth them; but if the besieged themselves shall shoot at us, and use us as enemies for venturing our lives to relieve them, it is time to be gone, and let them take what they get by it.

Perhaps you think that the preacher, or private

<sup>9</sup> 1 Peter v. 2-4; 2 Cor. x. 4; 2 Cor. v. 19, 20; 2 Cor. i. 24; 1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. iii. 6, and xi. 23; Joel i. 9, 13; 2 Cor. iv. 5; Mark x. 44; Matt. xx. 27; Luke xxii. 24-26.

admonisher, is too plain with you;<sup>r</sup> but you should consider that self-love is like to make you partial in your own cause, and therefore a more incapable judge than they. And you should consider that God hath commanded them to deal plainly, and told them that else the people's blood shall be required at their hands, Isa. lviii. 1; Ezek. xviii. And that God best knoweth what medicine and diet is fittest for your disease; and that the case is of such grand importance (whether you shall live in heaven or hell for ever?) that it is scarce possible for a minister to be too plain and serious with you: and that your disease is so obstinate, that gentler means have been too long frustrate, and therefore sharper must be tried; else why were you not converted by gentler dealing until now? If you fall down in a swoon, or be ready to be drowned, you will give leave to the standers-by to handle you a little more roughly than at another time, and will not bring your action against them for laying hands on you, or ruffling your silks or bravery; if your house be on fire, you will give men leave to speak in another manner, than when they modulate their voices into a civil and complimenting tone.

It may be you think that they are censorious in judging you to be unconverted, when you are not; and to be worse and in more danger than you are, and speaking harder of you than you deserve. But it is you that should be most suspicious of yourselves, and afraid in so great a matter of being deceived. A stander-by may see more than a player: I am sure he that is awake may know more of you, than you of yourselves when you are asleep.

But suppose it were as you imagine; it is his love that mistakingly attempteth your good: he intendeth you no harm: it is your salvation that he desireth; it is your damnation that he would prevent. You have cause to love him, and be thankful for his goodwill, and not to be angry with him, and reproach him for his mistakes. He is none of those that brings you into the inquisition, and would fine, or imprison, or banish, or burn, or hang, or torment you, in order to convert and save you: the worst he doth, is but to speak those words, which, if true, you are deeply concerned to regard; and if mistaken, can do you no hurt, unless you are the cause yourself. If it be in public preaching, he speaketh generally by descriptions, and not by nomination; no more of you, than of others in your case; nor of you at all, if you are not in that case. If he speak privately to you, there is no witness but yourself; and therefore it is no matter of disgrace. Never, for shame, pretend that thou art willing to be converted and saved, when thou hatest those that would promote it; and art angry with every one that tells thee of thy case, and couldst find in thy heart to stop their mouths, or do them a mischief.

*Direct. VIII.* If thou art willing indeed to be converted, do thy best to discover that yet thou art unconverted, and in a lost and miserable state.

Who will endeavour to cure a disease which he thinks he hath not? or to vomit up the poison which he thinks he never took, or taketh to be no poison? or to come out of the ditch, that thinks he is not in it? or who will turn back again, that will not believe but he is in the right way? Who will labour to be converted, that thinks he is converted already? Or who will come to Christ as the physician of his soul, that thinks he is not sick, or is cured already? The common cause that men live and die without the grace of repentance, sanctification, and justification,

<sup>r</sup> Seneca Ep. 87. scribit, Tam necessarium fuisse Romano populo nasci Catonem, quam Scipionem: alter enim cum hostibus nostris, alter cum moribus bellum gerit.



which should save them, is because they will not believe but that they have it, when they have it not; and that they are penitent, and justified, and sanctified already. It is not my desire to make any of you think worse of your condition than it is; but if you will not know what it is, you will not be fit for recovering grace, nor use the means for your own recovery: you think it is so sad a conclusion, to find yourselves in a state of condemnation, that you are exceeding unwilling to know it or confess it.

But I beseech you consider but these two things: first, either it is true that you are in so miserable a state, or it is not true: if it be not true, the closest trial will but comfort you, by discovering that you are sanctified already; but if it be true, then do you think it will save you to be ignorant of your danger? Will it cure your disease, to believe that you have it not? Will thinking well of yourselves falsely, prove that you are well indeed? Is it the way to grace, to think you have it, when you have it not? Will it bring you to heaven, to think that you are going thither, when you are in the way to hell? Nay, do you not know, that it is the principal temptation of the devil, to keep men from a state of repentance and salvation, to deceive them thus, and persuade them that they are in such a state already? Judge soberly of the case. Do you think if all the impenitent, unconverted sinners in the world were certain that they are indeed in a graceless state, in which if they died, they were past all hope, that they would not quickly look about them, and better understand the offers of a Saviour, and live in continual solicitude and fear, till they found themselves in a safer state? If you were sure yourselves, that you must yet be made new creatures, or be damned, would it not set you on work to seek more diligently after grace than ever you have done? The devil knoweth this well enough; that he could scarce keep you quiet this night in his snares, but you would be ready to repent and beg for mercy, and resolve on a new life, before to-morrow, if you were but sure that you are yet in a state of condemnation. And therefore he doth all he can to hide your sin and danger from your eyes, and to quiet you with the conceit, that though you are sinners, yet you are penitent, pardoned, and safe.

Well, sirs, there can be no harm in knowing the truth. And therefore will you but try yourselves, whether you are unsanctified or not? You were baptized into the name of the Holy Ghost as your Sanctifier; and if now you neglect or mock at sanctification, what do you but deride your baptism, or neglect that which is its sense and end? It doth not so much concern you to know that you live the life of nature, as to know whether sanctification have made you spiritually alive to God.

And let me tell you this to your encouragement, that we do not call you to know that you are unconverted, and unpardoned, and miserable, as men that have no remedy, but must sit down in despair, and be tormented with the fore-knowledge of your endless pains before the time. No; it is but that you may speedily and thankfully accept of Christ, the full remedy, and turn to God, and quickly get out of your sin and terror, and enter into a life of safety and of peace. We desire not your continuance in that life which tendeth to despair and horror: we would have you out of it, if it were in our power, before to-morrow; and therefore it is that we would have you understand what danger you are in, that you may go no further, but speedily turn back, and seek for help. And I hope there is no hurt, though

\* Bernard. de Grad. Humil. grad. 8. describeth men's excusing their sins thus, "If it may be, they will say, I did not do it; or else, It was no sin, but lawful; or else, I did it not oft or

there be some present trouble, in such a discovery of your danger as this is.

Well, if you are but willing to know, I shall help you a little to know what you are.

1. If you are persecutors, or haters, Marks of an unconverted state. or deriders of men, for being serious and diligent in the service of God, and fearful of sinning, and because they go not with the multitude to do evil, it is a certain sign that you are in a state of death: yea, if you love not such men, and desire not rather to be such yourselves, than to be the greatest of the ungodly. See Gal. iv. 29; Acts xxvi. 11; 1 Tim. i. 13; 1 Pet. iv. 2—5; Psal. xv. 4; 1 John iii. 8—15; John xiii. 35; Psal. lxxxiv. 10.

2. If you love the world best, and set your affections most on things below, and mind most earthly things; nay, if you seek not first God's kingdom, and the righteousness thereof; and if your hearts be not in heaven, and your affections set on the things that are above; and you prefer not your hopes of life eternal before all the pleasures and prosperity of this world, it is a certain sign that you are but worldly and ungodly men. See this in Matt. vi. 19—21, 33; Phil. iii. 18—20; Col. iii. 1—4; Psal. lxxiii. 25; 1 John ii. 15—17; James i. 27; Luke xii. 20, 21; xvi. 25.

3. If your estimation, belief, and hopes, of everlasting life through Christ, be not such, as will prevail with you to deny yourselves, and forsake father, and mother, and the nearest friends; and house, and land, and life, and all that you have, for Christ, and for these hopes of a happiness hereafter, you are no true christians, nor in a state of saving grace. See Luke xiv. 26, 33; Matt. x. 37—39; xiii. 21, 22.

4. If you have not been converted, regenerated, and sanctified by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, making you spiritual, and causing you to mind the things of the Spirit above the things of the flesh. If this Spirit be not in you, and you walk not after it, but after the flesh; making provision for the flesh, to satisfy its desires, and preferring the pleasing of the flesh before the pleasing of God, it is certain that you are in a state of death. See Matt. xviii. 3; John iii. 3, 5, 6; Heb. xii. 14; Rom. viii. 1, 5—13; xiii. 13, 14; Luke xvi. 19, 25; xii. 20, 21; Heb. xi. 25, 26; 2 Cor. iv. 16—18; v. 7; Rom. viii. 17, 18.

5. If you have any known sin which you do not hate, and had not rather leave it than keep it, and do not pray, and strive, and watch against it, as far as you know and observe it; but rather excuse it, plead for it, desire it, and are loth to part with it, so that your will is habitually more for it than against it, it is a sign of an impenitent, unrenewed heart. 1 John iii. 3—10, 24; Gal. v. 16, 19—25; Rom. vii. 22, 24; viii. 13; Luke xiii. 3, 5; Matt. v. 19, 20; 2 Tim. ii. 19; Psal. v. 5; Luke xiii. 27.

6. If you love not the word, as it is a light discovering your sin and duty, but only as it is a general truth, or as it reproveth others: if you love not the most searching preaching, and would not know how bad you are, and come not to the light, that your deeds may be manifest, it is a sign that you are not children of the light, but of the darkness, John iii. 19—21.

7. If the laws of your Creator and Redeemer be not of greatest power and authority with you, and the will and word of God cannot do more with you, than the word or will of any man; and the threatenings and promises of God be not more prevalent with you, than the threats or promises of any men, it is a sign that you take not God for your God, but in much; or else, I meant no harm; or else, I was persuaded by another, and drawn to it by temptation"



heart are atheists and ungodly men. Luke xix. 27; Matt. vii. 21—23, 26; Dan. iii. 16—18; vi. 5, 10; Jer. xvii. 5, 6; Luke xii. 4; Acts v. 29; Psal. xiv. 1, &c.

8. If you have not, in a deliberate covenant or resolution, devoted and given up yourselves to God as your Father and felicity, to Jesus Christ as your only Saviour, and your Lord and King, and to the Holy Ghost as your Sanctifier, to be made holy by him, desiring that your heart and life should be perfectly conformed to the will of God, and that you might know him, and love him, and enjoy him more; you are void of godliness and true christianity; for this is the very covenant which you make in baptism, which you call your christening. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; 2 Cor. viii. 5; 1 Cor. vi. 17; John i. 10—12; Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 14, 15.

I have now plainly showed you, and fully proved, from the word of God, by what infallible signs an ungodly man may know that he is ungodly, if he will. May you not know whether it be thus with you, if you are willing to know? May you not know, if you will, whether your desire and design of life be more for this world or that to come? and whether heaven or earth be preferred and sought first? and whether your fleshly prosperity and pleasure, or your souls, be principally cared for and regarded? May you not know, if you will, whether you love or loathe the serious worshippers of God? and whether you had rather be delivered from your sins or keep them? and whether your wills be more against them, or for them? and whether you love a holy life or not? and whether you had rather be perfect in holiness and obedience to God, or be excused from it, and please the flesh? and whether you had rather be such a one as Paul, or as Cæsar? a persecuted saint in poverty and contempt, or a persecuting conqueror or king? May you not know, if you will, whether you love a searching ministry, that telleth you of the worst, and would not deceive you? May you not know, whether you are resolutely devoted and given up to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as your Father and felicity, your Saviour and your Sanctifier; and whether the scope, design, and business of your lives is more for God, or for the flesh, for heaven, or earth; and which it is that bears the sway, and which it is that comes behind, and hath but the leavings of the other, or only so much as it can spare? Certainly these are things so near you, and so remarkable in your hearts, that you may come to the knowledge of them if you will. But if you will not, who can help it?

What a sottish cavil is it then of those ignorant men, that ask us, when we tell them of these things, Whether ever we were in heaven? or ever saw the book of life? and how we can tell who shall be saved, and who shall be damned? If it were about a May-game this jesting were more seasonable; but to talk thus distractedly about the matters of salvation and damnation, and to make such a jest of the damning of souls, is a kind of foolery that hath no excuse. What though we never were in heaven? and never saw the book of life? dost thou think I never saw the Scriptures? Why, wretched sinner, dost thou not know, that Christ came down from heaven, to tell us who they be that shall come thither, and who they be that shall be shut out?

And did he not know what he said? Is God the Governor of the world, and hath he not a law by which he governeth them? and can I not tell by the law, who they be that the Judge will condemn or save? What else is the law made for, but to be the rule of life, and the rule of judgment? Read Psal. i. and xv.; Matt. v. vii. and xxv., and all the texts which I even now cited, and see in them whether God hath not told you who they be that shall be saved, and who they be that shall be condemned? nay, see whether this be not the very business of the word of God? And do you think that he hath written in vain? But some men have loved ignorance and ungodliness so long, till the Spirit of grace hath cast them off, and left them to the sottishness of their carnal minds, so that "they have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not, and hearts and understand not." But those that are willing and diligent to know their sin and duty, in order to their recovery, God will not let them search in vain, nor hide the remedy from their eyes.

*Direct. IX.* When you have found yourselves in a state of sin and death, understand and consider what a state that is.

It may be you will think it a tolerable condition, and linger in it, as if you were safe; or delay your repentance, as if it were a matter of no great haste; unless you open your eyes, and look round about you, and see in how slippery a place you stand. Let me name some instances of the misery of an unregenerate, graceless state, and then judge of it as the word of God directs you.

1. As long as you are unconverted, you must needs be loathsome and abominable to God.<sup>a</sup> His holy nature is unreconcilable to sin, and would be unreconcilable to sinners, if it were not that he can cleanse and purify them. Did you know what sin is, and know God's holiness, you would understand this much better. Your own averseness to God, and your dislike of the holiness of his laws and servants, might tell you what thoughts he hath of you. "He hateth all the workers of iniquity," Psal. v. 5. Indeed he taketh you for his enemies, and as such he will handle you, if you be not converted. I know many persons that are most deeply guilty, especially men of honour and esteem in the world, would scorn to have this title given to themselves; but verily God is not fearful of offending them, nor so tender of their defiled honour, as they are of their own, or as they expect the preacher should be. If those be the king's enemies that refuse his government and set up another, then those are the enemies of God, and of the Redeemer, and of the Holy Ghost, that set up the base concupiscence of their flesh, and the honour and prosperity of this world, and the will of man, and refuse the government of God their Creator and Redeemer, and refuse the sanctifying teachings and operations of the Holy Ghost. Read Luke xix. 27.

Some think it strange that any men should be called "haters of God;" and I believe you will find it hard to meet with that man that will confess it by himself, till converting grace or hell constrain him. And indeed if God himself had not charged men with that sin, and called them by that name, we should scarce have found belief or patience when we had endeavoured to convince the world of it. Entreat

<sup>a</sup> Atque haud scio an pietate adversus Deos sublatâ, fides etiam, et societas humani generis, et una excellentissima virtus, justitia, tollatur. Cicero de Nat. Deor. p. 4.

<sup>b</sup> Mira Ciceronis fictio in li. de Universit. p. 358. Atque ille qui recte et honeste curriculum vivendi à natura datum conferit, ad illud astrum, quo cum aptus fuerit, revertetur. Qui autem immoderate et intemperate vixerit, eum secundus ortus

in figuram muliebrem transferet, et si ne tum quidem finem vitiorum faciet, gravius etiam jactabitur, et in suis moribus simillimas figuras pecudum, et ferarum transferetur: neque malorum terminum prius aspiciet, quam illam sequi cœperit conversionem, quam habebat in se, &c. cum ad primam et optimam affectionem animi pervenerit.



but the worst of men to repent of hating God, and try how they will take it. Yet they may read that name in Scripture, Rom. i. 30; Psal. lxxxi. 15; Luke xix. 14. Did not the Jews hate Christ, think you, when they murdered him? and when they hated all his followers for his sake? Matt. x. 22; Mark xiii. 13. And doth not Christ say, "that they shall be hated for his sake, not only of the Jews, but also of all nations, and all men," Matt. xxiv. 9; x. 22; even by the "world," John xvii. 14; xv. 17—19, &c. And this was a hating "both Christ and his Father," John xv. 23, 24. But you will say, it is not possible that any man can hate God. I answer, how then came the devils to hate him? Yea, every ungodly man hateth God: indeed no man hateth him as good, or as merciful to them; but they hate him as holy and just, as one that will not let them have the pleasure of sin, without damning them; as one engaged in justice to cast them into hell, if they die without conversion; and as one that hath made so pure and precise a law to govern them, and convinceth them of sin, and calls them to that repentance and holiness which they hate. Why did the world hate Christ himself? He tells you, John vii. 7, "The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth, because I testify against it, that the works thereof are evil." John iii. 19, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Nay, it is a wonder of blindness, that this God-hating world and age should not perceive that they are God-haters, while they hate his servants to the death, and implacably rage against them, and hate his holy ways and kingdom, and bend all their power and interest in most of the kingdoms of the world, against his interest and his people upon earth: while the devil fighteth his battles against Christ through the world, by their hands, they will yet confess the devil's malice against God, but deny their own; as if he used their hands without their hearts. Well! poor, wretched worms! instead of denying your enmity to him, lament it, and know that he also taketh you for his enemies, and will prove too hard for you when you have done your worst. Read Psal. ii. and tremble, and submit. This is especially the case of persecutors and open enemies; but in their measure also of all that would not have him to reign over them. And therefore Christ came to reconcile us unto God, and God to us; and it is only the sanctified that are reconciled to him. See Col. i. 21; Phil. iii. 18; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Rom. v. 10. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God; nor indeed can be," Rom. viii. 7. Mark that text well.

2. As long as you are unsanctified, you are unjustified and unpardoned: you are under the guilt of all the sins that ever you committed: every sinful thought, word, and deed, of which the least deserveth hell, is on your score, to be answered for by yourself: and what this signifieth, the threatenings of the law will tell you. See Acts xxvi. 18; Mark. iv. 12; Col. i. 14. There is no sin forgiven to an impenitent, unconverted sinner.

3. And no wonder, when the unconverted have no special interest in Christ. The pardon and life that is given by God, is given in and with the Son: "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son: he that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the

Rom. viii. 9.

\* Unus gehennæ ignis et in inferno, sed non uno modo omnes excruciat peccatores. Uniuscujusque enim quantum exigit culpa, tantum illic sentitur et pœna: nam sicut hic unus sol non omnia corpora æqualiter calefacit, ita illic unus

Son, hath not life," 1 John v. 10—12. Till we are members of Christ, we have no part in the pardon and salvation purchased by him: and ungodly sinners are not his members. So that Jesus Christ, who is the hope and life of all his own, doth leave thee as he found thee: and that is not the worst; for,

4. It will be far worse with the impenitent rejecters of the grace of Christ, than if they had never heard of a Redeemer. For it cannot be, that God having provided so precious a remedy for sinful, miserable souls, should suffer it to be despised and rejected, without increased punishment. Was it not enough that you had disobeyed your great Creator, but you must also set light by a most gracious Redeemer, that offered you pardon, purchased by his blood, if you would but have come to God by him? Yea, the Saviour that you despised shall be himself your Judge, and the grace and mercy which you set so light by, shall be the heaviest aggravation of your sin and misery. For "how shall you escape, if you neglect so great salvation?" Heb. ii. 3. "And of how much sorer punishment" (than the despisers of Moses' law) "shall they be thought worthy, who have trodden under foot the Son of God," &c. Heb. x. 29.

5. The very prayers and sacrifice of the wicked are abominable to God (except such as contain their returning from their wickedness). So that terror ariseth to you from that which you expect should be your help. See Prov. xv. 8; xxi. 27; Isa. i. 13.

6. Your common mercies do but increase your sin and misery (till you return to God): your carnal hearts turn all to sin; Tit. i. 15, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving, is nothing pure: but even their mind and conscience is defiled."

7. While you are unsanctified, you are impotent, and dead to any holy, acceptable work: when you should redeem your time, and prepare for eternity, and try your states, or pray, or meditate, or do good to others, you have no heart to any such spiritual works: your minds are biassed against them, Rom. viii. 7. And it is not the excusable impotency of such, as would do good, but cannot: but it is the malicious impotency of the wicked, (the same with that of devils,) that cannot do good, because they will not; and will not, because they have blind, malicious, and ungodly hearts, which makes their sin so much the greater, Tit. i. 16.

8. While you have unsanctified hearts, you have at all times the seed and disposition unto every sin; and if you commit not the worst, it is because some providence restraining the tempter hindereth you. No thanks to you that you do not daily commit idolatry, blasphemy, theft, murder, adultery, &c. It is in your hearts to do it, when you have but temptation and opportunity; and will be, till you are renewed by sanctifying grace.

9. Till you are sanctified you are heirs of death and hell,\* even under the curse, and condemned already in point of law, though judgment have not passed the final sentence. See John iii. 18, 19, 36. And nothing is more certain, than that you had been damned and undone for ever, if you had died before you had been renewed by the Holy Ghost; and that yet this will be your miserable portion, if you should die unsanctified. Think, then, what a life you have lived until now? and think what it is to live any longer in such a case, in which if you die, you are certain to be damned. Conversion may save

ignis animas pro qualitate criminum dissimiliter exurit. Hugo Etherianus de Anim. regres. cap. 12. "Idem undique in infernum descensus est," saith Anaxagoras (in Laert.) to one that only lamented that he must die in a strange country.



you, but unbelief and self-flattery will not save you from this endless misery, Heb. xii. 14; ii. 3; Matt. xxv. 46.

10. As long as you are unsanctified, you are hastening to this misery: sin is like to get more rooting; and your hearts to be more hardened, and at enmity with grace; and God more provoked; and the Spirit more grieved; and you are every day nearer to your final doom, when all these things will be more sensibly considered, and better understood, 2 Tim. iii. 13; 2 Pet. ii. 3.

Thus I have given you a brief account of the case of unrenewed souls, and but a brief one, because I have done it before more largely. (Treatise of Conversion.)

*Direct. X.* When you have found out how sad a condition you are in, consider what there is in sin to make you amend or repair your loss, that should be any hindrance to your conversion.

Certainly you will not continue for nothing (if you know it to be nothing) in so dangerous and doleful a case as this. And yet you do it for that which is much worse than nothing, not considering what you do. Sit down sometimes, and well bethink you, what recompence the world or sin will make you, for your God, your souls, your hopes, and all, when they are lost and past recovery? Think what it will then avail or comfort you, that once you were honoured, and had a great estate; that once you fared of the best, and had your delicious cups, and merry hours, and sumptuous attire, and all such pleasures. Think whether this will abate the horrors of death, or put by the wrath of God, or the sentence of your condemnation; or whether it will ease a tormented soul in hell? If not, think how small, and short, and silly a commodity and pleasure it is, that you buy so dear; and what a wise man can see in it, that should make it seem worth the joys of heaven, and worth your enduring everlasting torments. What is it that is supposed worth all this? Is it the snare of preferment? Is it vexing riches? Is it befooling honours? Is it distracting cares? Is it swinish luxury or lust? Is it beastly pleasures? Or what is it else that you will buy at so wonderful dear a rate? O lamentable folly of ungodly men! O foolish sinners! unworthy to see God! and worthy to be miserable! O strangely corrupted heart of man, that can sell his Maker, his Redeemer, and his salvation, at so base a price!

*Direct. XI.* And when you are casting up your account, as you put all that sin and the world will do for you in the one end of the scales, so put into the other the comforts both of this life, and of that to come, which you must part with for your sins.

Search the Scriptures, and consider how happy the saints of God are there described. Think what it is, to have a purified, cleansed soul; to be free from the slavery of the flesh and its concupiscence; to have the sensitive appetite in subjection unto reason, and reason illuminated and rectified by faith; to be alive to God, and disposed and enabled to love and serve him; to have access to him in prayer, with boldness and assurance to be heard; to have a sealed pardon of all our sins, and an interest in Christ, who will answer for them all and justify us; to be the children of God, and the heirs of heaven; to have peace of conscience, and the joyful hopes of endless joys; to have communion with the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit, and to have that Spirit dwelling in us, and working to our further holiness and joy; to have communion with the saints; and the

help and comfort of all God's ordinances, and to be under his many precious promises, and under his protection and provision in his family, and to cast all our care upon him; to delight ourselves daily in the remembrance and renewed experiences of his love, and in our too little knowledge of him, and love to him, and in the knowledge of his Son, and of the mysteries of the gospel; to have all things work together for our good, and to be able with joy to welcome death, and to live as in heaven in the foresight of our everlasting happiness. I would have orderly here given you a particular account of the privileges of renewed souls, but that I have done so much in that already in my "Treatise of Conversion," and "Saints' Rest." This taste may help you to see what you lose, while you abide in an unconverted state.

*Direct. XII.* When you have thus considered of the condition you are in, consider also whether it be a condition to be rested in one day.

If you die unconverted, you are past all hope; for out of hell there is no redemption;<sup>y</sup> and certain you are to die ere long; and uncertain whether it will be this night, Luke xii. 20. You never lay down with assurance that you should rise again; you never went out of doors with assurance to return; you never heard a sermon with assurance that you should hear another; you never drew one breath with assurance that you should draw another: a thousand accidents and diseases are ready to stop your breath, and end your time, when God will have it so. And if you die this night in an unregenerate state, there is no more time, or help, or hope. And is this a case then for a wise man to continue in a day, that can do any thing towards his own recovery? Should you delay another day or hour, before you fall down at the feet of Christ, and cry for mercy, and return to God, and resolve upon a better course? May I not well say to thee, as the angels unto Lot, Gen. xix. 15, 17, 22, "Arise, lest thou be consumed: escape for thy life; look not behind thee."

*Direct. XIII.* When thou art resolved, past thy waverings and delays, give up thyself entirely and unreservedly to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as thy happiness, thy Saviour, and thy Sanctifier, in a hearty consent to the covenant of grace.<sup>z</sup>

This is thy christianity; thy espousals with Christ. It is sacramentally done in baptism; but till it be personally owned, and heartily renewed by men at age, they have no reason to be numbered with adult believers, nor to dream of a part in the blessings of the covenant. It is pity it is not made a more serious, solemn work, for men thus to renew their covenant with God. (For which I have written in a "Treatise of Confirmation," but hitherto in vain.) However, do it seriously thyself: it is the greatest and weightiest action of thy life.

To this end, peruse well the covenant of grace which is offered thee in the gospel: understand it well. In it God offereth, notwithstanding thy sins, to be thy reconciled God and Father in Christ, and to accept thee as a son, and an heir of heaven.

The Son offereth to be thy Saviour, to justify thee by his blood and grace, and teach thee, and govern thee as thy Head, in order to thy everlasting happiness. The Holy Spirit offereth to be thy Sanctifier, Comforter, and Guide, to overcome all the enmity of the devil, the world, and the flesh, in order to the full accomplishment of thy salvation; nothing is expected of thee, in order to thy title to the benefits of this covenant, but deliberately, unfeignedly, entirely

<sup>y</sup> Alienus est à fide qui ad agendam pœnitentiam tempus expectat senectutis. Jo. Benedictus Paris. in Annot. in

Luc. xii. Multos vitam differentes mors incerta prœvenit. Id. ib. ex Senec.



to consent to it, and to continue that consent, and perform what thou consentest to perform, and that by the help of the grace which will be given thee. See, therefore, that thou well deliberate of the matter, but without delays; and count what thou shalt gain or lose by it. And if thou find that thou art like to be a loser in the end, and knowest of any better way, even take it, and boast of it, when thou hast tried the end; but if thou art past doubt, that there is no way but this, despatch it resolutely and seriously.

And take heed of one thing, lest thou say, Why, this is no more than every body knoweth, and than I have done a hundred times, to give up myself in covenant to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Dost thou know it, and yet hast thou not done it? Or hast thou done it with thy lips, and not unfeignedly with thy heart? Lament it as one of thy greatest sins, that thou hast thus provokingly dallied with God; and admire his mercy, that he will yet vouchsafe to enter into covenant with one, that hath hypocritically profaned his covenant. If thou hadst ever seriously thus covenanted and given up thyself to God, thou wouldst not have neglected him by an ungodly life, nor lived after to the devil, the world, and the flesh, which were renounced. I tell you, the making of this christian vow and covenant with God in Christ, is the act of greatest consequence of any in all thy life, and to be done with the greatest judgment, and reverence, and sincerity, and foresight, and firm resolution, of any thing that ever thou dost. And if it were done sincerely, by all that do it ignorantly, for fashion, only with the lips, then all professed christians would be saved; whereas now, the abusers of that holy name and covenant will have the deepest place in hell. Write it out on thy heart, and put thy heart and hand to it resolvedly, and stand to thy consent, and all is thine own: conversion is wrought when this is done.

*Direct.* XIV. In present performance of thy covenant with God, away with thy former sinful life; and see that thou sin wilfully no more; but as far as thou art able, avoid the temptations which have deceived thee.

God will never be reconciled to thy sins: if he be reconciled to thy person, it is as thou art justified by Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit: he entertaineth thee as one that turneth with repentance from sin to him. If thou wilfully or negligently go on in thy former course of sin, thou showest that thou wast not sincerely resolved in thy covenant with God.

I know infirmities and imperfections will not be so easily cast off, but will cleave to thee in thy best obedience, till the day of thy perfection come. But I speak of gross and wilful sin; such as thou canst forbear, if thou be but sincerely, though imperfectly, willing.\*

Hast thou been a profane swearer or curser, or used to take God's name in vain, or used to backbiting, slandering, lying, or to ribald, filthy talk? It is in thy power to forbear these sins, if thou be but willing. Say not, I fall into them through custom before I am aware; for that is a sign that thou art not sincerely willing to forsake them. If thou wert truly penitent, and thy will sincerely opposite to these sins, thou wouldst be more tender and fearful to offend, and resolved against them, and make a greater matter of them, and abhor them, and not commit them, and say, I did it before I was aware; no more than thou wouldst spit in the face of thy

father, or curse thy mother, or slander thy dearest friend, or speak treason against the king, and say, I did it through custom before I was aware. Sin will not be so played with by those that have been soundly humbled for it, and resolved against it.

Hast thou been a drunkard, or tippler, spending thy precious hours in an ale-house, prating over a pot, in the company of foolish, tempting sinners? It is in thy power, if thou be truly willing, to do so no more. If thou love and choose such company, and places, and actions, and discourse, how canst thou say thou art willing to forsake them, or that thy heart is changed? If thou do not love and choose them, how canst thou commit them, when none compels thee? No one carrieth thee to the place; no one forceth thee to sin; if thou do it, it is because thou wilt do it, and lovest it. If thou be in good earnest with God, and wilt be saved indeed, and art not content to part with heaven for thy cups and company, away with them presently, without delay.

Hast thou lived in wantonness, fornication, uncleanness, gluttony, gaming, pastimes, sensuality, to the pleasing of thy flesh, while thou hast displeased God? O bless the patience and mercy of the Lord, that thou wast not cut off all this while, and damned for thy sin before thou didst repent! And, as thou lovest thy soul, delay no longer; but make a stand, and go no further, not one step further in the way which thou knowest leads to hell. If thou knowest that this is the way to thy damnation, and yet wilt go on, what pity dost thou deserve from God or man?

If thou have been a covetous worldling, or an ambitious seeker of honour or preferment in the world, so that thy gain, or rising, or reputation, hath been the game which thou hast followed, and hath taken thee up instead of God and life eternal; away now with these known deceits, and hunt not after vanity and vexation. Thou knowest beforehand what it will prove when thou hast overtaken it, and hast enjoyed all that it can yield thee; and how useless it will be as to thy comfort or happiness at last.

Surely, if men were willing, they are able to forbear such sins, and to make a stand, and look before them, to prevent their misery: therefore God thus pleads with them, Isa. i. 16—18, "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well," &c. Isa. lv. 2, 3, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you." Ver. 6, 7, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Christ supposeth that the foresight of judgment may restrain men from sin, when he saith, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," John v. 14, and viii. 11. Can the presence of men restrain a fornicator; and the presence of the judge restrain a thief, yea, or the foresight of the assizes? And shall not the presence of God, with the foresight of judgment and damnation, restrain thee? Remember, that impenitent sin and damnation are conjoined. If you will cause one, God will cause the other. Choose one, and you

\* Næ illi falsi sunt, qui diversissimas res pariter expectant, ignaviæ voluptatem et præmia virtutis. Sallust. Tenebit te diabolus sub specie libertatis addictum, ut sit tibi liberum peccare, non vivere: Captivum te tenet auctor scelerum,

compedes tibi libidinis imposuit, et undique te sepsit armatâ custodiâ; Legem tibi dedit ut licitum putes omne quod non licet; et vivum te in eternæ mortis foveam demersit. Hugo Etherianus de Animar. regressu, cap. 9.



shall not choose whether you shall have the other. If you will have the serpent, you shall have the sting.

*Direct.* XV. If thou have sincerely given up thyself to God, and consented to his covenant, show it, by turning the face of thy endeavours and conversation quite another way, and by seeking heaven more fervently and diligently than ever thou soughtest the world, or fleshly pleasures.

Holiness consisteth not in a mere forbearance of a sensual life, but principally in living unto God. The principle or heart of holiness is within, and consisteth in the love of God, and of his word, and ways, and servants, and honour, and interest in the world, and in the soul's delight in God, and the word and ways of God, and in its inclination towards him, and desire after him, and care to please him, and lothness to offend him. The expression of it in our lives, consisteth in the constant, diligent exercise of this internal life, according to the directions of the word of God. If thou be a believer, and hast subjected thyself to God, as thy absolute Sovereign, King, and Judge, it will then be thy work to obey and please him, as a child his father, or a servant his master, Mal. i. 6. Do you think that God will have servants, and have nothing for them to do? Will one of you commend or reward your servant for doing nothing, and take it at the year's end for a satisfactory answer or account, if he say, I have done no harm? God calleth you not only to do no harm, but to love and serve him with all your heart, and soul, and might. If you have a better master than you had before, you should do more work than you did before. Will you not serve God more zealously than you served the devil? Will you not labour harder to save your souls than you did to damn them? Will you not be more zealous in good, than you were in evil? "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life," Rom. vi. 21, 22. If you are true believers, you have now laid up your hopes in heaven, and therefore will set yourselves to seek it, as worldlings set themselves to seek the world. And a sluggish wish, with heartless, lazy, dull endeavours, is no fit seeking of eternal joys. A creeping pace seemeth not a man that is in the way to heaven; especially who went faster in the way to hell. This is not running as for our lives. You may well be diligent and make haste, where you have so great encouragement and help, and where you may expect so good an end, and where you are sure you shall never, in life or death, have cause to repent of any of your just endeavours; and where every step of your way is pure, and clean, and delectable, and paved with mercies, and fortified and secured by divine protection; and where Christ is your conductor, and so many have sped so well before you, and the wisest and best in the world are your companions. Live

<sup>a</sup> Acosta saith, that the Indians are so addicted to their idolatry, and unwearied in it, that he knoweth not what words can sufficiently declare, how totally their minds are transformed into it, no whoremonger having so mad a love to his whore, as they to their idols: so that neither in their idleness or their business, neither in public or in private, will they do any thing, till they have first used their superstition to their idols: they will neither rejoice at weddings, nor mourn at funerals, neither make a feast, or partake of it, nor so much as move a foot out of doors, or a hand to any work, without this heathenish sacrilege: and all this they do with the greatest secrecy, lest the christians should know it. Lib. 5. cap. 8. p. 467. See here how nature teacheth all men that there is a Deity to be worshipped with all possible love and industry! And shall the worshippers of the true God

then as men that have changed their master, their end, their hopes, their way, and work. Religion layeth not men to sleep, though it be the only way to rest. It awakeneth the sleepy soul to higher thoughts, and hopes, and labours, than ever it was well acquainted with before. "He that is in Christ, is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17. You never sought that which would pay for all your cost and diligence till now; you never were in a way that you might make haste in, without repenting of your haste, till now. How glad should you be that mercy hath brought you into the right way, after the wanderings of such a sinful life!<sup>a</sup> And your gladness and thankfulness should now be showed, by your cheerful diligence and zeal. As Christ did not raise up Lazarus from the dead, to do nothing, or live to little purpose (though the Scripture giveth us not the history of his life); so did he not raise you from the death of sin, to live idly, or to be unprofitable in the world. He that giveth you his Spirit, to be a principle of heavenly life within you, expecteth that you stir up the gift that he hath given you, and live according to that heavenly principle.

*Direct.* XVI. Engage thyself in the cheerful, constant use of the means and helps appointed by God, for thy confirmation and salvation.

He can never expect to attain the end, that will not be persuaded to use the means. Of yourselves you can do nothing. God giveth his help, by the means which he hath appointed and fitted to your help. Of the use of these, I shall treat more fully afterwards; I am now only to name them to thee, that thou mayst know what it is that thou hast to do.<sup>b</sup>

1. That you must hear or read the word of God, and other good books which expound it and apply it, I showed you before. The new-born christian doth incline to this, as the new-born child doth to the breast; 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2, "Laying aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." Psal. i. 2, 3, the blessed man's "delight is in the law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate day and night."

2. Another means is the public worshipping of God in communion with his church and people. Besides the benefit of the word there preached, the prayers of the church are effectual for the members; and it raiseth the soul to holy joys, to join with well ordered assemblies of the saints, in the praises of the Almighty. The assemblies of holy worshippers of God, are the places of his delight, and must be the places of our delight. They are most like to the celestial society, that sound forth the praises of the glorious Jehovah, with purest minds and cheerful voice. "In his temple doth every one speak of his glory," Psal. xxix. 9. In such a choir, what soul will not be rapt up with delight, and desire to join in the concert and harmony? In such a flame of united

then think it unnecessary preciseness, to be as diligent and hearty in his service?

<sup>b</sup> How penitents of old did rise even from a particular sin, judge by these words of Pacianus Parænes. ad Pœnit. Bibl. Pat. To. 3. p. 74. "You must not only do that which may be seen of the priest, and praised by the bishop—to weep before the church, to lament a lost or sinful life in a sordid garment, to fast, pray, to roll on the earth; if any invite you to the bath (or such pleasures) to refuse to go: if any bid you to a feast, to say, These things are for the happy; I have sinned against God, and am in danger to perish for ever! What should I do at banquets, who have wronged the Lord? Besides these, you must take the poor by the hand, you must beseech the widow, lie at the feet of the presbyters, beg of the church to forgive you, and pray for you: you must try all means rather than perish.



desires and praises, what soul so cold and dull that will not be inflamed, and with more than ordinary facility and alacrity fly up to God?

3. Another means is private prayer unto God. When God would tell Ananias that Paul was converted, he saith of him, "Behold, he prayeth," Acts ix. 11. Prayer is the breath of the new creature. The spirit of adoption given to every child of God is a spirit of prayer, and teacheth them to cry, "Abba, Father," and helpeth their infirmities; when they know not what to pray for as they ought, and when words are wanting, it (as it were) intercedeth for them with groans, which they cannot express in words, Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 15, 26, 27. And God knoweth the meaning of the Spirit in those groans. The first workings of grace are in desires after grace, provoking the soul to fervent prayer, by which more grace is speedily obtained. "Ask," then, "and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you," Luke xi. 9.

4. Another means to be used is confession of sin; not only to God, (for so every wicked man may do, because he knoweth that God is already acquainted with it all, and this is no addition to his shame: he so little regardeth the eye of God, that he is more ashamed when it is known to men,) but in three cases confession must be made also to man. 1. In case you have wronged man, and are thus bound to make him satisfaction: as if you have robbed him, defrauded him, slandered him, or borne false witness against him. 2. In case you are children or servants, that are under the government of parents or masters, and are called by them to give an account of your actions: you are bound then to give a true account. 3. In case you have need of the counsel or prayers of others, for the settling of your consciences in peace: in this case, you must so far open your case to them, as is necessary to their effectual help for your recovery; for if they know not the disease, they will be unfit to apply the remedy. In these cases, it is true, that "he that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy," Prov. xxviii. 13.

5. Another means to be used, is the familiar company and holy converse with humble, sincere, experienced christians. The Spirit that is in them, and breatheth and acteth by them, will kindle the like holy flames in you. Away with the company of idle, prating, sensual men, that can talk of nothing but their worldly wealth, or business, or their reputations, or their appetites and lusts; associate yourselves with them that go the way to heaven, if you resolve yourselves to go in it. O what a deal of difference will you find between these two sorts of companions! The one sort, if you have any thoughts of repentance, would stifle them, and laugh you out of the use of your reason, into their own distracted mirth and dotage: and if you have any serious thoughts of your salvation, or any inclinations to repent and be wise, they will do much to divert them, and hold you in the power and snares of Satan, till it be too late: if you have any zeal, or heavenly-mindedness, they will do much to quench it, and fetch down your minds to earth again. The other sort will speak of things of so great weight and moment, and that with seriousness and reverence, as will tend to raise and quicken your souls; and

possess you with a taste of the heavenly things which they discourse of; they will encourage you by their own experiences, and direct you by that truth which hath directed them, and zealously communicate what they have received: they will pray for you, and teach you how to pray: they will give the example of holy, humble, obedient lives, and lovingly admonish you of your duties, and reprove your sins. In a word, as the carnal mind doth savour the things of the flesh, and is enmity against God, the company of such will be a powerful means to infect you with their plague, and make you such, if you were escaped from them; much more to keep you such, if you are not escaped: and as they that are spiritual, do mind the things of the Spirit, so their converse tendeth to make you spiritually-minded, as they are, Rom. viii. 7, 8. Though there are some useful qualities and gifts in some that are ungodly, and some lamentable faults in many that are spiritual; yet experience will show you so great a difference between them in the main, in heart and life, as will make you the more easily believe the difference that will be between them in the life to come.

6. Another means is serious meditation on the life to come, and the way thereto; which though all cannot manage so methodically as some, yet all should in some measure and season be acquainted with it.

7. The last means is, to choose some prudent, faithful guide and counsellor for your soul,<sup>c</sup> to open those cases to which are not fit for all to know, and to resolve and advise you in cases that are too hard for you: not to lead you blindfold after the interest of any seduced or ambitious men, nor to engage you to his singular conceits, against the Scripture or the church of God; but to be to your soul, as a physician to your body, or a lawyer to your estates, to help you where they are wiser than you, and where you need their helps.

Resolve now, that instead of your idle company and pastime, your excessive cares and sinful pleasures, you will wait on God in the seasonable use of these his own appointed means; and you will find, that he hath appointed them not in vain, and that you shall not lose your labour.

*Direct.* XVII. That in all this you may be sincere, and not deceived by a hypocritical change, be sure that God be all your confidence, and all your hopes be placed in heaven; and that there be no secret reserve in your hearts, for the world and flesh; and that you divide not your hearts between God and the things below, nor take up with the religion of a hypocrite, which giveth God what the flesh can spare.

When the devil cannot keep you from a change and reformation, he will seek to deceive you with a superficial change and half reformation, which goeth not to the root, nor doth recover the heart to God, nor deliver it entirely to him. If he can by a partial, deceitful change, persuade you that you are truly renewed and sanctified, and fix you there that you go no further, you are as surely his, as if you had continued in your grosser sins. And, of all other, this is the most common and dangerous cheat of souls, when they think to halve it between God and the world, and to secure their fleshly interest of

<sup>c</sup> Of how great concernment faithful pastors are for the conversion of the ungodly, see a Jesuit, Acosta, lib. 4. c. 1, 4. Infinitum esset cætera persequi, quæ contra hos fatuos principes tanaos, contra pastores stultos, vel potius idola pastorum, contra seipso potius pascentes, contra vâsanos prophetas, contra sacerdotes contemptores, atque arrogantes, contra sterces solennitatum, contra popularis plausus captatores,

contra inexplebiles pecuniæ gurgites, cæterasque pestes, propheticus sermo declamat. Vix alias sancti patres plenioribus velis feruntur in Pelagiis, quam cum de sacerdotali contumelia oratio est. Acosta, ib. p. 353. Non est iste sacerdos, non est sed infestus, atrox, dolosus, illusor sui, et lupus in dominicum gregem ovina pella armatus. Ibid.



pleasure and prosperity, and their salvation too; and so they will needs serve God and mammon.

This is the true character of a self-deceiving hypocrite.<sup>4</sup> He is neither so fully persuaded of the certain truth of the Scripture and the life to come, nor yet so mortified to the flesh and the world, as to take the joys of heaven for his whole portion, and to subject all his worldly prosperity and hopes thereunto, and to part with all things in this world, when it is necessary to the securing of his salvation: and therefore he will not lose his hold of present things, nor forsake his worldly interest for Christ, as long as he can keep it. Nor will he be any further religious, than may stand with his bodily welfare; resolving never to be undone by his godliness; but in the first place to save himself, and his prosperity in the world, as long as he can: and therefore he is truly a carnal, worldly-minded man; being denominated from what is predominant in him. And yet, because he knoweth that he must die, and for aught he knows, he may then find, against his will, that there is another life which he must enter upon; lest the gospel should prove true, he must have some religion: and therefore he will take up as much as will stand with his temporal welfare, hoping that he may have both that and heaven hereafter; and he will be as religious as the predominant interest of the flesh will give him leave. He is resolved rather to venture his soul, than to be here undone: and that is his first principle. But he is resolved to be as godly as will stand with a worldly, fleshly life: that is his second principle. And he will hope for heaven as the end of such a way as this: that is his third. Therefore he will place most of his religion in those things which are most consistent with worldliness and carnality, and will not cost his flesh too dear; as in being of this or that opinion, church, or party, (whether papist, protestant, or some smaller party,) in adhering to that party and being zealous for them, in acquiring and using such parts and gifts, as may make him highly esteemed by others; and in doing such good works as cost him not too dear; and in forbearing such sins as would procure his disgrace and shame, and cost his flesh dearer to commit them, than forbear them; and such other as his flesh can spare: this is his fourth principle. And he is resolved, when trial calleth him to part with God and his conscience, or with the world, that he will rather let go God and conscience, and venture upon the pains hereafter, which he thinks to be uncertain, than to run upon a certain calamity or undoing here; at least, he hath no resolution to the contrary, which will carry him out in a day of trial: this is his fifth principle. And his sixth principle is, That yet he will not torment himself, or blot his name, with confessing himself a temporizing worldling, resolved to turn any way to save himself. And therefore he will be sure to believe nothing to be truth and duty that is dangerous; but will furnish himself with arguments to prove that it is not the will of God; and that sin is no sin: yea, perhaps, conscience and duty shall be pleaded for his sin: it shall be out of tenderness, and piety, and charity to others, that he will sin; and will charge them to be the sinners that comply not, and do not wickedly as well as he. He will be one that shall first make a controversy of

<sup>4</sup> Whereas there are two great and grievous sorts of trouble raised, one in the churches at the trial of members, and another in men's consciences in trying their states, about this question, How to know true conversion or sanctification? I must tell them in both these troubles, plainly, that christianity is but one thing, the same in all ages, which is their consent to the baptismal covenant: and there is no such way to re-

every sin which his flesh calls necessary, and of every duty which his flesh counts intolerably dear; and then, when it is a controversy, and many reputed wise, and some reputed good, are on his side, he thinks he is on equal terms with the most honest and sincere: he hath got a burrow for his conscience and his credit: he will not believe himself to be a hypocrite, and no one else must think him one, lest they be uncharitable; for then the censure must fall on the whole party; and then it is sufficient to defend his reputation of piety to say, Though we differ in opinion, we must not differ in affection, and must not condemn each other for such differences (a very great truth where rightly applied.) But what is it, O hypocrite, that makes thee differ in cases where thy flesh is interested, rather than in any other? and why wast thou never of that mind till now that thy worldly interest requireth it? and how cometh it to pass, that thou art always on the self-saving opinion? and whence is it that thou consultest with those only that are of the opinion which thou desirest should be true, and either not at all, or partially and slightly, with those that are against it? Wast thou ever conscious to thyself, that thou hast accounted what it might cost thee to be saved, and reckoned on the worst, and resolved in the strength of grace to go through all? Didst thou ever meddle with much of the self-denying part of religion, or any duties that would cost thee dear? May not thy conscience tell thee, that thou never didst believe that thou shouldst suffer much for thy religion; that is, thou hadst a secret purpose to avoid it?

O sirs! take warning from the mouth of Christ, who hath so oft and plainly warned you of this sin and danger! and told you how necessary self-denial, and a suffering disposition is, to all that are his disciples; and that the worldly, fleshly principle, predominant in the hypocrite, is manifest by his self-saving course: he must take up his cross, and follow him in a conformity to his sufferings, that will indeed be his disciple. We must suffer with him, if we will reign with him, Rom. viii. 17, 18. Matt. xiii. 20—22, "He that received the seed in stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not the root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." If thou have not taken heaven for thy part, and art not resolved to let go all that would keep thee from it, I must say to thy conscience, as Christ to one of thy predecessors, Luke xviii. 22, "Yet lackest thou one thing," and such a one, as thou wilt find of flat necessity to thy salvation. And it is likely some trying time, even in this life, will detect thine hypocrisy, and make thee "go away sorrowful," for thy riches' sake, as he, ver. 23. If godliness with contentment seem not sufficient gain to thee, thou wilt make thy gain go instead of godliness; that is, thy gain shall be next thy heart, and have the precedency which godliness should have, and thy gain shall choose thee thy religion, and overrule thy conscience, and sway thy life.

O sirs! take warning by the apostates, and tem-

solve this question, as to write or set before you the covenant of baptism in its proper sense, and then ask your hearts, whether you unfeignedly and resolvedly consent. He that consenteth truly, is converted and justified; and he that professeth consent, is to be received into the church by baptism (if his parents' consent did not bring him in before, which he is to do nevertheless himself at age).



porizing hypocrites, that have looked behind them, and, with Demas, for the world forsaken their duty, and are set up by justice as pillars of salt, for your warning and remembrance. And as ever you would make sure work in turning to God, and escape the too late repentance of the hypocrite, see that you go to the root, and resign the world to the will of God,—and reckon what it may cost you to be followers of Christ,—and look not after any portion, but the favour of God and life eternal,—and see that there be no secret reserve in your hearts for your worldly interest or prosperity,—and think not of halving it between God and the world, nor making your religion compliant with the desires and interest of the flesh. Take God as enough for you, yea, as all, or else you take him not as your God.

*Direct. XVIII.* If you would prove true converts, come over to God, as your Father and felicity, with desire and delight, and close with Christ, as your only Saviour, with thankfulness and joy; and set upon the way of godliness with pleasure and alacrity, as your exceeding privilege, and the only way of profit, honour, and content: and do it not as against your wills, as those that had rather do otherwise if they durst, and account the service of God an unsuitable and unpleasant thing.

You are never truly changed, till your hearts be changed; and the heart is not changed, till the will or love be changed. Fear is not the man; but usually is mixed with unwillingness and dislike, and so is contrary to that which is indeed the man. Though fear may do much for you, it will not do enough: it is oft more sensible than love, even in the best, as being more passionate and violent; but yet there is no more acceptableness in all, than there is will or love.\* God sent not soldiers, or inquisitors, or persecutors, to convert the world by working upon their fear, and driving them upon that which they take to be a mischief to them: but he sent poor preachers, that had no matter of worldly fears or hopes to move their auditors with; but had authority from Christ to offer them eternal life; and who were to convert the world by proposing to them the best and most desirable condition, and showing them where is the true felicity, and proving the certainty and excellency of it to them, and working upon their love, desire, and hope: God will not be your God against your wills, while you esteem him as the devil, that is only terrible and hurtful to you, and take his service for a slavery, and had rather be from him, and serve the world and the flesh, if it were not for fear of being damned. He will be feared as great, and holy, and just; but he will also be loved as good, and holy, and merciful, and every way suited to be the felicity and rest of souls. If you take not God to be better than the creature, (and better to you,) and heaven to be better for you than earth, and holiness than sin, you are not converted; but if you do, then show it by your willingness, alacrity, and delight. Serve him with gladness and cheerfulness of heart, as one that hath found the way of life, and never had cause of gladness until now. If you see your servant do all his work with groans, and tears, and lamentations, you will not think he is well pleased with his master and his work. Come to God willingly with your hearts, or you come not to him indeed at all. You must either make him and his service your delight, or at least your desire; as apprehending him most fit to be your delight, so far as you enjoy him.

*Direct. XIX.* Remember still that conversion is the turning from your carnal selves to God; and

\* Passibilis timor est irrationabilis, et ad irrationabilia constitutus, sed eum præcipit qui cum disciplina et recta ratione consistit, cujus proprium est reverentia. Qui enim propter

therefore that it engageth you in a perpetual opposition to your own corrupt conceits and wills, to mortify and annihilate them, and captivate them wholly to the holy word and will of God.

Think not that your conversion despatcheth all that is to be done in order to your salvation. No, it is but the beginning of your work, that is, of your delight and happiness; you are but engaged by it to that which must be performed throughout all your lives; it entereth you into the right way, not to sit down there, but to go on till you come to the desired end. It entereth you into Christ's army, that afterwards you may there win the crown of life; and the great enemy that you engage against, is yourselves. There will still be a law in your members, rebelling against the law that the Holy Ghost hath put into your minds: your own conceits and your own wills are the great rebels against Christ, and enemies of your sanctification. Therefore it must be your resolved daily work to mortify them, and bring them clean over to the mind and will of God, which is their rule and end: If you feel any conceits arising in you that are contrary to the Scripture, and quarrel with the word of God, suppress them as rebellious, and give them not liberty to cavil with your Maker, and malapertly dispute with your Governor and Judge; but silence it, and force it reverently to submit. If you feel any will in you contrary to your Creator's will, and that there is something which you would have or do, which God is against, and hath forbid you, remember now how great a part of your work it is, to fly for help to the Spirit of grace, and to destroy all such rebellious desires. Think it not enough, that you can bear the denial of those desires; but presently destroy the desires themselves. For if you let alone the desires, they may at last lay hold upon their prey, before you are aware: or if you should be guilty of nothing but the desires themselves, it is no small iniquity; being the corruption of the heart, and the rebellion and adultery of the principal faculty, which should be kept loyal and chaste to God. The crossness of thy will to the will of God, is the sum of all the impiety and evil of the soul; and the subjection and conformity of thy will to his, is the heart of the new creature, and of thy rectitude and sanctification. Favour not therefore any self-conceitedness or self-willedness, nor any rebelliousness against the mind and will of God, any more than you would bear with the disjuncting of your bones, which will be little for your ease or use, till they are reduced to their proper place.

*Direct. XX.* Lastly, Be sure that you renounce all conceit of self-sufficiency or merit in any thing you do, and wholly rely on the Lord Jesus Christ, as your Head, and Life, and Saviour, and Intercessor with the Father.

Remember that "without him ye can do nothing," John xv. 5. Nor can any thing you do be acceptable to God, any other way than in him, the beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased. As your persons had never been accepted but in him, no more can any of your services. All your repentings, if you had wept out your eyes for sin, would not have satisfied the justice of God, nor procured you pardon and justification, without the satisfaction and merit of Christ. If he had not first taken away the sins of the world, and reconciled them so far to God, as to procure and tender them the pardon and salvation contained in his covenant, there had been no place for your repentance, nor faith, nor prayers, nor endeavours, as

Christum et doctrinam ejus Deum timet, cum reverentia ei subjectus est; cum ille qui per verbera aliaque tormenta timet Deum, passibilem timorem habere viderur. Dydimus Alex. in Pet. 1.



to any hope of your salvation. Your believing would not have saved you, nor indeed had any justifying object, if he had not purchased you the promise and gift of pardon and salvation to all believers.

*Objection.* But perhaps you will say, That if we had loved God, without a Saviour, we should have been saved; for God cannot hate and damn those that love him. To which I answer, You could not have loved God as God, without a Saviour: to have loved him as the giver of your worldly prosperity, with a love subordinate to the love of sin and your carnal selves, and to love him as one that you imagine so unholy and unjust, as to give you leave to sin against him, and prefer every vanity before him, this is not to love God, but to love an image of your own fantasy; nor will it at all procure your salvation. But to love him as your God and happiness, with a superlative love, you could never have done without a Saviour. For, 1. Objectively; God being not your reconciled father, but your enemy, engaged in justice to damn you for ever, you could not love him as thus related to you, because he could not seem amiable to you; and therefore the damned hate him as their destroyer, as the thief or murderer hates the judge. 2. And as to the efficiency; your blinded minds and depraved wills could never have been restored so far to their rectitude, as to have loved God as God, without the teaching of Christ, and the renewing, sanctifying work of his Spirit. And without a Saviour, you could never have expected this gift of the Holy Ghost. So that your supposition itself is groundless.

Indeed conversion is your implanting into Christ, and your uniting to him, and marriage with him, that he may be your life, and help, and hope. "He is the way, the truth, and the life: and no man cometh to the Father, but by him," John xiv. 6. "God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son: he that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life," 1 John v. 11, 12. "He is the Vine, and we are the branches: as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can we, except we abide in him: he that abideth not in Christ, is cast forth as a branch, and withered, to be burned," John xv. 4—6. All your life and help is in him, and from him: without Christ, you cannot believe in the Father, as in one that will show you any saving mercy, but only as the devils, that believe him just, and tremble at his justice. Without Christ, you cannot love God, nor have any lively apprehensions of his love. Without Christ, you can have no hope of heaven, and therefore no endeavours for it. Without him, you cannot come near to God in prayer, as having no confidence, because no admittance, acceptance, or hope. Without him, how terrible are the thoughts of death! which in him we may see as a conquered thing: and when we remember that he was dead, and is now alive, and the Lord of life, and hath the keys of death and hell, with what boldness may we lay down this flesh, and suffer death to undress our souls! It is only in Christ that we can comfortably think of the world to come; when we remember that he must be our Judge, and that in our nature, glorified, he is now in the highest, Lord of all; and that he is "preparing a place for us, and will come again to take us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also," John xiv. 3. Alas! without Christ, we know not how to live an

hour; nor can have hope or peace in any thing we have or do; nor look with comfort either upward or downward, to God, or the creature; nor think without terrors of our sins, of God, or of the life to come. Resolve, therefore, that as true converts, you are wholly to live upon Jesus Christ, and to do all that you do by his Spirit and strength; and to expect all your acceptance with God upon his account. When other men are reputed philosophers, or wise, for some unsatisfactory knowledge of these transitory things, do you desire to know nothing but a crucified and glorified Christ: study him, and take him (objectively) for your wisdom. When other men have confidence in the flesh, and in their show of wisdom, in will-worship, and humility, after the commandments and doctrines of men, (Col. ii. 20—23,) and would establish their own righteousness, do you rejoice in Christ your righteousness; and set continually before your eyes his doctrine and example, as your rule: look still to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith, who contemned all the glory of the world, and trampled upon its vanity, and subjected himself to a life of suffering, and made himself of no reputation, but "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame," and underwent the contradiction of sinners against himself. Live so, that you may truly say, as Paul, Gal. ii. 20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Having given you these directions, I most earnestly beseech you to peruse and practise them, that my labour may not rise up as a witness against you, which I intend for your conversion and salvation. Think on it, whether this be an unreasonable course, or an unpleasant life, or a thing unnecessary? and what is reasonable, necessary, and pleasant, if this be not?

And if you meet with any of those distracted sinners, that would deride you from Christ and your salvation, and say, this is the way to make men mad,<sup>f</sup> or, this is more ado than needs; I will not stand here to manifest their brutishness and wickedness, having largely done it already, in my book called, "A Saint or a Brute," and "Now or Never," and in the third part of the "Saints' Rest:" but only I desire thee, as a full defensive against all the pratings of the enemies of a holy, heavenly life, to take good notice but of these three things.

1. Mark well the language of the holy Scriptures, and see whether it speak not contrary to these men; and bethink thee whether God or they be wiser, and whether God or they must be thy judge?

2. Mark, whether these men do not change their minds,<sup>g</sup> and turn their tongues when they come to die? Or think whether they will not change their minds, when death hath sent them into that world where there is none of these deceits? And think whether thou shouldst be moved with that man's words, that will shortly change his mind himself, and wish he had never spoke such words?

3. Observe well, whether their own profession do not condemn them; and whether the very thing that they hate the godly for, be not that they are serious in practising that which these malignants themselves profess as their religion? And are they not then notorious hypocrites,<sup>h</sup> to profess to believe in God, and

<sup>f</sup> Every one is not a thief, that a dog barks at; nor an hypocrite, that hypocrites call so.

<sup>g</sup> As the Athenians, that condemned Socrates to death, and then lamented it, and erected a brazen statue for his memorial.

<sup>h</sup> Acosta saith, that he that will be a pastor to the Indians,

must not only resist the devil and the flesh, but must resist the custom of men which is grown powerful by time and multitude: and must oppose his breast to receive the darts of the envious and malevolent, who, if they see any thing contrary to their profane fashion, they cry out, A traitor! a hy-



yet scorn at those that "diligently seek him?" Heb. xi. 6; to profess faith in Christ, and hate those that obey him? to profess to believe in the Holy Ghost as the sanctifier, and yet hate and scorn his sanctifying work? to profess to believe the day of judgment, and everlasting torment of the ungodly, and yet to deride those that endeavour to escape it? to profess to believe that heaven is prepared for the godly, and yet to scorn at those that make it the chief business of their lives to attain it? to profess to take the holy Scripture for God's word and law, and yet to scorn those that obey it? to pray after each of the ten commandments, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law," and yet to hate all those that desire and endeavour to keep them? What impudent hypocrisy is joined with this malignity! Mark, whether the greatest diligence of the most godly be not justified by the formal profession of those very men that hate and scorn them? The difference between them is, that the godly profess christianity in good earnest, and when they say what they believe, they believe as they say; but the ungodly customarily, and for company, take on them to be christians when they are not, and by their own mouths condemn themselves, and hate and oppose the serious practice of that which they say they do themselves believe.

## PART II.

*The Temptations whereby the devil hindereth Men's Conversion; with the proper Remedies against them.*

THE most holy and righteous Governor of the world hath so restrained Satan and all our enemies, and so far given us free-will, that no man can be forced to sin against his will; it is not sin if it be not (positively or privatively) voluntary. All our enemies in hell or earth cannot make us miserable without ourselves; nor keep a sinner from true conversion, and salvation, if he do it not himself; no, nor compel him to one sinful thought, or word, or deed, or omission, but by tempting and enticing him to be willing: all that are graceless, are wilfully graceless. None go to hell, but those that choose the way to hell, and would not be persuaded out of it: none miss of heaven, but those that did set so light by it, as to prefer the world and sin before it, and refused the holy way that leadeth to it. And surely man, that naturally loveth himself, would never take so mad a course, if his reason were not laid asleep, and his understanding were not woefully dcluded: and this is the business of the tempter, who doth not drag men to sin by violence, but draw and entice them by temptations. I shall therefore take it for the next part of my work, to open these temptations, and tell you the remedies.

*Temptation I.* The first endeavour of the tempter, is, in general, to keep the sinner asleep in sin: so that he shall be as a dead man, that hath no use of any of his faculties; that hath eyes and seeth not, and ears but heareth not, and a heart that understandeth not, nor feeleth any thing that concerneth his peace. The light that shineth upon a man asleep, is of no use to him; his work lieth undone; his friends, and wealth, and greatest concernments are all forgotten by him, as if there were no such things or persons in the world: you may say what you will

pocrite! an enemy! lib. 4. c. 15. p. 404. It seems among papists and barbarians, the serpent's seed do hiss in the

against him, or do what you will against him, and he can do nothing in his own defence. This is the case that the devil most laboureth to keep the world in; even in so dead a sleep, that their reason and their wills, their fear and hope, and all their powers, shall be of no use to them: that when they hear a preacher, or read the Scripture or good books, or see the holy examples of the godly, yea, when they see the grave, and know where they must shortly lay, and know that their souls must stay here but a little while; yet they shall hear, and see, and know all this, as men asleep, that mind it not, as if it concerned not them at all; never once soberly considering and laying it to heart.<sup>1</sup>

*Direct. I.* For the remedy against this deadly sin, 1. Take heed of sleeping opinions, or doctrines and conceits which tend to the lethargy of security. 2. Sit not still, but be up and doing: stirring tends to shake off drowsiness. 3. Come into the light: live under an awakening minister and in wakening company, that will not sleep with you, nor easily let you sleep: agree with them to deal faithfully with you, and promise them to take it thankfully. 4. And meditate oft on wakening considerations. Think whether a sleepy soul beseeem one in thy dangerous condition. Canst thou sleep with such a load of sin upon thy soul? Canst thou sleep under the thundering threatenings of God, and the curse of his law; with so many wounds in thy conscience, and ulcers in thy soul? If thy body were sick, or in the case of Job, yea, if thou hadst but an aching tooth, it would not let thee sleep; and is not the guilt of sin a thing more grievous? If thorns, or toads and adders, were in thy bed, they would keep thee waking; and how much more odious and dangerous a thing is sin! If thy body want but meat, or drink, or covering, it will break thy sleep; and is it nothing for thy soul to be destitute of Christ and grace? A condemned man will be easily kept awake; and if thou be unregenerate, thou art already condemned, John iii. 18, 3, 5. Thou sleepest in irons, in the captivity of the devil, among the walking judgments of God, in a life that is still expecting an end, in a boat that is swiftly carried to eternity, just at the entrance of another world; and that world will be hell, if grace awake thee not: thou art going to see the face of God, to see the world of angels or devils, and to be accompanied with one of them for ever; and is this a place or case to sleep in? Is thy bed so soft? thy dwelling so safe? God standeth over thee, man, and dost thou sleep? Christ is coming, and death is coming, and judgment coming, and dost thou sleep? Didst thou never read of the foolish virgins, that slept out their time, and knocked and cried in vain when it was too late, Matt. xxv. 5. Thou mightest wiselier sleep on the pinnacle of a steeple in a storm, than have a soul asleep in so dangerous a case as thou art in. The devil is awake, and is rocking thy cradle! How busy is he to keep off ministers, or conscience, or any that would awake thee! None of thine enemies are asleep; and yet wilt thou sleep, in the thickest of thy foes? Is the battle a sleeping time, or thy race a sleeping time, when heaven or hell must be the end? While he can keep thee asleep, the devil can do almost what he list with thee. He knows that thou hast now no use of thy eyes, or understanding, or power to resist him: the learnedest doctor in his sleep is as unlearned actually as an idiot, and will dispute no better than an unlearned man: this makes many learned men to be ungodly; they are asleep in sin. The same manner against the good among themselves, as they do against us.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. ii. 1; Col. ii. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 35; 1 Tim. v. 6; Joel i. 5



devil could never have made such a drudge of thee, to do his work against Christ and thy soul, if thou hadst been awake. Thou wouldst never have followed his whistle to the ale-house, the play-house, the gaming-house, and to other sins, if thou hadst been in thy wits, and well awake. Read Prov. vii. 23, 24. I cannot believe that thou longest to be damned, or so hatest thyself, as to have done as thou hast done, to have lived a godless, a graceless, a prayerless, and yet a merry, careless life, if thy eyes had been opened, and thou hadst known, and feelingly known, that this was the way to hell. Nature itself will hardly go to hell awake. But it is easy to abuse a man that is asleep. Thou hast reason; but didst thou ever awake it to one hour's serious consideration of thy endless state and present case? Oh dreadful judgment, to be given over to the spirit of slumber! Rom. xi. 8. Is it not high time now to awake out of sleep? Rom. xiii. 11; when the light is arisen and shines about thee! when others that care for their souls, are busy at work! when thou hast slept out so much precious time already! Many a mercy, and perhaps some ministers, have been as candles burnt out to light thee while thou hast slept. How oft hast thou been called already! "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?" Prov. vi. 9, 10. Yet thou hast thundering calls and alarms to awake thee. God calls, and ministers call; mercies call, and judgments call; and yet wilt thou not awake? "The voice of the Lord is powerful; full of majesty; breaketh the cedars; shaketh the wilderness:" and yet cannot it awake thee? Thou wilt not sleep about far smaller matters; at meat, or drink, or in common talk, or market. But O! how much greater business hast thou to keep thee awake! Thou hast yet an unholy soul to be renewed; and an ungodly life to be reformed; an offending God to be reconciled to; and many thousand sins to be forgiven! Thou hast death and judgment to prepare for; thou hast heaven to win, and hell to scape! Thou hast many a needful truth to learn, and many a holy duty to perform; and yet dost thou think it time to sleep? Paul, that had less need than thou, did watch, and pray, and labour, day and night, Acts xx. 31; 1 Thess. iii. 10. O that thou knewest how much better it is to be awake. While thou sleepest, thou lovest the benefit of the light, and all the mercies that attend thee: the sun is but as a clod to a man asleep; the world is as no world to him; the beauty of heaven and earth are nothing to him; princes, friends, and all things are forgotten by him! So doth thy sleep in sin make nothing of health and patience, time and help, ministers, books, and daily warnings. O what a day hast thou for everlasting, if thou hadst but a heart to use it! What a price hast thou in thine hand! Sleep not out thy day, thy harvest time, thy tide time, Prov. x. 5. "They that sleep, sleep in the night," 1 Thess. v. 7. "Awake, and Christ will give thee light," Rom. xiii. 12; Eph. v. 14. "Awake to righteousness, and sin not," 1 Cor. xv. 34. O when thou seest the light of Christ, what a wonder will it possess thee with, at the things which thou now forgettest! What joy will it fill thee with! and with what pity to the sleepy world! But if thou wilt needs sleep on, be it known to thee, sinner, it shall not be long. If thou wilt wake no sooner, death and vengeance will awake thee. Thou wilt wake when thou seest the other world, and seest the things which thou wouldst not believe, and comest before thy dreadful Judge! "Thy damnation slumbereth not," 2 Pet. ii. 3. There are no sleepy souls in heaven or hell, all are awake there: and the day that hath awakened so many, shall waken thee.

Watch, then, if thou love thy soul, lest thy Lord come "suddenly and find thee sleeping. What I say to one, I say to all, Watch," Mark xiii. 34—37.

*Tempt. II.* If Satan cannot keep the soul in a sleepy, careless, inconsiderate forgetfulness, he would make the unregenerate soul believe, that there is no such thing as regenerating grace; but that it is a fancied thing, which no man hath experience of; and he saith, as Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" John iii. 9. He thinks that natural conscience is enough.

*Direct. II.* But this may easily be refuted by observing, that holiness is but the very health and rectitude of the soul; and is no otherwise supernatural, than as health to him that is born a leper. It is the rectitude of nature, or its disposition to the use and end that it was made for. Though grace be called supernatural, 1. Because it is not born with us; and 2. Corrupted nature is against it; 3. And the end of it is the God of nature, who is above nature; 4. And the revelation and other means are supernatural (as Christ's incarnation, resurrection, &c.): yet both nature, and Scripture, and experience tell you, that man is made for another life, and for such works which he is utterly unfit for, till grace have changed and renewed him, as it doth by many before your eyes. See 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15; Gal. iv. 19; John iii. 3, 5, 6; Matt. xviii. 3; 1 Pet. i. 23.

*Tempt. III.* But, saith the tempter, if supernatural grace be necessary, yet it may be born in you. Infants have no sin; Christ saith, "Of such is the kingdom of God: Abraham is your Father; yea, God," John viii. 39, 41. You are born of christian parents.

*Direct. III.* See the full proof of original sin in all infants, in my "Treatise of the Divine Life," part I. chap. xi. xii. Grace may indeed be put betimes into nature, but comes not by nature.\* "Except you be born again, you cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 3, 5. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17. But how vain is it for him to boast that he was born holy, who finds himself at the present unholy! Show that you have a holy, heavenly heart and life, and then you are happy, whenever it was wrought.

*Tempt. IV.* But, saith the tempter, baptism is the laver of regeneration: you are baptized, and therefore you are regenerated. The ancients taught that all sins were washed away in baptism, and grace conferred.

*Direct. IV. Answ.* The ancients by baptism meant the internal and external acts conjunct, the soul's delivering up itself to God in the covenant, and sealing it by baptism, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20: and so it includeth conversion, and true repentance, and faith: and all that are thus baptized are pardoned, justified and holy. But they that have only sacramental regeneration, or the external ordinance, are not for that in a state of life; for Christ expressly saith, that "except you are born of the Spirit," as well as "water, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," John iii. 5, 6. And Peter told Simon Magus, after he was baptized, that he was "yet in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity," Acts viii. 13. It is not the "putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience," 1 Pet. iii. 21. Christ cleanseth his church "by the washing of water by the word," Eph. v. 26. But if you had been cleansed in baptism, if at present you are unclean and unholy, can you be saved so?

\* Rom. viii. 9, 16; Rom. ix. 8; Eph. ii. 3.



*Tempt. V.* When this faileth, the tempter would persuade them, that godliness is nothing but a matter of mere opinion or belief: to believe all the articles of the faith, and to be no papist nor heretic, but of true religion, and to be confident of God's mercy through Christ; for "he that believeth shall be saved," Mark xvi. 16.

*Direct. V.* To this you must answer, that it will not save a man, that his religion is true, unless he be true to it. Read James ii. against such a dead faith. Saving faith is the hearty entertainment of Christ as our Lord and Saviour, and the delivering up of the soul to him to be sanctified and ruled, as well as pardoned. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." "He that knoweth his master's will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes," Luke xii. 47. It is sad that men should think to be saved by that which will condemn them; by being of a right opinion, and a wrong conversation; by believing their duty, instead of doing it; and then presuming that Christ forgiveth them, and that their state is good. Opinion and presumption are not faith.

*Tempt. VI.* But, saith the tempter, holiness is the excellency of holy persons; but vulgar, unlearned people may be saved, without such high matters, which are above them.

*Direct. VI.* But God telleth you, that "without holiness none shall see him," Heb. xii. 14. The unlearned may be saved, but the ungodly cannot, Psal. i. 6. Holiness is to the soul, as life to the body: he that hath it not, is dead; though all have not the same degree of health: sin is sin, and hated of God, in learned or unlearned. All men have souls that need regenerating at first: and as all bodies that live, must live on the earth, by the air, and food, &c.; so all souls that live, do live upon the same God, and Christ, and heaven, by the same word and Spirit; and all this may be had by the unlearned.

*Tempt. VII.* But, saith the tempter, God is not so unmerciful as to damn all that are not holy: this is but talk to keep men in awe; and not to be believed.

*Direct. VII.* But if God's threatenings be necessary to keep men in awe, then are they necessary to be executed. For God needs not awe men by a lie. He best knows to whom he will be merciful, and how far. Did you never read, Isa. xxvii. 11, "It is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour." And Psal. lix. 5, "Be not merciful to any wicked transgressors." Is he not just, as well as merciful? Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. Do you not see that men are sick, and pained, and die, for all that God is merciful? And do not merciful judges condemn malefactors? Are not angels made devils by sin for all that God is merciful? The devil knoweth this to his sorrow. "And if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell," 2 Pet. ii. 4, will he be unjust for you?

*Tempt. VIII.* But Christ died for all; and God will not punish him and you both for the same fault.

*Direct. VIII.* Christ died so far for all that have the gospel, as to procure and seal them a free and general pardon of all their sins, if they will repent and take him for their Saviour, and so to bring salvation to their choice. But will this save the ungodly obstinate refusers? Christ died to sanctify, as well as to forgive, Eph. v. 27, and to "purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Tit. ii. 14; and to "destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8; and to bring all men under his dominion and government, Rom. xiv. 9; Luke xix. 27. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his," Rom. viii. 9.

*Tempt. IX.* No man can be certain of his salvation; but all must hope well: and to raise doubts in men's hearts, whether they shall be saved or no, will not help them, but puzzle them, and cast them into despair.

*Direct. IX.* But is there so little difference between a child of God and of the devil, and between the way to heaven and the way to hell, that they cannot be known asunder? Hath not Christ taught us plainly how to know them? Psal. i. and xv.; 1 John iii; and bid us "give diligence to make our calling and election sure?" 2 Pet. i. 10. If all men must hope that they shall be saved, then most must hope for that which they shall never have: but it is no hope of God's making, which deceiveth men. Should so great a matter as our everlasting joy or misery be cast out of our care, and ventured so regardlessly in the dark? When is it that we have life, and time, and all for to make it sure? And what hurt can it do you, to find out the truth of your own condition? If you are indeed unregenerate and unholy, discover it now in time, and you have time to be recovered. You must despair of being saved without conversion; but that preventeth absolute, final despair. Whereas if you find not out your case till time is past, then hope is past, and the devil hath you in endless desperation, where he would.

*Tempt. X.* If this prevail not, the devil will seek to carry it by noise instead of reason; and will seek to keep you in jovial, merry, voluptuous company, that shall plead by pots, and plays, and pleasures; and shall daily make a jest of godliness, and speak of the godly with scorn, as a company of fanatic hypocrites.

*Direct. X.* But consider, that this is but the rage of fools, that speak of what they never understood. Did they ever try the way they speak against? Are they to be believed before God himself? Will they not eat their words, at last, themselves? Will their merry lives last always? Do they die as merrily as they live? and bring off themselves as well as they promised to bring off you? See Prov. xiii. 20; xxviii. 7; Eph. v. 7, 11. He that will be cheated of his salvation, and forsake his God, for the ranting scorns of a distracted sinner, is worthy to be damned.

*Tempt. XI.* Next he telleth them, that a godly life is so hard and tedious, that if they should begin, they should never endure to hold on, and therefore it is in vain to try it.

*Direct. XI.* But this pretence is compounded of wickedness and madness. What but a wicked heart can make it so hard a thing to live in the love of God, and holiness, and in the hope and seeking of eternal life? Why should not this be a sweeter and pleasanter life, than drinking, and roaring, and gaming, and fooling away time in vain; or than the enjoying of all the delights of the flesh? There is nothing but a sick, distempered heart against it, that nauseateth that which in itself is most delightful. When grace hath changed your hearts, it will be easy. Do you not see that others can hold on in it, and would not be as they were for all the world? And why may not you? God will help you: it is the office of Christ and the Spirit to help you: your encouragements are innumerable. The hardness is most at first; it is the longer the easier. But what if it were hard? Is it not necessary? Is hell easier, and to be preferred before it? And will not heaven pay for all your cost and labour? Will you set down in desperation, and resolve to let your salvation go, upon such silly bug-bear words as these?

*Tempt. XII.* Next the devil's endeavour will be, to find them so much employment with worldly cares, or hopes, or business, that they shall find no leisure to be serious about the saving of their souls.



*Direct.* XII. But this is a snare, though frequently prevalent, yet so irrational, and against so many warnings and witnesses, even of all men in the world, either first or last, at conversion or at death, that he who, after all this, will neglect his God and his salvation, because he hath worldly things to mind, is worthy to be turned over to his choice, and have no better help or portion in the hour of his necessity and distress. Of this sin I have spoken afterward, chap. iv. part 6.

*Tempt.* XIII. Lest the soul should be converted, the devil will do all that he can to keep you from the acquaintance and company of those whose holiness and instructions might convince and strengthen you; and especially from a lively, convincing minister; and to cast you under some dead-hearted minister and society.

*Direct.* XIII. Therefore, if it be possible, though it be to your loss or inconvenience in the world, live under a searching, heavenly teacher; and in the company of them that are resolved for heaven. It is a dead heart indeed that feeleth not the need of such assistance, and is not the better for it when they have it. If ever you be fair for heaven, and like to be converted, it will be among such helps as these.

*Tempt.* XIV. But one of the strongest temptations of Satan is, by making their sin exceeding pleasant to them, for the gain, or honour, or fleshly satisfaction; and so increasing the violence of their sensual appetite and lust, and making them so much in love with their sin, that they cannot leave it. Like the thirst of a man in a burning fever, which makes him cry for cold drink, though it would kill him; the fury of the appetite conquering reason. So we see many drunkards, fornicators, worldlings, that are so deeply in love with their sin, that come on it what will, they will have it, though they have hell with it.

*Direct.* XIV. Against this temptation I desire you to read what I have said after, chap. iv. part 7, chap. iii. direct. 6, 8. Oh that poor sinners knew what it is that they so much love! Is the pleasing of the flesh so sweet a thing to you? and are you so indifferent to God, and holy things? Are these less amiable? Do you foresee what both will be at last? Will your sin seem better than Christ, and grace, and heaven, when you are dying? O be not so in love with damning folly, and the pleasure of a beast, as for it to despise the heavenly wisdom and delights!

*Tempt.* XV. Another great temptation is, the prosperity of the wicked in this life; and the reproach and suffering which usually falls upon the godly. If God did strike every notorious sinner dead in that place, as soon as he had sinned, or struck him blind, or dumb, or lame, or inflicted presently some such judgment, then many would fear him, and forbear their sin; but when they see no men prosper so much as the most ungodly, and that they are the persecutors of the holy seed, and that sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, then are their hearts set in them to do evil, Eccles. viii. 11.

*Direct.* XV. But alas, how short is the prosperity of the wicked! Read Psal. lxxiii. and xxxvii. Delay is no forgiveness: they stay but till the assize: and will that tempt you to do as they? How unthankfully do sinners deal with God! If he should kill you and plague you, that would not please you: and yet if he forbear you, you are emboldened by it in your sin. Thus his patience is turned against him; but the stroke will be the heavier when it falls. Dost thou think those men will always

flourish? Will they always domineer and revel? Will they always dwell in the houses where they now dwell, and possess those lands, and be honoured and served as now they are? Oh how quickly and how dreadfully will the case be changed with them! Oh could you but foresee now what faces they will have, and what heavy hearts, and with what bitter exclamations they will at last cry out against themselves for all their folly, and wish that they had never been deceived by prosperity, but rather had the portion of a Lazarus! If you saw how they are but fatted for the slaughter, and in what a dolorous misery their wealth, and sport, and honours will leave them, you would lament their case, and think so great a destruction were soon enough, and not desire to be partners in their lot.

*Tempt.* XVI. Another temptation is, their own prosperity: they think God, when he prospereth them, is not so angry with them as preachers tell them: and it is a very hard thing in health and prosperity, to lay to heart either sin or threatenings, and to have such serious, lively thoughts of the life to come, as men that are awakened by adversity have; and specially men that are familiar with death. Prosperity is the greatest temptation to security, and delaying repentance, and putting off preparation for eternity. Overcome prosperity, and you overcome your greatest snare.

*Direct.* XVI. Go into the sanctuary, yea, go into the church-yard, and see the end; and judge by those skulls, and bones, and dust, if you cannot judge by the fore-warnings of God, what prosperity is! Judge by the experience of all the world. Doth it not leave them all in sorrow at last? Woe to the man that hath his portion in this life! O miserable health, and wealth, and honour, which procureth the death, and shame, and utter destruction of the soul! Was not he in as prosperous a case as you, Luke xvi. that quickly cried out in vain for a drop of water to cool his tongue? There is none of you so senseless as not to know that you must die. And must you die? must you certainly die? and shall that day be no better prepared for? Shall present prosperity make you forget it, and live as if you must live here for ever? Do you make so great difference between that which is, and that which will be, as to make as great a matter of it as others when it comes, and to make no more of it when it is but coming? O man, what is an inch of hasty time? How quickly is it gone! Thou art going hence apace, and almost gone! Doth God give thee the mercy of a few days or years of health to make all thy preparations in for eternity, and doth this mercy turn to thy deceit, and dost thou turn it so much contrary to the ends for which it was given thee? Wilt thou surfeit on mercy, and destroy thy soul with it? Sense feeleth and perceiveth what now is, but thou hast reason to foresee what will be? Wilt thou play in harvest, and forget the winter?

*Tempt.* XVII. Another great temptation to hinder conversion is, the example and countenance of great ones that are ungodly. When landlords and men in power are sensual, and enemies to a holy life, and speak reproachfully of it, their inferiors, by the reverence which they bear to worldly wealth and greatness, are easily drawn to say as they: also, when men reputed learned and wise are of another mind: and especially when subtle enemies speak that reproach against it, which they cannot answer.

*Direct.* XVII. To this I spake in the end of the first part of this chapter. No man is so great and wise as God. See whether he say as they do in his

<sup>1</sup> See my sermon on Prov. i. 32, in the end of "The vain

Religion of the Formal Hypocrite."



word. The greatest that provoke him can no more save themselves from his vengeance, than the poorest beggars. What work made he with a Pharaoh! and got himself a name by his hard-heartedness and impiteny! He can send worms to eat an arrogant Herod, when the people cry him up as a god! Where are now the Cæsars and Alexanders of the world? The rulers and Pharisees believed not in Christ, John vii. 48; wilt not thou therefore believe in him? The governor of the country condemned him to die; and wilt thou condemn him? "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us," Psal. ii. 2, 3; wilt thou therefore join in the conspiracy? When "he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision—He will break them with an iron rod, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel, unless they be wise, and kiss the Son, and serve the Lord with fear, before his wrath be kindled and they perish," Psal. ii. 4, 9—12. If thy landlord, or great ones, shall be thy god, and be honoured and obeyed before God and against him, trust to them, and call on them in the hour of thy distress, and take such a salvation as they can give thee. Teach not God what choice to make, and whom to reveal his mysteries to: he chooseth not always the learned scribe, nor the mighty man. Christ himself saith, Matt. xi. 25, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes: even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight!" If this reason satisfy you not, follow them, and speed as they. If they are greater and wiser than God, let them be your gods.<sup>m</sup> I Cor. i. 26—28, "You see your calling, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and the things that are despised, hath God chosen, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are." It is another kind of greatness, honour, and wisdom which God bestoweth on the poorest saints, than the world can give. Worldlings will shortly be weary of their portion. In your baptism you renounced the world with its pomps and vanity; and now do you deify what you then defied?

*Temp.* XVIII. Another temptation is to draw on the sinner into such a custom in sin, and long neglect of the means of his recovery, till his heart is utterly hardened.

*Direct.* XVIII. Against this, read after, chap. iv. part 2, against hardness of heart.

*Temp.* XIX. Another temptation is, to delay repentance, and purpose to do it hereafter.

*Direct.* XIX. Of this I entreat you to read the many reasons which I have given to shame and waken delayers, in my book of "Directions for a Sound Conversion."

*Temp.* XX. The worst of all is, to tempt them to flat unbelief of Scripture and the life to come.

*Direct.* XX. Against this, read here chap. iii. direct. 1, chap. iv. part 1, and my "Treatise against Infidelity."

*Temp.* XXI. If they will needs look after grace, he will do all he can to deceive them with counterfeits, and make them take a seeming half conversion for a saving change.

*Direct.* XXI. Of this read my "Directions for Sound Conversion," and the "Formal Hypocrite," and "Saints' Rest," part 3. c. 10.

*Temp.* XXII. If he cannot make them flat infidels, he will tempt them to question and contradict the sense of all those texts of Scripture which are used to convince them, and all those doctrines which grate most upon their galled consciences; as, of the necessity of regeneration, the fewness of them that are saved, the difficulty of salvation, the torments of hell, the necessity of mortification, and the sinfulness of all particular sins. They will hearken what cavillers can say for any sin, and against any part of godliness; and with this they wilfully delude themselves.

*Direct.* XXII. But if men are resolved to join with the devil, and shut their eyes, and cavil against all that God speaketh to them to prevent their misery, and know not, because they will not know; what remedy is left, or who can save men against their wills? "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. He that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd," John iii. 19, 20. In Scripture, "some things are hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable, wrest to their own destruction," 2 Pet. iii. 16. Of particulars read the end of my "Treatise of Conversion."

*Temp.* XXIII. Yea, Satan will do his worst to make them heretics, and teach them some doctrine of licentiousness suitable to their lusts. It is hard being wicked still against conscience in the open light. This is kicking against the pricks; too smarting work to be easily borne; therefore the devil will make them a religion which shall please them and do their sins no harm. Either a religion made up of loose opinions, like the familists, ranters, libertines, and antinomians, and the Jesuits too much; or else made up of trifling formalities, and a great deal of bodily exercise, and stage actions, and compliments, as much of the popish devotion is: and a little will draw a carnal heart to believe a carnal doctrine. It is easier to get such a new religion, than a new heart. And then the devil tells them that now they are in the right way, and therefore they shall be saved. A great part of the world think their case is good, because they are of such or such a sect or party, and of that which (they are told by their leaders) is the true church and way.

*Direct.* XXIII. But remember, that whatever law you make to yourselves, God will judge you by his own law. Falsifying the king's coin is no good way to pay a debt, but an addition of treason to your former misery. It is a new and a holy heart and life, and not a new creed, or a new church or sect, that is necessary to your salvation. It will never save you to be in the soundest church on earth, if you be unsound in it yourselves, and are but the dust in the temple that must be swept out: much less will it save you, to make yourselves a rule, because God's rule doth seem too strict.

*Temp.* XXIV. Another way of the tempter is, to draw men to take up with mere convictions, instead of true conversion. When they have but learnt that it is but necessary to salvation, to be regenerate, and have the Spirit of Christ, they are as quiet, as if this were indeed to be regenerate, and to have the Spirit. As some think they have attained to perfection, when they have but received the opinion that perfection may here be had; so abundance think they have had sanctification and forgiveness, because now they see that they must be had, and without sanctification there is no salvation: and thus the knowledge of all grace and duty shall go with them for the grace and

<sup>m</sup> Read Mr. Bolton's Assize Sermon on I Cor. i. 26.



duty itself; and their judgment of the thing, instead of the possession of it: and instead of having grace, they force themselves to believe that they have it.

*Direct.* XXIV. But remember God will not be mocked: he knoweth a convinced head from a holy heart. To think you are rich, will not make you rich: to believe that you are well, or to know the remedy, is not enough to make you well. You may dream that you eat, and yet awake hungry, Isa. xxix. 8. All the land or money which you see, is not therefore your own. To know that you should be holy, maketh your unholiness to have no excuse. Ahab did not escape by believing that he should return in peace. Self-flattery in so great and weighty a case, is the greatest folly. "If you know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," John xiii. 17.

*Tempt.* XXV. Another great temptation is, by hiding from men the intrinsic evil and odiousness of sin. What harm, saith the drunkard, and adulterer, and voluptuous sensualist, is there in all this, that preachers make so great ado against it? what hurt is this to God or man, that they would make us believe that we must be damned for it, and that Christ died for it, and that the Holy Ghost must mortify it? "Wherefore," say the Jews, Jer. xvi. 10, "hath God pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed?" He that knoweth not God, knoweth not what sin against God is; especially when the love of it and delight in it blindeth them.

*Direct.* XXV. Against this I entreat you to ponder on those forty intrinsic evils in sin, which I have after named, chap. iii. direct. 8, and the aggravations. If the devil can but once

*Psal.* xl. 12.

*Psal.* ii.

persuade you, that sin is harmless, all faith, all religion, all honesty, and your souls and all are gone. For then, all God's laws and government must be fictions; then, there is no work for Christ as a Saviour, or the Spirit as a Sanctifier, to do; then, all ordinances and means are troublesome vanities, and godliness and obedience deserve to be banished from the earth, as unnecessary troublers of mankind; then, may this poison be safely taken and made your food. But oh how mad a conceit is this! How quickly will God make the proudest know, what harm it was to refuse the government of his Maker, and set up the government of his beastly appetite and misguided will! and that sin is bad, if hell be bad.

*Tempt.* XXVI. The devil also tempteth them to think, that though they sin, yet their good works are a compensation for their bad, and therefore they pray, and do some acts of pharisaical devotion, to make God amend for what they do amiss.

*Direct.* XXVI. Against this consider, that if you had never so many good works, they are all but your duty, and make no satisfaction for your sin. But what good works can you do, that shall save a wicked soul? and that God will accept without your hearts? Your hearts must be first

See Prov. xxviii. 9; cleansed, and yourselves devoted and  
Prov. xv. 26, 8; sanctified to God: for an evil tree  
Prov. xxi. 27; will bring forth evil fruit: first make  
Isa. i. 13, 14. the tree good, and the fruit will be good. It is the

love of God, and the hatred of sin, and a holy and heavenly life, which are the good works that God chiefly calleth for; and faith, and repentance, and conversion in order to these. And will God take your lip-labour, or the leavings of your flesh by way of alms, while the world and fleshly pleasure have your hearts? Indeed, you do no work that is truly

good. The matter may be good; but you poison it with bad principles and ends. "The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be; but is enmity to God," Rom. viii. 6, 7.

*Tempt.* XXVII. Some are tempted to think, that God will not condemn them because they are poor and afflicted in this life, and have their sufferings here: and that he that condemneth the rich for not showing mercy to the poor, will himself show them mercy.

*Direct.* XXVII. Hath he not showed you mercy? And is it not mercy which you vilify and refuse? even Christ, and his Spirit, and holy communion with God? or must God show you the mercy of glory, without the mercy of grace? which is a contradiction. Strange! that the same men that will not be entreated to accept of mercy, nor let it save them, are yet saying, that God will be merciful and save them.

And for your poverty and suffering, is it not against your will? you cannot deny it: and will God save any man for that which is against his will? You would have riches, and honour, and pleasure, and your good things in this life, as well as others, if you could tell how: you love the world as well as others, if you could get more of it. And to be carnal and worldly for so poor a pittance, and to love the world when you suffer in it, doth make you more inexcusable than the rich. The devils have suffered more than you, and so have many thousand souls in hell; and yet they shall be saved never the more. If you are poor in the world, but rich in faith and holiness, then you may See Heb. xi. 6, 7, 9, 10. well expect salvation, James ii. 5.

But if your sufferings make you no more holy, they do but aggravate your sin.

*Tempt.* XXVIII. Also the devil blindeth sinners, by keeping them ignorant of the nature and power of holiness of heart and life. They know it not by any experience; and he will not let them see it and judge of it in the Scripture, where it is to be seen without any mixed contraries; but he points them only to professors of holiness, and commonly to the weakest and the worst of them, and to that which is worst in them, and showeth them the miscarriages of hypocrites, and the falls of the weaker sort of christians, and then tells them, This is their godliness and religion; they are all alike.

*Direct.* XXVIII. But it is easy to see, how these men deceive and condemn themselves. This is as if you should plead that a beast is wiser than a man, because some men are drunk, and some are passionate, and some are mad. Drunkenness and passions, which are the disturbances of reason, are no disgrace to reason, but to themselves: nor were they a disgrace themselves, if reason which they hinder were not honourable. So no man's sins are a disgrace to holiness, which condemneth them: nor were they bad themselves, if holiness were not good, which they oppose. It is no disgrace to the daylight or sun, that there is night and darkness: nor were darkness bad, if light were not good. Will you refuse health, because some men are sick? nay, will you rather choose to be dead, because the living have infirmities? The devil's reasoning is foolisher than this! Holiness is of absolute necessity to salvation. If many that do more than you, are as bad as you imagine, what a case then are you in, that have not near so much as they! If they that make it their greatest care to please God, and be saved, are as very hypocrites as the devil would persuade you, what a hopeless case then are you in, that come far short of them! If so, you must do more than they,



and not less, if you will be saved; or else out of your own mouths will you be condemned.

*Tempt. XXIX.* Another way of the tempter is, by drawing them desperately to venture their souls; come on them what will, they will put it to the venture, rather than live so strict a life.

*Direct. XXIX.* But, O man, consider what thou dost, and who will have the loss of it! and how quickly it may be too late to recall thy adventure! What should put thee on so mad a resolution? Is sin so good? is hell so easy? is thy soul so contemptible? is heaven such a trifle? is God so hard a master? is his work so grievous, and his way so bad? doth he require any thing unreasonable of you? hath God set you such a grievous task, that it is better venture on damnation than perform it? You cannot believe this, if you believe him to be God. Come near, and think more deliberately on it, and you will find you might better run from your food, your friend, your life, than from your God, and from a holy life, when you run but into sin and hell.

*Tempt. XXX.* Another great temptation is, in making them believe that their sins are but such common infirmities as the best have: they cannot deny but they have their faults; but are not all men sinners? They hope that they are not reigning, unpardoned sins.

*Direct. XXX.* But, oh how great a difference is between a converted and an unconverted sinner! between the failings of a child and the contempt of a rebel! between a sinner that hath no gross or mortal sin, and hateth, bewaileth, and striveth against his infirmities; and a sinner that loveth his sin, and is loth to leave it, and maketh light of it, and loveth not a holy life. God will one day show you a difference between these two, when you see that there are sinners that are justified and saved, and sinners that are condemned.

*Tempt. I.* But here are many subordinate temptations, by which Satan persuades them that their sins are but infirmities: one is, because their sin is but in the heart, and appeareth not in outward deeds: and they take *restraint* for sanctification.

*Direct. I.* Alas! man, the life and reign of sin is in the heart; that is its garrison and throne: the life of sin lieth in the prevalence of your lusts within, against the power of reason and will. All outward sins are but acts of obedience to the reigning sin within; and a gathering tribute for this, which is the king. For this it is that they make provision, Rom. xiii. 14. On this all is consumed, James iv. 3. Original sin may be reigning sin (as a king may be born a king). Sin certainly reigneth, till the soul be converted and born again.

*Tempt. II.* The devil tells them it is but an infirmity, because it is no open, gross, disgraceful sin: it is hard to believe that they are in danger of hell, for sins which are accounted small.

*Direct. II.* But do you think it is no mortal, heinous sin, to be void of the love of God and holiness? to love the flesh and the world above him? to set more by earth than heaven, and do more for it? However they show themselves, these are the great and mortal sins. Sin is not less dangerous for lying secret in the heart. The root and heart are usually unseen. Some kings (as in China, Persia, &c.) keep out of sight for the honour of their majesty. Kings are the spring of government; but actions of state are executed by officers. When you see a man go, or work, you know that it is something within which is the cause of all. If sin appeared without, as it is within, it would lose much of its power and majesty.

Then ministers, and friends, and every good man would cast a stone at it; but its secrecy is its peace. The devil himself prevaileth by keeping out of sight. If he were seen, he would be less obeyed. So it is with the reigning sins of the heart. Pride and covetousness may be reigning sins, though they appear not in any notorious, disgraceful course of life. David's hiding his sin, or Rachel her idol, made them not the better. It is a mercy to some men, that God permitteth them to fall into some open, scandalous sin, which may tend to humble them, who would not have been humbled nor convinced by heart-sins alone. See Jer. iv. 14; Hosea vii. 6, 7. An oven is hottest when it is stopped.

*Tempt. III.* Satan tells them, they are not unpardoned, reigning sins, because they are common in the world. If all that are as bad as I must be condemned, say they, God help a great number.

*Direct. III.* But know you not that reigning sin is much more common than saving holiness? and that the gate is wide, and the way is broad, that leadeth to destruction, and many go in at it? Salvation is as rare as holiness; and damnation as common as reigning sin, where it is not cured. This sign therefore makes against you.

*Tempt. IV.* But, saith the tempter, they are such sins as you see good men commit: you play at the same games as they: you do but what you see them do; and they are pardoned.

*Direct. IV.* You must judge the man by his works, and not the works by the man. And there is more to be looked at, than the bare matter of an act. A good man and a bad may play at the same game, but not with the same end, nor with the same love to sport, nor so frequently and long to the loss of time. Many drops may wear a stone: many stripes with small twigs may draw blood. Many mean men in a senate have been as great kings: you may have many of these little sins set all together, which plainly make up a carnal life. The power of a sin is more considerable than the outward show. A poor man, if he be in the place of a magistrate, may be a ruler. And a sin materially small, and such as better men commit, may be a sin in power and rule with you, and concur with others which are greater.

*Tempt. V.* But, saith the tempter, they are but sins of omission, and such are not reigning sins.

*Direct. V.* Sins of omission are always accompanied with some positive, sensual affection to the creature, which diverteth the soul, and causeth the omission. And so omission is no small part of the reigning sin. The not using of reason and the will for God, and for the mastering of sensuality, is much of the state of ungodliness in man. Denying God the heart and life, is no small sin. God made you to do good, and not only to do no harm: else a stone or corpse were as good a christian as you; for they do less harm than you. If sin have a negative voice in your religion, whether God shall be worshipped and obeyed or not, it is your king: it may show its power as well by commanding you not to pray, and not to consider, and not to read, as in commanding you to be drunk or swear. The wicked are described by omissions: such as "will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts," Psal. x. 4. Such as "know not God, and call not on his name," Jer. x. 25. That have "no truth, or mercy, or knowledge of God," Hos. iv. 1. That "feed not, clothe not, visit not" Christ in his members, Matt. xxv.; that hide their talents, Matt. xxv. Indeed, if God have not your heart, the creature hath it; and so it is omission and commission that go together in your reigning sin.



*Tempt.* VI. But, saith the tempter, they are but sins of ignorance, and therefore they are not reigning sins: at least you are not certain that they are sins.

*Direct.* VI. And indeed do you not know that it is a sin to love the world better than God? and fleshly pleasure better than God's service? and riches better than grace and holiness? and to do more for the body than for the soul, and for earth than for heaven? Are you uncertain whether these are sins? And do you not feel that they are your sins? You cannot pretend ignorance for these. But what causeth your ignorance? Is it because you would fain know, and cannot? Do you read, and hear, and study, and inquire, and pray for knowledge, and yet cannot know? Or is it not because you would not know, or think it not worth the pains to get it; or because you love your sin? And will such wilful ignorance as this excuse you? No; it doth make your sin the greater. It showeth the greater dominion of sin, when it can use thee as the Philistines did Samson, put out thy eyes, and make a drudge of thee; and conquer thy reason, and make thee believe that evil is good and good is evil. Now it hath mastered the principal fortress of thy soul, when thy understanding is mastered by it. He is reconciled indeed to his enemy, who taketh him to be a friend. Do you not know, that God should have your heart, and heaven should have your chiefest care and diligence; and that you should make the word of God your rule, and your delight, and meditation day and night? If you know not these things, it is because you would not know them: and it is a miserable case to be given up to a blinded mind! Take heed, lest at last you commit the horridest sins, and do not know them to be sins. For such there are that mock at godliness, and persecute christians and ministers of Christ, and know not that they do ill; but think they do God service, John xvi. 2. If a man will make himself drunk, and then kill, and steal, and abuse his neighbours, and say, I knew not that I did ill, it shall not excuse him. This is your case. You are drunken with the love of fleshly pleasure and worldly things, and these carry you so away, that you have neither heart nor time to study the Scriptures, and hear, and think what God saith to you, and then say that you did not know.

*Tempt.* VII. But, saith the tempter, it cannot be a mortal reigning sin, because it is not committed with the whole heart, nor without some struggling and resistance: dost thou not feel the Spirit striving against the flesh? and so it is with the regenerate, Gal. v. 17; Rom. vii. 20—23. The good which thou dost not do, thou wouldst do; and the evil which thou dost, thou wouldst not do; so then it is no more thou that dost it, but sin that dwelleth in thee. In a sensual unregenerate person, there is but one party, there is nothing but flesh; but thou feelest the combat between the flesh and the Spirit within thee.

*Direct.* VII. This is a snare so subtle and dangerous, that you have need of eyes in your head to escape it. Understand therefore, that as to the two texts of Scripture, much abused by the tempter, they speak not at all of mortal reigning sin, but of the unwilling infirmities of such as had subdued all such sin, and walked not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; and whose wills were habitually bent to good; and fain would have been perfect, and not have been guilty of an idle thought, or word, or of any imperfection in their holiest service, but lived up to all that the law requireth: but this they could not do, because the flesh did cast many stops before the will in the performance. But this is nothing to the case of one that liveth in gross sin, and an ungodly life, and hath strivings and convictions, and

uneffectual wishes to be better and to turn, but never doth it. This is but sinning against conscience, and resisting the Spirit that would convert you; and it maketh you worthy of many stripes, as being rebellious against the importunities of grace. Sin may be resisted where it is never conquered; it may reign nevertheless for some contradiction. Every one that resisteth the king, doth not depose him from his throne. It is a dangerous deceit to think that every good desire that contradicteth sin, doth conquer it, and is a sign of saving grace. It must be a desire after a state of godliness, and an effectual desire too. There are degrees of power: some may have a less and limited power, and yet be rulers. As the evil spirits that possessed <sup>What resistance of</sup> men's bodies, were a legion in one, <sup>sin may be in the</sup> and but one in others, yet both were <sup>ungodly.</sup> possessed; so is it here. Grace is not without resistance in a holy soul; there are some remnants of corruption in the will itself, resisting the good; and yet it followeth not that grace doth not rule. So is it in the sin of the unregenerate. No man in this life is so good as he will be in heaven, or so bad as he will be in hell; therefore none is void of all moral good. And the least good will resist evil, in its degree, as light doth darkness. As in these cases:

1. There is in the unregenerate a remnant of natural knowledge and conscience. Some discoveries of God and his will there are in his works: God hath not left himself without witness. See Acts xiv. 17; xvii. 27; Rom. i. 19, 20; ii. 7—9. This light and law of nature governed the heathens; and this in its measure resisteth sin, and assisteth conscience.

2. When supernatural extrinsic revelation in the Scripture, is added to the light and law of nature, and the ungodly have all the same law as the best; it may do more.

3. Moreover, an ungodly man may live under a most powerful preacher, that will never let him alone in his sins, and may stir up much fear in him, and many good purposes, and almost persuade him to be a true christian; and not only to have some ineffectual wishings and strivings against sin, but to do many things after the preacher, as Herod did after John, and to escape the common pollutions of the world, 2 Pet. ii. 20.

4. Some sharp affliction, added to the rest, may make him seem to others a true penitent: when he is stopped in his course of sin, as Balaam was by the angel, with a drawn sword, and seeth that he cannot go on but in danger of his life; and that God is still meeting him with some cross, and hedging up his way with thorns (for such mercy he showeth to some of the ungodly); this may not only breed resistance of sin, but some reformation. When the Babylonians were planted in Samaria they feared not God, and he sent lions among them; and then they feared him, and sent up some kind of service to him, performed by a base sort of priests; "they feared the Lord, and served their own gods," thinking it was safest to please all, 2 Kings xvii. 25, 32, 33. Affliction maketh bad men likeliest to the good.

5. Good education and company may do very much: it may help them to much knowledge, and make them professors of strict religion; and constant companions with those that fear sin, and avoid it; and therefore they must needs go far then, as Joash did all the days of Jehoiada, 2 Chron. xxiv. 2. As plants and fruits change with the soil by transplantation, and as the climate maketh some blackmoors and some white; so education and converse have so great a power on the mind, that they come next to grace, and are oft the means of it.



6. And God giveth to many, internally, some grace of the Spirit, which is not proper to them that are saved, but common or preparatory only. And this may make much resistance against sin, though it do not mortify it. One that should live but under the convictions that Judas had when he hanged himself, I warrant him, would have strivings and combats against sin in him, though he were unsanctified.

7. Yea, the interest and power of one sin may resist another: as covetousness may make much resistance against sensuality and pride of life, and pride may resist all disgraceful sin.

*Tempt.* VIII. But, saith the tempter, it is not unpardoned sin, because thou art sorry and dost repent for it when thou hast committed it; and all sin is pardoned that is repented of.

*Direct.* VIII. All the foresaid causes which may make some resistance of sin in the ungodly, may cause also some sorrow and repenting in them. There is repenting and sorrow for sin in hell. All men repent and are sorry at last; but few repent so, as to be pardoned and saved. When a sinner hath had all the sweetness out of sin that it can yield him, and seeth that it is all gone, and the sting is left behind, no marvel if he repent. I think there is scarce any drunkard, or whoremonger, or glutton, (that is not a flat infidel,) but he repenteth of the sin that is past, because he hath had all out of it that it can yield him, and there is nothing left of it that is lovely: but yet he goeth on still, which showeth that his repentance was unsound. True repentance is a thorough change of the heart and life; a turning from sin to a holy life, and such a sorrow for what is past as would not let you do it if it were to do again. If you truly repent, you would not do so again, if you had all the same temptations.

*Tempt.* IX. But, saith the tempter, it is but one sin, and the rest of thy life is good and blameless; and God judgeth by the greater part of thy life, whether the evil or the good be most.

*Direct.* IX. If a man be a murderer, or a traitor, will you excuse him, because the rest of his life is good, and it is but one sin that he is charged with? One sort of poison may kill a man; and one stab at the heart, though all his body else be whole: you may surfeit on one dish: one leak may sink a ship. James ii. 10, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." See Ezek. xviii. 10, 11. Indeed God doth judge by the bent of thy heart, and the main drift and endeavour of thy life. But canst thou say, that the bent of thy heart, and the main endeavour of thy life, is for God, and heaven, and holiness? No: if it were, thou wert regenerate; and this would not let thee live in any one beloved, chosen, wilful sin. The bent of a man's heart and life may be sinful, earthly, fleshly, though it run but in the channel of one way of gross sinning: as a man may be covetous, that hath but one trade; and a whoremonger, that hath but one whore; and an idolater, that hath but one idol. If thou lovedst God better, thou wouldst let go thy sin; and if thou love any one sin better than God, the whole bent of thy heart and life is wicked: for it is not set upon God and heaven, and therefore is ungodly.

*Tempt.* X. But, saith the tempter, it is not reigning, unpardoned sin, because thou believest in Jesus Christ; and all that believe, are pardoned, and justified from all their sin.

*Direct.* X. He that savingly believeth in Christ, doth take him entirely for his Saviour and Governor; and giveth up himself to be saved, sanctified, and

<sup>a</sup> See more of Temptations, chap. iii. direct. 9.

ruled by him. As trusting your physician, implieth that you take his medicines, and follow his advice, and so trust him; and not that you trust to be cured while you disobey him, by bare trusting: so is it as to your faith and trust in Christ; it is a belief or trust, that he will save all those that are ruled by him in order to salvation. "He is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him," Heb. v. 9. If you believe in Christ, you believe Christ: and if you believe Christ, you believe "that except a man be converted, and born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," John iii. 3, 5; Matt. xviii. 3; and that he that is "in Christ, is a new creature; old things are past away, and all is become new," 2 Cor. v. 17; and that "without holiness, none shall see God," Heb. xii. 14; and that "no fornicator, effeminate, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, murderers, liars, shall enter into, or have any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ," 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Eph. v. 4-6; Rev. xxi. 27; xxii. 14, 15. If you believe Christ, you must believe that you cannot be saved unless you be converted. It is the devil, and not Christ, that telleth you, you may be pardoned and saved in an unholy, unregenerate state: and it is sad, that men should believe the devil, and call this a believing in Christ, and think to be saved for so believing; as if false faith and presumption pleased God! Christ will not save men for believing a lie, and believing the father of lies before him; nor will he save all that are confident they shall be saved. If you think you have any part in Christ, remember Rom. viii. 9, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his."<sup>a</sup>

## CHAPTER II.

### DIRECTIONS TO YOUNG CHRISTIANS OR BEGINNERS IN RELIGION, FOR THEIR ESTABLISHMENT AND SAFE PROCEEDING.<sup>a</sup>

BEFORE I come to the common directions for the exercise of grace, and walking with God, containing the common duties of christianity, I shall lay down some previous instructions, proper to those that are but newly entered into religion (presupposing what is said in my book of directions to those that are yet under the work of conversion, to prevent their mis-carrying by a false superficial change).

*Direct.* I. Take heed lest it be the novelty or reputation of truth and godliness, that takes with you, more than the solid evidence of their excellency and necessity; lest when the novelty and reputation are gone, your religion wither and consume away.

It is said of John and the Jews by Christ, "He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light," John v. 35. All men are affected most with things that seem new and strange to them. It is not only the infirmity of children, that are pleased with new clothes, and new toys and games; but even to graver, wiser persons, new things are most affecting, and commonness and custom dulls delight. Our habitations, and possessions, and honours, are most pleasing to us at the first; and every condition of life doth most affect us at the first: if nature were not much for novelty, the publishing of news-books would not have been so gain-

<sup>a</sup> I have since written a book on this subject, to which I refer the reader for fuller direction.