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John Lewis

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Dunblane

24 Jan 1863



T H E

*Christian, the Student, and
Pastor,*

E X E M P L I F I E D;

IN THE LIVES OF

Mess. JAMES FRAZER, JAMES HOGG, THOMAS
HALYBURTON, in Scotland; OWEN STOCK-
TON, MATTHEW HENRY, PHILIP DOD-
DRIDGE, in England; THOMAS SHEP-
HERD, COTTON MATHER, and JONA-
THAN EDWARDS, in America.

B Y

J O H N B R O W N,

Minister of the Gospel at HADDINGTON.

Be not slothful, but followers of them, who, through faith and
patience, inherit the promises. Heb. vi. 12.



E D I N B U R G H:

Printed by and for GAVIN ALSTON,

M.DCC.LXXXI.



To the READER.

TO disparage the fashionable, but soul-ruining
simplicity in religion,—and promote a distinct,
deep, and heart-captivating experience of the gracious
working of the Spirit of God, issuing in a devout, ac-
tive, and orderly practice, is the aim of the subsequent
EXEMPLIFICATION. The men of God, and their de-
lightful attainments therein represented, are far above
my recommendation.

The principal substance of their respective MEMOIRS,
I have endeavoured faithfully to exhibit;—which, I
hope, will excite to a perusal of the *Memoirs* at large.
—How far these LIVES illustrate, corroborate, or sup-
ply the defects of each other, the reader is left to judge.
—The shame, the pain, the pleasure, which my own
soul felt in the abridging, makes me hope, that others
may experience the like in the reading of them.

Might I prevail with my pupils, or others, I would
earnestly obtest you, for the Lord's sake, and for the
sake of souls unnumbered, to lay DEEP the foundation
of your professed religion, if you wish the *ravishing de-*
lights of it.—Formal gnawings of the shell, will but
render it disgusting to you, and make your ministra-
tions of the gospel a task, a burden to you, and a curse
to your hearers. None that know how long, and how
eagerly I have hunted after *human literature*, as my
circumstances permitted, will readily suspect me for an
enthusiastic contemner of it.—But, as on the brink of
eternity, I dare boldly pronounce it all *vanity, and*
vexation of spirit, when compared with, or not subor-
dinated to the experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ,
as *made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and*
sanctification, and redemption.—There is no language,
ancient or modern, like that of the gospel of the grace
of God, pronounced by the HOLY GHOST, to one's heart,
—and of heaven-born souls to God, under his influ-
ence;—no *history* like that of Jesus Christ, redemption
through his blood, and effectual application of his grace;

—no science like that of beholding the Word made flesh and beholding the infinite perfections of JEHOVAH in him, and through him, in every creature;—as from eternity manifested, and to be for ever manifested, in our inconceivable happiness, to the praise of the glory of his grace;—no pleasure like that of fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ;—and all that joy and peace, with which the God of hope fills men in believing,—that joy unspeakable, and full of glory.—Come then, Let us go up to the mountain of the God of Jacob; and he will teach of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.—Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.—Let us be no more slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience, inherit the promises.

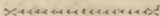
I have not here touched the excellent *Memoirs of Mr Boscawen*, as they are still private property; and his own grandson has a far better right to abridge them.

The CHRISTIAN, the STUDENT,
and PASTOR,

E X E M P L I F I E D;

In the LIVES of

Mess. FRASER, HOGG, HALYBURTON,
OW. STOCKTON, MATTH. HENRY,
and PH. DODDRIDGE.



FIRST, Memoirs of Mr JAMES FRASER
of Culrofs.

C H A P. I.

*Of his convictions, conversion, and particular back-
slidings and recoveries.*

BEING born in the north of Scotland 1639,
and not likely to live, on account of bad humours in my body, the Lord made them break out in boils, and relieved me. My temper was peevish, unruly, and impatient of restraint. Notwithstanding the Lord's marvellous preservation of me from drowning in a well, into which my own perverse rambling had plunged me, my wickedness of nature appeared in many vicious and childish tricks, Prov. xx. 21. I early learned and repeated some forms of prayer. If I was punctual in this, I had no small inward peace and comfort;

fort; and, if I omitted it, I was vexed, and sometimes terrified by fearful dreams. But my overseer turning careless, Judg. xvii. 6.; God giving me up to my own heart's lust, Psal. lv. 19.; and my soul not being united to Christ the fountain of life, John xv. 4.; and my inward corruptions still reigning, Luke viii. 14.; and I having no real satisfaction in God himself; I sought it in them, Matth. xii. 44.; and falling into bad company, 1 Cor. v. 6. and xv. 33. I, by degrees, became more and more unconcerned, Prov. xxiv. 33. 34.; and at last, without any challenge from conscience, omitted prayer, and indulged myself in every sin answerable to my age.

BEING about eleven years old, we got a chaplain, who, on account of his religious strictness, was not a little hated in our family. He obliged me to lay aside my learned forms of prayer, and to read a portion of scripture evening and morning, and conceive prayers for myself. In compliance with this, I, for a time, found no small peace and pleasure. But at length, my lightness in the time of public prayer; my slight performance of religious duties, when I could not omit them; my omitting of them sometimes, when I was not under the eye of my governor; my playing on the Lord's day with some other children; my pouring contempt on my governor; and at last the putting of him from our family; and my falling into bad company, issued in my abandoning myself to many open vices. Nevertheless, God, by sharp convictions, Acts ii. 37. Psal. lxi. 3.; by the tyrannical cruelty of my new teacher, Psal.

Is. xviii. 35. Is. xxvi. 12. 16. ; and by the exhortations of our instructors, 2 Chron. xxiv. 2. ; obliged me at times to return to my prayers.

ABOUT the 15th year of my life, I proceeded a step further. I applied myself not only to prayer, but to the other external duties of religion. I left off my former vices, and became a kind of conscientious practiser of moral virtues. I became a reprover of others, and conceived a kind of love to the godly. Awakened a little, by reading the *Practice of piety*, I resolved to live not only an harmless, but a devout life. In my study of this, I found marvellous peace and pleasure; and thought myself truly converted to God. Meanwhile I regarded nothing more than an outward conformity to the law, 2 Tim. iii. 5. Amos iv. 4. I judged myself chiefly by the multitude and length of my duties, Matth. vi. 7. I rested in my duties as my end, and did not use them as means of bringing me to Christ, Is. i. 15. When my conscience challenged me for any sin, I doubled my duties, in order to atone for it, Mic. vi. 7. Amos iv. 4. Prov. vii. 14. Matth. xxiii. 14. I remained utterly ignorant of the mystery of faith, and of justification through the imputed righteousness of Christ, Rom. x. 3. I regarded duties, gifts, and graces, more than Christ himself, Hos. vii. 16. Though I detested prophane persons, I did not relish the more strict and lively Christians, John xv. 18. I could not relish heaven itself, in its constant spiritual exercises, and its want of carnal comforts. As I performed my duties in order to satisfy my own conscience, not

from love to God, who was a terror to me, my legal fears about eternal life increased as my duties did, Matth. xix. 16.

AFTER some time, my carnal pleasures, vanity, and bad companions, drew me off from all my religious appearances, and plunged me as deep in the omission of duties, and commission of vices, as ever, Hof. iv. 11. Luke viii. 14. Jer. ii. 28. Mal. i. 13. and iii. 14. But the Lord, in his due time, mercifully re-awakened me, and convinced me that all my former religion had been naught. I saw that all I had done was insufficient to save me; and therefore concluded, that I was certainly in an unregenerate estate, and that I was in some measure barred out from it; but I had some hope, that God would bring me to it before I died. I had some sharp convictions of particular actual sins, but none of the sin of my nature. I vainly expected some extraordinary revelation from God to my soul. When the Spirit moved me, I prayed much; and had no inward peace, but when I prayed with lively affections. I imagined, that such as were regenerated lived in perpetual comfort and glory, and performed religious duties in a lively manner. Observing the untender conversation of most professed Christians, and the complaints and doubts of others, I condemned them all as little better than mere formalists. I loved the preachers best, who were *most methodical and eloquent*, not those who were *most spiritual and searching*. I often neglected duties, and fell into acts of prophane swearing, lying, idle talk, and playing at cards. I mourned for sin, not because

cause it offended God, but because it issued in misery. In this condition I continued about three years, not without some fearful impressions of God's wrath, and apprehensions, that I had committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, particularly in a blasphemous expression which I had uttered, while I was playing at cards.

FROM my above-mentioned exercise, *observe*,
 (1.) The time of youth is the fittest season for seeking God, Lam. iii. 27. Eccl. xii. 1. (2.) Proper care of superiors, is an excellent mean of seasoning young minds with the knowledge of God, Eph. vi. 4. Gen. xviii. 19. Deut. vi. 7. (3.) When this mean is conscientiously used, it is ordinarily blessed, Gen. xviii. 19. (4.) There is an appointed day of Christ's power; in which alone sinners are converted to him, Eccl. iii. 1. Psal. cx. 3. (5.) God often strives much with sinners, before he effectually draws them to himself. Rev. iii. 20. Is. v. 4. (6.) God is often kind to the unthankful and evil, in their extremity, Psal. cxvii. 17. 18. 19. Is. lvii. 17. 18. 19. (7.) The earnest prayers, even of unregenerate men, in the day of their distress, are often graciously answered by God, 1 Kings xxi. 29. Psal. lxxviii. 37. 38. 2 Kings xiii. 4. 5. (8.) Distressed souls ordinarily apply themselves to other physicians, before they come to Christ, Hos. v. 13. (9.) All false rest, and gilded graces, will fade away at last, 1 Pet. i. 24. Matth. xiii. 21. 22. (10.) Unregenerate persons may receive great favours and deliverances from God, Gen. xvi. 13. (11.) None are so bad, but they may become worse, if

the Lord gives them up to their own lusts, 1 Kings. xxi. (12.) Carelessness in prayer, meditation, and other private duties of religion, hath a fearful tendency to promote spiritual decays, Exod. xvi. 11. Matth. xxvi. 41. Psal. lvi. 9.

BEING now about eighteen years of age, I purposed to partake of the Lord's supper, which was to be dispensed the next Sabbath.—I knew that I was still unconverted, and that I would risk the most dreadful wickedness and danger, if I were not converted before next Lord's day. I therefore resolved, by the Lord's assistance, to use every possible means of promoting my conversion before that time. After I went home, I laboured in prayer, reading, and meditation, and found such sweetness in them, as I had never known before. Finding, by self-examination, on Wednesday-night, that I was still unregenerate, I, amidst no small anguish and perplexity, resolved to set apart the next day for solemn fasting, and supplication to God in secret.—After I had, for a time, poured forth my complaints before him, he, by his word, so represented to my mind Jesus Christ, as the only *Mediator, Friend, Saviour*, and helper of poor sinners, the *Way, the Truth, and the Life*, who died for them,—as enlightened and conquered my heart, and made me chearfully content to give up with all things as mere vanity or vileness, and receive him, in all his offices, as my *all in all*, and to be wholly his, henceforth and for ever. O the liberty I had in pouring out my heart in prayer!—for a quarter of an hour my soul was absolutely

ly

ly ravished with the views of his glory and grace ; after which the manifestation gradually abated.

THE Lord's withdrawment of his sensible presence perplexed me much. Reading *Shepherd's Sound Believer*, I began to fear that my conversion had not been of the right kind ; and if it was not, I knew not who Jesus Christ might be, or what I should do. My discouragement so increased, that I thought my condition worse than ever. I sought him night and day, under a deep sense of the danger of wanting him at his table ; but nothing could draw him to my soul, till his own hour came. I knew not how to live by faith, when sense was gone, and so was quite discouraged. When Sabbath came, my fears and sorrows increased ; and I was tempted to abstain from communicating. But a minister, at the service of a table, hinting, that if any feared to draw guilt on themselves by partaking, but had been seeking Christ last week, and had found some droppings of his myrrh on the lock of the door of their hearts, they might come forward, as that was his token, I went to the table, but found not his sensible presence at it. In the afternoon I got my soul a little revived and encouraged. Having thus engaged myself to be the Lord's servant, I resolved to wait upon him, and trust my reward to him. For about a month, spiritual exercises, of every kind, were exceeding sweet to me, and I could delight in nothing else.

BUT not long after, I met with a grievous storm, of long continuance. In the view of another sacramental

erament, I set myself to prepare for it by self-examination and prayer. Reading the account of Christ's celebration of the sacrament, with his disciples, before his death, Luke xxii. I concluded that I had no true grace, because I could read of his dying-love with such coldness of heart. I also fretted that Christ, who was so kind to his disciples, was so unkind to me. This increased the bad frame of my soul; and I became full of bitterness, horror, and almost utter despair. By reading Shepherd's *Sincere convert*, I was fearfully wounded; and apprehended that all that I had met with amounted to no real conversion to Christ. My props being thus torn away, Satan entered into my soul with a whole flood of new horrors. My blasphemous expression was urged upon me, as certainly the sin against the Holy Ghost. My heart fretted and murmured against the Lord for guiding me thus. My conscience upbraided me, as already smelling of hell, and asked me, how God could look on such an accursed nature as mine: it upbraided me, as a reprobate, whose prayers could not avail me. Necessity drove me to prayer: but alas! my soul was bound up, and my mouth closed; and God appeared peculiarly dreadful, when ever I essayed it. Yet, having no other shift, I was forced to apply to him for relief. Sometimes I thought, my trouble could not be in wrath, as I had met with nothing like it when I was walking in my wickedness.

WHEN I was in this extremity, never opening my mind to any, some friends sent for me. I was

was glad thus to get rid of the sacramental feast, which was a terror to me. But, going to them, my temptations and horror increased, and every thing became a burden to me. My blasphemy, the terrible wickedness of my heart, and of all that I did, the difficulty of true conversion, the long uselessness of the means of grace to me, the terrors of reprobation, the apprehended fewness of them that are saved, terrible dreams of the last Judgment and of hell, fearful apprehensions of God, and dreadful despair of things ever becoming better with me, burdened my spirit. To aggravate all, I had to hear a lifeless minister. Nevertheless I went to church, with the rest; looking on it as indifferent whom I heard, as I thought it was beyond the power of means to help me. His text was, *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ*. Between sermons, I retired by myself, and poured out my distressed soul to God in prayer, but got no refreshing. But by that quotation, in the afternoon-sermon, *I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, and in unbelief*, the Lord persuaded me, that none of my sins committed before conversion could be that against the Holy Ghost, and that they were all pardoned. My heart was sanctified, and determined to seek the Lord till I should find him. I laboured to do good to others, and to spread the knowledge of Christ; by which means my own knowledge of him daily increased: God much blessed to me the reading of *Shepherd* and *Fennel's* works, the *Practice of piety*, and the *Confession of faith*.

I looked on the above-mentioned manifestation
of

of Christ as the time of my conversion to him ; because, thereafter, (1.) I found my heart to delight in such persons as were most holy and strict, 1 John iii. 14. (2.) I found it to esteem and delight in all the ordinances and commands of Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 2. (3.) I found it mortified to the world, and all its concerns, 1 John ii. 15. (4.) I found it to esteem, love, and delight in Jesus Christ himself above all things else, saints, duties, or ordinances, Psal. lxxiii. 25. 26. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. (5.) I found an universal and abiding change wrought in my soul, 2 Cor. v. 17. (6.) I was made zealous against sin and sinners, and to endeavour the drawing of all that I could to Christ, by instructing and exhorting them, Prov. x. 21. Luke xxii. 32. (7.) I understood and delighted in the word of God, especially the more spiritual parts of it, after a new manner, Prov. ii. 10. and vii. 4. Matth. xiii. 11. (8.) An impression of that manifestation remained with me, amidst all my after-shakings, John iv. 14. 1 John iii. 9. I perceived that the Lord had granted it to me. (1.) To draw my soul to him by faith and love, John vi. 40. 44. 45. and xx. 29. Psal. xxiv. 7. 9. (2.) To strengthen my faith of his love, and my hope of heaven, Eph. i. 13. 14. 2 Cor. i. 22. (3.) To comfort me in my choice of himself and his fulness, and to shew me what I might expect in heaven, 1 Cor. ii. 9. 12. (4.) To make known himself, in his own condescending power and glory, through my remarkable experience of its marvellous effects, 1 John v. 10. 20. In the terrible trouble which followed, he intended, (1.) To shew me the dreadful wickedness of my own heart,

heart, and make me humbly to acknowledge his grace and love to me, Job i. 11. 2 Chron. xxiii. 31. (2.) To encourage me to trust his power and grace when in the like strait, Rom. v. 4. 1 Sam. xvii. 37. 2 Tim. iv. 17. 18. 2 Cor. i. 10. Psal. lxiii. 7. (3.) To acquaint me with his diversified ways of converting sinners, that I might know how to direct others, 2 Cor. i. 4. and v. 14. Psal. xxxiv. 5. 6. 11. (4.) To make me a pattern of his long-suffering to others, 1 Tim. i. 16. (5.) To correct me for trampling on his distinguished kindness, 1 Cor. xi. 32. 2 Sam. xii. 13. 14. (6.) To draw out my heart in love to him for my seasonable deliverance, Psal. cxvi. 1. 16. lvii. 16. 17. 18. (7.) To teach me to live by faith, since sensible manifestations are but like the grass that withereth, 1 Pet. i. 24. 25. From his dealing in both, I learned, (1.) It is more sure to live by faith on God's word than by spiritual sense, 2 Cor. v. 7. 1 Pet. i. 24. (2.) On the day of espousals to Christ, some extraordinary views of his love and glory are ordinarily granted, Luke xv. 22. 23. Hos. ii. 15. (3.) In real conversion a soul closeth chiefly with Christ himself, Jer. ix. 1. Hos. vii. 16. (4.) Real grace makes a wonderful and universal change, both inward and outward, 2 Cor. v. 17. (5.) A gracious frame of heart is manifested, in loving and joining with the saints, Acts ix. 26. (6.) Much corruption may remain in a soul newly brought to Christ, and under great flashes of light and joy, Mark iv. 31. (7.) In conversion the Lord draws men sweetly, as well as *graciously*, John x. 16. and vi. 44. 45. Hos. xi. 3. 4. (8.) Great manifestations and enlargements

largements of heart are often succeeded by great troubles; and are more dangerous, and less firm, than that which is less sensible, and gradually attained by much pains, Psal. cii. 10. Matth. iii. 17. with iv. 1.—10. 2 Cor. xii. 1.—9. Luke viii. 15. Matth. xiii. 20. (9.) There are no sudden steps in the growth of grace, Exod. xxiii. 29. Psal. lxxxiv. 7. Mat. xiii. 33. (10.) The rapturous joys of saints and of hypocrites being so like to one another, it is safer to examine our state by the whole course of our life, than by any particular experience, Psal. xxiii. 6. and xxxvii. 37. (11.) The more painful and lasting God's preparation of the heart be, his superstructure of grace is ordinarily the more solid and glorious, Matth. xiii. 21. (12.) Satan's first temptations to apostacy begin with unbelieving doubts of our interest in Jesus Christ, Luke iv. 3. Heb. iii. 12. Jer. ii. 28. Lam. i. 9. (13.) Though God brings good out of legal terrors, they naturally tend to evil; and therefore ought never to be desired nor cherished, Gal. iv. 24. 30. Rom. vii. 9.—13. 1 John iv. 18. (14.) Young converts often mistake sadly, concerning God's love to them, and concerning the sanctification of their nature. (15.) The mercy of God appears, at last, in every remarkable providence towards his people, Psal. xxv. 10. Rom. viii. 28. (16.) In his mercies towards his people, God himself is more eminently seen than the instruments, Deut. xxxii. 12. and xxxiii. 29. Psal. lxviii. 35. and xviii. 31. 32. (17.) Sometimes the sharpest convictions of sin and misery, follow after real conversion to God, Heb. x. 32. Psal. cxxxviii. Heb. ii. 15. If. l. 10.

NOT long after, my spiritual light, life, and comfort, fearfully decayed, by the following steps : (1.) Through mistakes of the nature of sanctification, wrong constructions of his providences, and ignorance of his covenant of grace, I fell a doubting of my interest in God, and of his love to me ; hence I encouraged strange and hard thoughts of him, as if he had been mine enemy, who envied my welfare, Luke xix. 21. Gen. iii. 5. I looked on his declarations of his love in his word, to be but empty compliments or snares ; and so could not be taken with Christ's allurements in the gospel, 1 John v. 10. Hence, I could neither love nor believe him, Psal. lv. 21. Zech. xi. 8. I disliked fellowship with him, 1 Kings xii. 16. with Jer. iii. 19. I became heartless and superficial in his ordinances, Jer. xviii. 12. Lam. i. 9. Luke xix. 21. Finding no satisfaction in God, I sought it in creatures, Jer. ii. 13. (2.) Finding that the Lord still kept up in my soul some hope of conversion, and some relish of religious duties, Satan stirred me up to such a close attendance to things lawful in themselves, and particularly to the learning of short-hand writing, as drew me much off from the duties of God's worship. He pretended, that the sooner I obtained this knowledge, I would have the more leisure to wait on God. (3.) Returning home, I fell among dead formal companions ; or, what was worse, among professors of religion, who discouraged me by their complaints, hardened me by their untender practice, or offended me by their contempt of me, Prov. xxviii. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 33. Numb. xiii. 30. Ezek. xxxiv. 21. (4.) By these means spiritual

duties became a burden to me ; and my apprehensions of the multitude of my sins, the terribly hard and lifeless frame of my heart, and want of success in my vain attempts to recover my strength, threw me into the depths of despair, Jer. ii. 25. John xi. 39. Ezek. xxxvii. 4. Gen. xviii. 11. 12. 2 Kings vi. 33. Mean while Satan, from several scriptures, perswaded me, that I was judicially hardened, Is. vi. 10. ; that God would not hear my prayers, Prov. i. 26. ; and that, since I had been enlightened, and tasted of the powers of the world to come, and yet had fallen away, it was impossible to renew me to repentance, Heb. vi. 4. 5. 6.

My backslidings were many and dreadful ; I neglected, or but slightly performed, the duties of God's worship, in public or private. I idled away my time, neither glorifying God, edifying others, or profiting myself. I conformed to my carnal companions, in idle jesting, carnal converse on the Sabbath, intemperance, sinful diversions, and the like. Nevertheless, the Lord did not suffer me to fall totally away from him, Jer. li. 5. (1.) I was not altogether drawn off from religious duties, Psal. xiv. 4. (2.) I retained some secret hope and desire, that things would be better, 2 Cor. iv. 8. (3.) I still loved the people of God more than others, 1 John iii. 14. (4.) My decayed condition and backsliding course was unpleasant to me, when I remembered what I had met with : and I preferred my former husband and condition to it, Job xxix. 2.

3. 4. (5.) I was not so dead and senseless, as not to know that it was really evil with me.

No doubt, God's ends in permitting this decay, were, (1.) To give further proofs of his love, in renewing his kindness; in sparing me in this condition; preserving me from utter apostacy; and at last graciously reviving me. (2.) To render me watchful in time coming. (3.) To give me more experience of the power of my inward corruption, 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. (4.) To render me humble afterward, Ezek. xvi. 63.—On my side, many things tended to promote it (1.) I had no remarkable outward or inward afflictions, Psal. lv. 19. (2.) The sensible sweetness, which, for a time, attended duties, was withdrawn, Exod. xxxii. (3.) My spirits becoming wearied, I desired sleep, John v. 35. (4.) Satan and my corruptions had their restraints taken off, and were permitted to entangle me. (5.) I wanted the good company, and powerful sermons, which I once had. (6.) Graceless companions did eat all religion out of me. (7.) The formal, carnal, and lifeless conversation of some much-extolled professors, reduced me to the brink of despair. (8.) I too eagerly followed lawful enjoyments and studies. (9.) I became remiss in secret prayer and meditation. (10.) I did not set myself to stop my evils in their beginning. (11.) My ignorance, and unfixedness in principles, made me ready to believe every suggestion. (12.) I rashly believed myself still unconverted, and never like to be converted, and indulged hard thoughts of God, Heb. iii. 12. (13.) I was taken up with

lesser matters, rather than with weightier truths and duties; taken up with trials of grace, and not with common principles. (14.) I lived by sense, not by faith.

From this decay, I learned, (1.) Saints are very apt to fall from that measure of grace, or comfort, which they receive at their conversion, Rev. ii. 4-5. (2.) Saints never fall totally from grace, 1 John iii. 9. Song v. 2. (3.) The Lord ordinarily recovers saints from all their decays, Mic. vii. 8. Matth. xxv. 5. 7. (4.) Unbelieving doubts of our conversion and relation to God, are the first and chief spring of our apostacy from him, Heb. iii. 12. Jer. ii. 25. (5.) Christians thrive in spirituals, as they maintain fellowship with God in secret prayer and meditation, Matth. xxvi. 41. Exod. xvii. 11. (6.) Backsliders ordinarily proceed far in sin, before they be recovered, Jer. ii. 5. (7.) Saints are often drawn from God, by appearances of good, Gen. iii. 6. (8.) Spiritual apostacy from God comes on very gradually, Matth. xxv. 5. (9.) None but God himself can reclaim a backsliding soul, Hos. xiv. 4. (10.) Sinfulness contracted in backsliding is very hard to cure. (11.) In spiritual decays, saints are ordinarily very secure and sleepy, Matth. xxvi. 15. (12.) Affection, without solid knowledge, exposeth men to much instability, and other evils, 1 Cor. xiv. 20. Eph. iv. 14. (13.) Nothing but the word of God, powerfully applied, can cure a fiery temptation, Eph. vi. 16. (14.) Bad company, and peace in the world, are dangerous attendants of backsliding, Prov. i. 32. Eccl. iv. 10.

(15.)

(15.) Carnal and untender professors are great plagues, especially to young beginners in religion.

AFTER I had been long tossed up and down, enjoying occasional influences of the Holy Ghost, and then returning to my wonted decay, the Lord, at last, gave me a more distinct and full deliverance! (1.) He made me quite unsatisfied with, and weary of, my decayed condition, Job xxix. 2.—5. Hof. ii. 7. (2) After many perplexing thoughts, whether I might hope for conversion, he encouraged me earnestly to try the means of it, Ezra x. 2. 3. (3.) He made me apply, with some measure of earnestness, to prayer and meditation. (4.) When I had laboured in this manner about three weeks, without any apparent success, Satan tempted me, that Christ had given me over to judicial hardness of heart, and so I needed pray no more: but the Lord, by allowing me some liberty and sweetness in those duties, encouraged me to a more diligent and extensive use of the means of grace. (5.) By wearying me with duties, he mortified me to my self-righteousness. The sinfulness of my heart, and of all my duties, was discovered to me, and lay with a fearful weight on my spirit. My frames and exercises were so inconstant, and I had so little power with respect to any thing good, that it threw me into fearful perplexity. Thus, for about three years, I was wearied and burdened, emptied from vessel to vessel. (6.) By quickening me to extraordinary prayer, by directing me to some notes in books, or by stories of his dealing with others, and by the powerful gospel-

ministry which I then enjoyed, he kept in my dying life, and insensibly sanctified me more and more, and made heavenly things relish with my soul. (7.) By reading Shepherd's account of *true humiliation of soul*, in his *Sound Believer*, he so discovered his own sovereignty and equity to me, as all my proud murmurings of heart were brought down, and calmed, Lam. i. 18. and iii. 28. Dan. ix. 7. Jer. xii. 1. Lev. x. 3. Ps. xxxix. 9. My affections submitted to his present dispensations towards me, Mic. vii. 9. 1 Sam. iii. 18.; and I put myself in his will, to do with me as seemed good in his sight, 2 Sam. xv. 26. Judg. x. 15.; and, encouraged by a sermon of *Mr Andrew Gray*, on Prov. xxiii. 26. I essayed to give up my heart, and all my concerns, to Christ.

In this my wilderness-condition, (1.) I found great deadness and hardness of heart; and, in order to be delivered from it, not only mourned bitterly, but desired a law-work again. (2.) I neither saw, nor was admitted near Christ; and therefore lamented my ignorance, and was unsatisfied with all my enjoyments. (3.) I had no distinct assurance that I was converted to Christ; and I looked on his favours to me, rather as tokens that he would convert me. (4.) My frames and exercises were altogether inconstant, Hos. vi. 4. (5.) Through unbelief, I constructed hardly of God and his ways, and of myself, Exod. xvii. 3. (6.) I was tormented in spirit, because I met not with that sweetness in ordinances which I desired. (7.) I was very secure and unwatchful, and hence continually falling into some actual

actual sins, which disquieted me;—as wandering of heart from God, intemperance, idle words, unprofitable spending of time, carnality in my actions, civil or religious, slothfulness in attending the means of grace, pride, murmuring, unbelief, and want of love and fear. Notwithstanding all these provocations, the Lord, in his own time, awakened, convinced, and encouraged me; his visitations upheld my spirit. He continued ever with me, pitying me, sparing me, relieving me in my extremities, and preventing my utter ruin, Deut. xxxii. 10. Ezek. xxxvi. 32. Job vii. 17. 18. By an unexpected sermon from H. xlii. 4. *A bruised reed he will not break*;—by converse with a godly man, who told me the history of his conversion, and what brave days he had seen, though now all was deadness, carnality, and unbelief; and by some notes of Mr Shepherd, concerning *soul-humiliation*, on account of a dead, blind, and hard heart, after pleasant frames; I was wonderfully strengthened and encouraged.

No doubt, the Lord's ends in bringing me through this wilderness-condition, were, (1.) To make me know the weakness and sinfulness of my heart and life, for my humiliation, Deut. viii. 2. 1 Chron. xxxii. 31. John ii. 25. (2.) To make me better acquainted with his method of converting sinners, than my hasty incoming admitted, that I might be more enabled to edify others, Acts v. 32. 1 John i. 1. Psal. xxxiv. 4. 6. 11. 2 Cor. ii. 11. (3.) To do me much good in the end, Deut. viii. 16. Heb. xii. 11. Jer.

xxiv.

xxiv. 5. (4.) To prevent my backsliding, by keeping mine eyes waking, and emptying me from vessel to vessel, Judg. iii. 1. Psal. lxxiii. 3. 4. 5. 14. Jer. xlviii. 11. Psal. lv. 19. Job vii. 18. (5.) To give me experience of his own constant love and condescension, in continuing with me in all my wanderings and troubles, Deut. viii. 5. (6.) To beat me out of all my self-righteousness, worthiness, and sense, that I might get no rest but in himself by faith, Matth. xi. 28. Deut. viii. 3. I found they never gave me full peace or satisfaction; the roots of sin appeared remaining, the growth of grace was very indiscernible, and it could not hold out in temptations; my frames could not quicken me when I fell into deadness, and they did not last. (7.) To break my pride and stubbornness; and shew me that I could neither choose my own way, nor keep my resolutions, but as he directed and enabled me, Ezek. xxviii. 2. 6. 9. Dan. iv. 25. 27. Ezek. xx. 32.

HEREBY I learned, (1.) Persons may contract, by backsliding, what they may not, for a long time, get rid of, Josh. xxii. 17. (2.) After every kind of backsliding, the Lord draws the soul to himself in much the same way as at the first. Nay, a more distinct preparatory work may succeed the first drawing, Matth. xviii. 3. (3.) Spiritual pride is the strongest, bitterest, and most-
 -abhorred enemy, which the Lord hath, Ezek. xxviii. 9. Prov. xix. 3. It is hard to persuade a man that he can do nothing; no, not so much as to be thankful for the least mercy;—and to persuade him to live only in, by, and to another,
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submitting his will in all things to the will of God. (4.) It is the frequency and constancy of God's waterings, rather than the measure of them, which doth good to souls, John xv. 7. Hof. iii. 3. (5.) Unwatchfulness fearfully hinders growth in grace, Matth. xxvi. 41. (6.) Every good thing wrought in souls, is owing to the free grace of God by his word, Deut. viii. 3. (7.) In returning to God, mens souls are drawn by little and little, Exod. xxiii. 30. 1s. xlii. 16. (8.) The way to heaven is narrow and tedious, Deut. viii. 15. (9.) Some converts, for their encouragement, get their largest sensible joys at their first closing with Christ, Luke xv. 23. (10.) Men must be in some measure humbled before they receive any saving good, Lev. xxvi. 41. (11.) The spiritual exercises of all Christians are not similar in all their circumstances. (12.) There may be real humiliation in a soul, where there is no terror. (13.) Sense of a dead hard heart, is a most effectual mean of shutting up men to Christ, Rev. iii. 18. (14.) God is always carrying on his own work in the soul, though his doing so be not perceived, Mark iv. 27. (15.) Hope is the first step towards recovery, and all the sorrows of the elect have hope in them, Ezra x. 2. (16.) The beginnings of grace are very small, poor, and unpromising, Matth. xiii. 31. Ezek. xlvii. 3. 4. 5.

BUT the last and principal step of my recovery from my wilderness-condition, was by an acting of faith upon Jesus Christ. Finding no rest in my resignation of myself above mentioned, I, with no small anxiety, considered, what duty could be
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now a-wanting. The Spirit of God suggested to me, that I had all my life neglected the duty of *believing in Christ*, on account of which he had smitten me, in all the labours of mine hands, Hag. ii. 17. Heb. xi. 6.—I had thought, that none should believe but persons who had such qualifications, and some sensible manifestation of God's glory, to be the ground of it.—But now, the Lord shewed me from his word, particularly 1 John iii. 23. John vi. 29. Rom. iv. 20. Numb. xx. 12. Psal. lxxviii. 32. 33. that it was the duty of me, and every hearer of the gospel, however wicked or worthless, to believe in Christ. I also got all my objections answered. I saw that faith is the gift of God, not a thing hammered out of our own bowels; and that, by drawing and inviting men to believe, he gives them power to believe, as when he called on Lazarus to live and *come forth*.—I saw it could be no presumption to obey God, or receive what he offers.—I saw, that though none will believe, but such as are sensible of their own sinfulness and misery; yet it is the offer of the gospel, the call and command of God, not any qualifications, which give a right to believe on, or come to Christ, John v. 40. I saw that faith in Christ brings estimation of him from himself; and that if I would believe, he would be precious to me.—I saw, that not the felt influence of the drawing power of God, but his call in his word, was my warrant to believe, surer than even a voice from heaven, 2 Pet. i. 19.—I saw that the fruits of faith were not immediately discernible, but by abiding in Christ, Hos. vi. 2. John xv. 4. 5. I saw, that my emptiness and
vileness

vileness made me the fittest person in the world for him, to glorify his grace in my salvation, Luke i. 53. 1 Tim. i. 15. 16.

THE motives to believe, were also clearly presented to my view. I saw how earnest the Lord was with me, in commanding, inviting, beseeching, and threatening me; in shewing me my duty, answering all my objections and long waiting on me, Rev. iii. 20. and Rom. iv. 8.; that if I did not quickly believe, he would give up with me, Prov. i. 24.—28. I saw the delightful nature of believing, as a *receiving of Christ* offered in his word, and *giving my heart* to him, John i. 12. Prov. xxiii. 26. I saw how pleasant and acceptable faith is to God, and how detestable my unbelief, Luke xv. 7. Heb. xi. 6. I saw the happy fruits of faith, and the dreadful consequences of unbelief, Eph. ii. 8. Heb. ii. 3. and vi. 6. By his providence, particularly in the tossings of my own soul, the Lord also so shut me up, as obliged me to essay believing in Christ; that, according to his word, he bare me a good-will, and would do me good, and help me in all things, Job xiii. 15. Nevertheless, it was not till after fourteen days of further struggling, that the Lord remarkably manifested his love to my soul, and let me see my sincerity, in essaying to believe, Hos. vi. 1. 2.

I concluded my believing to be truly *sincere* and *saving*. (1.) It was wrought by the Lord himself, Eph. i. 19. 20. and ii. 8. Col. ii. 12. (2.) It was founded only on his word, Eph. ii. 20. (3.) It purified

purified my heart, and made me prize and desire grace, chiefly to put honour on Christ, Eph. i. 13. Acts xv. 9. 1 John iii. 3. (4.) It filled me with joy and peace, Rom. v. 2. 3. 1 Pet. i. 8. (5.) It was preceded by deep distress and humiliation, Matth. xi. 28. (6.) It strengthened me to serve God, Neh. viii. 10. Prov. xvii. 22.; and to pay my vows to him. (7.) It made Christ precious to me, 1 Pet. ii. 7. My faith had nevertheless many defects in it. (1.) I saw less of the power of God, in making me close with his promise, than in discovering my duty, and inclining me to believe; and so there was a sad mixture of my own operation in it. (2.) After believing, I rested much in my own act of faith, and drew comfort from it, instead of resting upon Christ the object of it. (3.) I knew better that believing was my duty, than what it really was to believe. (4.) I wanted distinct views of Christ in his offices, and the offers of him, and the grounds of believing in him, the covenant of grace, and its absolute promises. (5.) I did not distinctly close with Christ's person, but rather with what he had done. (6.) I closed with him for spiritual, but not for temporal benefits. (7.) I expected, that I would soon get sensible liveliness and comfort, without any more sad trouble and perplexity.

No doubt the Lord, by this dispensation, intended to give me more clear and distinct views of *effectual calling*; to teach me to live by faith, not by sense; to manifest his love to me, Hos. xi. 1. 3; and to bring me to his spiritual rest, Heb.

iv. 3. By it I learned, that, (1.) No man can believe till he be effectually called by God, Rom. viii. 30. 1 Cor. i. 2. Jer. iii. 22 (2.) Believing in, and resting on Christ for all things, is the immediate end of effectual calling, John vi. 28. 29. Matth. xxii. 3. 4. Is. lv. 1. (3.) God alone makes a sinner to answer his own call, 1 Pet. ii. 9. (4.) The outward call of the gospel being born in upon the heart by the Holy Ghost, renders it effectual, Hos. ii. 14. Jer. xxxi. 33. 2 Cor. iii. 3. (5.) God so stamps this call with his own authority, as to mark it his own, John vi. 63. Eccl. viii. 4. (6.) This call is given by God's own word, Rom. x. 16. 17. (7.) Faith is a cordial assent to, and particular application of God's promises, giving Christ and all his benefits, 1 Tim. i. 15. (8.) The command of God, the offer of the gospel, and especially the gospel declaration and promise, are the grounds of faith, Matth. xi. 28. 2 Cor. v. 19. 20. 21. (9.) Though it be the duty of all gospel-hearers to believe in Christ, and though preparatory qualifications give no right to Christ; yet he is never effectually revealed, till a soul find its own emptiness, and want of self-righteousness, Luke xiv. 21. 23. Matth. xi. 28. John ix. 39. Prov. ix. 4. 5. (10.) True humiliation for sin doth not consist in legal terrors; and a humbled soul may have great sense of its own deadness, Is. lxiii. 17. Psal. lxxx. 18. (11.) A heart truly humbled, is affected with original corruption and heart-plagues, John xvi. 9. (12.) All believers are not drawn to Christ precisely in the same manner. Some are brought to him under the influence of his revealed glory, Matth. xiii.

44.; some under great fears of eternal ruin, Acts ii. 37. Heb. vi. 18.; some under the sense of a dead, blind, and empty heart, Prov. ix. 4. Jer. xxxi. 18. 19. Hos. xiv. 1.; some, influenced by God's command, desperately venture their salvation on Christ alone, Job xiii. 15.; some come to Christ hanging on his promise, John vi. 37.; some, overcome by his love, consent to a marriage-union with him, Hos. ii. 19. 20. Eph. v. 25. Jer. xxxi. 33. and l. 5.; some come to him in the way of looking to him, Is. xlv. 22.; and others, by a kind of hoping in him for necessary blessings.

(13.) Love on Christ's part, and then on our part, opens the heart to him, Hos. ii. 19. 20. Rom. x. 10. (14.) In all right believing, the soul closeth with the person of Christ, as its *principal*, though not *immediate* object, Hos. xiv. 3. Jer. l. 5. Psal. xc. 1. (15) The whole life of a saint is a continued conversion to God, in which he is more and more humbled, draws nearer to God in faith and love, and walks more and more closely with him, Matth. xviii. 3. Luke xxii. 32. Prov. xxiii. 26. Song iv. 8. (16.) True faith strengthens, establisheth, and sanctifies the heart, 1 John iii. 3. Acts xv. 9. (17.) There may be true faith in the heart, though it do not manifest itself to the person in express and distinct acts of believing, John xiv. 7. 8. Acts xix. 2. (18) Where-ever God begins a saving work, he will carry it on to perfection, John xiii. 7. Matth. xiii. 31. (19.) Real closing with Christ, may be attended with much-felt deadness and hardness, Is. lxiii. 17. John v. 40. and xi. 25. (20.) The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation, John iv. 14.

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For about ten days my mind continued in peace, but the impression of joy decreased. Thereafter, I gradually fell under a fearful cloud. (1.) The Lord much withdrew from me his comforting and quickening presence. (2.) Having got my bands loosed, I imagined that I would not need to labour as formerly, Psal. xxx. 6. (3.) Not finding peace and rest in God, I thought to find it in the world, as if Christ alone could not have given me sufficient satisfaction. This made me, after many tossings, suspect that I had not truly closed with Christ; and that all I had met with in religion was but delusion. (4.) Satan violently tempted me, that, if there was a God, I was An atheist, who had never been convinced that there was a God; or that his word was true. A sensible horror upon my spirit attended this. (5.) Satan represented God to me, as one who had conceived hatred in his heart against me, and would take his opportunity to execute his vengeance upon me. (6.) Hereon my remaining hatred of God revived, and raged; God was terrible to me, and his ordinances a burden and terror; which occasionally increased my trouble. (7.) It heightened my sorrows, that, within fifteen days, I had access to partake of the Lord's supper: my dread of unworthy communicating on the one hand, and my proud aversion to hurt my reputation by forbearance, threw me into a sad case. (8.) On the Sabbath-morning, I was full of horror and atheistical temptations; but Satan leaving me a little, I went to the Lord's table, and there had atheistical and cruel thoughts of God borne in on my mind. (9.) My trouble was in-

creased by my communicating; especially, as I found it had gone so well with others, while it went so ill with me, Matth. viii. 11. 12. Atheistical thoughts, and objections against the divine authority of the scriptures, were so violently urged upon me, that sometimes I could not pray a word. And I thought, that if the Lord would remove my fears, I would take that as a sufficient evidence of his existence, and infinite power.

(1.) NOTWITHSTANDING all my discouragements, I prayed, read, and meditated; and sometimes found some healing thereby. (2.) I also retained a love to the people and ways of God, and a dislike of his enemies, John xxi. 20. (3.) Being for some time in the house of Mr Thomas Hog, his chearful and spiritual conversation, his discourses to me concerning temptations, his delightful explication of scriptures, by taking notice of the connection, his views of God's condescension and man's stubbornness, and his prayers, were of great use to quiet my spirit. (4.) But, when I left his house, my temptations returned upon me more violently than ever. In my extremity, I begged of the Lord, that, if he really existed, he would prove it to me, by removing my dreadful distress that night. That very night, while I was musing on the arguments in support of the divine authority of the scriptures, the Lord, by his Spirit, led me to see, that my inability to prove his being, or the veracity of his word, was no evidence at all against them; and that he had given sufficient evidence of both, against which
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no objections could avail. This composed my soul; and after about six months of a spiritual dead-throw, I had a dawning of about three months continuance.

IN this dispensation, the Lord intended, (1.) To manifest his own condescension and love. (2.) To cure me of my atheism, by a marvellous exertion of his power. (3.) To awaken me out of my carnal security, and hinder me from indulging it in time to come, Phil. iii. 13. 14. (4.) To discover my wickedness, misery, and weakness, when given up to myself, Hos. ix. 12. (5.) To put me out of conceit with legal terrors. (6.) To mortify me to extraordinary enlargements; as terrible distress always followed them in my case. (7.) To rebuke me for my ignorance of the object of faith, and my readiness to believe Satan; and for my thinking it sinful to strengthen and comfort my soul.

FROM it I learned, that, (1.) Weak faith cannot endure violent temptations, Matth. viii. 25. 26. (2.) Much of God in particular providences, is never learned till afterward, John xiii. 7. Deut. viii. 3. (3.) As Satan seeks to undermine, so the Lord powerfully teacheth his people fundamental principles of religion, Matth. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. xii. 3. (4.) No evidence, merely rational, can convince of, or cure atheism, Matth. xvi. 17. II. lvii. 19. (5.) Fears, produced in saints by atheistical temptations, especially proceed from their suspecting themselves to be Atheists. (6.) God establisheth his people by those very means, by

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which Satan labours to shake them loose, Gen. 1. 20. Psal. cxix. 71. (7.) However bad the case of our soul be, we ought never to despair. (8.) The devil ordinarily makes a great noise before he be driven out of his principal strong-holds. (9.) An evil under which a man mourns, and is burdened, will never damn him. (10.) The Lord is most ready to help, when distress is come to an extremity, Deut. xxxii. 36. M. xli. 17. (11.) In this world, we ought to look for one storm after another, John xvi. 33. Heb. iv. 9. (12.) All the troubles of saints prepare the way for gracious deliverances, Psal. xxxiv. 17. 19. 21. (13.) God afflicts his people, only, in proportion to the strength which he giveth them, Is. xxvii. 8. (14.) Violent temptations seldom last long, Rev. xii. 12. (15.) To fix his people in spiritual concerns, the Lord ordinarily first tries them in spirituals. (16.) Beginners in religion help Satan much, by their refusing spiritual comforts. (17.) It is not means, but the Lord's concurrence with them, that relieves distressed souls, Hos. i. 7. Matth. iv. 4. (18.) God must bend the will, as well as persuade the mind, in order to make one believe and accept relief. (19.) Pride and stubbornness under distress, are the very life and sting of it, Jam. iv. 6. (20.) Mercies too peremptorily asked, seldom do real good, Psal. lxxviii. 29. (21.) Extraordinary enjoyments ought not to be anxiously desired, as much adversity attends them, Eccl. vii. 14. (22.) True grace, even at its weakest, will make some appearance, Mic. vii. 9. (23.) God sometimes grants deliverance to his people, when they are

very

very little prepared for it. (14.) Satan perplexeth souls, not so much by attempting to disprove divine truths, as by urging them to demonstrate them, in opposition to his objections.

My pride, and hasty pushing of my deliverance, soon issued in a sad spiritual decay, of two years continuance. Being much abroad, and terribly embarrassed, by real or pretended claims on my worldly estate, I lost the spiritual liveliness I had attained; omitted, or carelessly performed, the secret duties of religion; spent my time unprofitably, nay, in foolish and sinful diversions, or the like. My guilt herein was the greater, as the Lord was then loudly calling to mourning, on account of the overthrow of our covenanted reformation, and the terrible eruption of all manner of wickedness, through the whole kingdom.

No doubt God permitted this fall, to manifest to me the evil of the world, and its concerns; to render me more humble and cautious afterwards, by the remembrance of my mispent time, Hos. ix. 1. Is. xxxviii. 15.; and that he might manifest his own love to me, in sparing me in my sins, Ezek. xx. 8.; in preserving some spiritual life in me, and upholding my spirit, Deut. viii. 15. 16.; and at last delivering me. And from it I learned, that, (1.) The wickedness and power of indwelling corruption is inconceivably great, and needs much to be watched. (2.) The evils which befall God's beloved saints, should make us walk in fear and trembling, 2 Chron. xxxii. 26. (3.) All the

the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth to them that fear him, Psal. xlv. 10. (4.) The frowns of the world are much better than its smiles, Prov. i. 32. (5.) God will not suffer sin to go unpunished in his saints, Amos iii. 2. (6.) No means will recover a backslider, till Christ's hour come, Jer. ii. 20. 22. (7.) Prayer and meditation are of great use to keep in spiritual life, Heb. xi. 6. Job xxi. 15. (8.) God's mercies ordinarily correspond to his people's diligence in proper means. (9.) To wean his people from this world, and exercise their graces, they have all tribulation allotted them in this world. (10.) Rash conclusions, that we have no saving interest in God, produce much evil, and tend to draw the soul from him. (11.) Assurance of our interest in God doth not flow from our holy walking, but it is proportionable to it.

BEING come home, and exceedingly afflicted with the remembrance of mispent time, and alarmed with the appearance of outward troubles coming upon me, I set apart some time for solemn humiliation, and dedication of myself to God. On this occasion, the Lord manifested to me the dreadful nature of unbelief, as the worst of all sins, and source of apostacy from God; and powerfully determined and enabled me to apply Jesus Christ to my soul. By this my fears were dispelled, my inward corruptions weakened; and from that day, and forward, I never had the smallest inclination to play at cards. After this, I found more wisdom and activity in managing my civil business; I found the Lord supporting
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me under, or delivering me from afflictions; I found afflictions doing me good; I got more distinct views of the covenant of grace; I began again to write DIARIES, and to walk more closely and circumspectly with God; I was led to meditate on more substantial truths than formerly; I more perceived the purity of my ends and actions; the scriptures were better understood by me, and more sweet to me. But these things were much checked, by my prosperity in some civil affairs, and by my being shut up to much company with some carnal friends.

OBSERVE, (1.) Faith is the *principal* grace of a Christian, by which he lives, Is. lv. 3. Hab. ii. 4. Gal. ii. 20. (2.) It is wrought by the power of God, Eph. ii. 8. Col. ii. 12. (3.) Sanctification is greatly promoted by the exercise of faith, 1 Pet. i. 5. Mark ix. 9. 23. (4.) Christ continues to perfect whatever good work he hath begun, Phil. i. 6. (5.) Faith, and every other grace, are but imperfect at first, Matth. xiii. 31. (6.) God often delivers, in a way contrary to that which his people expect, 2 Kings v. 11. Prov. iii. 5. Is. lv. 8. (7.) The exercise of faith doth, in order of nature, precede that of other graces, John vi. 29. Jer. xxxi. 19. (8.) It is vain to expect uninterrupted growth in grace. Christ, by renovation of spiritual life, lays new obligations on his people, Is. xxxiii. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 25. (9.) Setting apart of days for extraordinary humiliation or thanksgiving, are very necessary for the preservation and growth of the Christian life. I do

do not know how persons can be Christians without it.

I had not been long delivered out of one trouble, when I, unexpectedly, fell into another. By entering rashly into a law-suit with some of my relations ; by lodging in an inn, and wanting proper company, I again grew remiss, dull, and untender : but, by taking up my lodging with one of the persecuted ministers, his godly conversation, and spiritual sermons, were much blessed for my revival. Particularly upon Sabbath-day, when I was under great deadness, the Lord discovered to me my gracious estate, and the sad mistakes which had kept me so much in spiritual bondage. About this time also, I had some extraordinary visits from the Lord, in prayer and reading of the scriptures. [Coming south, I became too familiar with some Quakers and their books, which threatened to ensnare me ; but upon committing my staggering spirit to God, in solemn prayer, he made me clearly perceive their delusion. I saw that there was nothing commendable about them, which our own principles did not require. I observed, that they were more zealous for spreading their own opinions, than for gaining men to Christ ; that their pretended inward direction of the spirit, was a device of Satan for rejecting the scriptures ; that they denied the sovereignty of God, in maintaining *free-will* ; that they depended on their own works for their justification and happiness ; that their rejection of a standing ministry, and stated ordinances, was a devilish device, to draw men from the simplicity

city of the gospel; that they walked by feelings, not by faith; and that their profelytes were ordinarily old jaded professors, who never had found any satisfying sweetness in religion.]

ABOUT this time, 1663, I left off hearing the established Episcopalian clergy. I found, that at first, their sermons did me no good; and then, that they did me ill, in rendering my frame more lifeless. Upon examination, I found that, the grounds alledged for hearing them were insufficient; that no church had power to chuse for ministers, such as God had forbidden in his word; and that the true church did not consist so much in the multitude, as in the *serious professors* of the truths of God. As I was going to hear them one day, terror of mind obliged me to return back. I earnestly begged of God, that if he were displeased with my going, that he would be with me in private: soon after which, I gained more life and knowledge of God in one afternoon of the Sabbath, in private, than I had done for a whole year before. I observed, that the most of the godly and tender Christians were leaving them; and that the Lord bestowed his extraordinary influences on such as did. I looked on hearing of them, as an hardening of them in their wicked courses, and an owning of them as ambassadors of Christ. I perceived it duty to take part with the poor people of God,* for not hearing them. After a day set apart for solemn consultation of the Lord, in this matter, I found the duty of giving up with such hearing more abundantly cleared to me.

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* who were persecuted

By the badness of my titles, my father's suretyship for others, and leaving me so young, and by the unskilfulness and negligence of my tutors and agents, and by the undutifulness of my friends, and the injustice of the times, my whole estate was wrested from me, or like to be so. But, as God himself permitted, and had the sovereign management in all this, my own sins chiefly procured it. He, no doubt, intended, (1.) To correct me for my carnality, and desire of outward greatness and comfort, my faithlessness in dealing with others, my neglect to acknowledge him in all my ways, my pride and stoutness of heart, my breaches of my solemn vows, my incorrigibleness under ordinances, convictions, and lesser judgments; to humble me on account of them, and reform me from them, *Is.* xxviii. 9. *Deut.* viii. 2. (2.) To wean me from the world, friends, and relations, *Hos.* ii. 6. 7. *Mic.* ii. 10. (3.) To give me experience of his love, in supporting me under, and delivering me from these troubles, *Rom.* v. 3. 4. 5. *Deut.* viii. 15. 16. (4.) To fit me to direct and comfort others in their afflictions, *2 Cor.* i. 4. (5.) To cause me more earnestly desire and seek himself, *Is.* xxvi. 8. (6.) To keep me from dying out, or sleeping, *Is.* xxxviii. 16. (7.) To exercise and increase my faith and patience, *Jam.* i. 2. 3. (8.) To preserve me from the snares to which rich men are exposed in this evil time, *Prov.* i. 32. *Psal.* lv. 19. and cxix. 71.

From this trouble, I learned, that, (1.) Outward prosperity puffs up the heart, *Deut.* xxxiii.

15. (2.) As a man thrives in this world, so hath he friends in it, Lam. i. 8. Ezek. xvi. 37. (3.) When God afflicts, he is in good earnest, Ezek. ii. 4. 5. 1 Sam. iii. 12. Jer. iv. 12. and vi. 19. (4.) God must sometimes make his stroke heavy, and his furnace hot. (5.) All saints may expect trouble in this world, John xvi. 33. Acts xiv. 22. (6.) No means can deliver us out of trouble, till God's time come, Jer. xlv. 11. (7.) The troubles of the people of God sometimes last very long, Psal. xiii. 1. (8.) Want of good company is a great loss, and a sad step towards apostacy, Eccl. iv. 10. (9.) The company of lively Christians, is a blessed means of begetting, maintaining, and restoring spiritual life, 1 Pet. iii. 1. Eccl. iv. 9. 10. 11. 12. (10.) It is one of the greatest curses, for a man to get his will and desires in this world. (11.) The Lord will not let pride go unpunished in his own people, Jam. iv. 6. 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. (12.) Good is rarely got by afflictions at the first, Hos. ii. 6. 7. Is. lvii. 17. (13.) All the afflictions of the saints are sanctified to them, Heb. xii. 11. (14.) The good which God doth to his people is not presently seen, Hos. ii. 3. John xiii. 7. Jer. xxiii. 20. (15.) God mingles much mercy with his rods, Is. xxvii. 8. Psal. cxxxviii. 3. (16.) Saints corruptions, as well as their graces, are much exercised under troubles. (17.) The beginning of a Christian's warfare is hardest, Deut. viii. 3. 16. (18.) A proud murmuring heart makes afflictions more painful and heavy. (19.) God's love is more seen, in comforting and strengthening under trouble, than in delivering from it, Luke xii.

32. (20.) God is the only Comforter of his people under afflictions.

BEING in this forsaken and destitute condition, the Lord himself befriended me. (1.) He refreshed my soul with views of Christ's compassion to me, of his being the kind Manager of all my concerns, and of the happy issue of my troubles, and the like. (2.) He enabled me, sometimes, to pour out my heart before him, and commit my case to him. (3.) He remarkably disentangled me from the processes raised against me. (4.) He made me to revive and increase in faith, strength, and diligence in holy conversation. I was especially enlightened in the *nature of faith*, and in the *extent, freedom, and excellency of the covenant of grace*, as making all the blessings of grace and glory my own.

NEVERTHELESS, by Satan's tempting me to doubt of all my evidences and comforts, as the comfortable sense of them remained *so short time* upon my spirit; and by my going from home, and being much among carnal men, and indulging a proud esteem of myself, and despising others, I fell into another decay, which continued from the end of 1664 to the end of 1665. But, in his own time, by opening up the covenant of grace to me more clearly than ever, by my family-discourses on the first eleven chapters to the Romans, by private fasts, by converse with lively Christians, and by abounding more in daily secret prayer, the Lord remarkably revived me; and the longer I travelled in his way, I found it the
more

more heartsome, even though my outward troubles continued.

OBSERVE, (1.) When all the world forsake his people, the Lord takes them up, Hof. xiv. 3. (2.) When the church is in distress, her true members have distress along with her. (3.) In trouble, God chiefly manifests his love, by supporting and comforting under it. (4.) Divine comforts render outward troubles easy. (5.) Godliness hath the advantages of this life, as well as of that which is to come. (6.) A true Christian-life hath many changes, living and dying, rejoicing and sorrowing, growing and decaying. (7.) It is never a vain thing to seek the Lord. (8.) A Christian grows or decays, as his faith doth. (9.) Meditation on the covenant of grace, the gospel, Christ, and faith, avails much to promote sanctification. (10.) Cheerfully to lose the favour of the world, and bear the reproach of Christ, is very profitable to souls. (11.) God is never kinder to his people, than when they are under great afflictions. (12.) God first teacheth his people to bear trouble, and then delivers them from it. (13.) There is no perfection here, either in holiness or comfort.

NOTWITHSTANDING my late deliverance, I was soon plunged into fearful spiritual trouble, for about ten weeks. Observing that inward grace was called the *divine nature*, I concluded, that there was no such glorious thing about me. I found no evidence of grace in me, against which there were not strong objections. I found my-

Myself averse to comply with hard duties, and so not to have a respect to all God's commandments. The terribleness of a natural state was represented to me. I apprehended God as clothed with fury. Satan violently tempted me to hard thoughts of God, and to believe that I had hitherto met with nothing but delusion. In searching out the causes of my trouble, I thought it was certainly something more than any particular fault. My melancholy temper, and want of company, helped on my trouble. I never more earnestly strove to keep close to God by faith. I had a deep impression of divine things. Yet I was weary of my life. I could not endure to think of feeling such power and work of God, as could produce a saving change in me. Prayer and reading were a terror to me before I applied to them; and then they were sometimes sweet. Satan violently urged me to some strict and unseasonable duties, that he might ruin my body and soul at once.

BUT at last the Lord graciously delivered me. (1.) He enabled me calmly to consider matters; and to find, that I had been disquieted without proper grounds. (2.) He enabled me to resolve to continue praying, and looking up to God, never to despair, but alway to trust and depend on him; and to be humble and submissive to his will, be the issue as it would. (3.) He kept me close to prayer, reading, and meditation, as his *instituted* means of grace, and made me find some comfort in them. (4.) By his word, he suggested to my soul, that it was good for me to hope,
and

and quietly wait for the salvation of God. (5.) He shewed me, that the spirit of bondage was not good in itself. (6.) He shewed me, that it was Satan who tempted me to hard thoughts of God, and to give over duties, or attempt unseasonable duties, plainly beyond my strength. (7.) In a serious, and thorough examination of my state, by the word of God, I found the marks of my sincerity to be valid, and the objections which had been started against them, to be inconclusive. (8.) By manifesting my wickedness, and his own sovereignty, wisdom, and infinite holiness, to me, the Lord made me calmly submissive to his will. (9.) By some encouraging considerations, which I drew up for myself, he often comforted me in my dark hours. (10.) By some motives to diligence, which I drew up, I found my soul often awakened and excited. (11.) The Lord remarkably directed me, in the difficult duty of reproving others for their sins; and I saw, that my former unwillingness to it, or slight performance of it, had proceeded, not from my weakness, but from my ignorance and unbelief. (12.) I discerned much mercy and kindness of God, in sanctifying my present trouble to me. But, (13.) I found most benefit, by a more full discovery of Christ, the gospel, covenant of grace, and its promises, particularly, 1 Tim i. 15. John iii. 17. Psal. lxxv. 5. Rom. x. 4. 1 Cor. i. 30. John xv. 16.: by which I clearly perceived, that nothing in man is the first ground of hope or despair; that the whole ground of hope is in Christ alone; that sinners have right to absolute promises, as the ground of their faith; that Christ is related to men *as sinners*, not as whole or righteous; that

Christ came only to shew mercy, John iii. 17.; that all salvation depends on Christ's good-will; that God himself forms sinners security for happiness, 1 Cor. i. 30. Is. xlii. 6.; that God bestows this right freely and absolutely; that nothing damns gospel-hearers but unbelief.

No doubt God trysted me with these dispensations, (1.) To try, exercise, and strengthen my faith, which had never been so lively in its exercise before. (2.) To impress my mind more deeply with the things of God. (3.) To discover to me the danger of the pleasures, profits, and honours of the world, and bring me to a compliance with the cross of Christ, as a thing, in which most safety and quietness are found. (4.) To acquaint me with Satan's devices to hinder the work of sanctification, and the mistakes of my own heart in it. (5.) To make me esteem the scriptures, and walk more closely by them. (6.) To stir me up to be more profitable to the souls of others. (7.) To cause me live entirely off my self and sense, and on Christ alone, as given in his word. And indeed I became more settled than formerly, and much established in faith, patience, humility, and duty.

FROM them I learned, that, (1.) Soul-trouble, though not good in itself, hath sometimes a sweetness in it, as attended with submission to God. (2.) When God appears angry, every thing appears terrible. (3.) The comforts of the world are dangerous. (4.) In all distress, it is profitable to pray, and use other means of grace. (5.) It

is never safe, rashly, to admit suggestions or apprehensions. (6.) Want of good, and having of bad company, are very distressful to an exercised soul. (7.) Soul-trouble hath its ebbings and flowings. (8.) We should alway surrender ourselves to God's direction and disposal. (9.) Living by faith on Christ alone, and at a distance from the world, is the best mean of spiritual settlement. (10.) No soul-trouble will cure all evils perfectly.

By my above trouble, which ended with the year 1665, I was made more diligent, in devising and endeavouring to do spiritual good to others; in instructing, and praying with, and for them; more strict and tender in my own conversation; more acquainted with spiritual exercises, Satan's devices, and the mistakes of my own heart; more deeply impressed with the matters of God and salvation; more settled and established on Christ; more meekened in spirit; more weaned from the world, and inclined to the cross of Christ; and more diligent in reading, meditation, and prayer, and striving against my inward lusts. Much dross, however, still remained. I was plagued with a slothful indisposition to religious duties; I acted towards God, under a great deal of legal fear, rather than from faith and love; I had an estranging aversion from God and heaven; I had a strong inclination towards the world; I had much remaining deadness and ignorance, which issued in idle words, vain thoughts, excess in the use of lawful comforts, pride, and departing from God: but, by means of trouble on my body, by

a careful observation of God's providences, by diligence in religious duties, by setting apart times for extraordinary fasting and humiliation, by meditation on the law and gospel, by an earnest study of patience, and universal resignation to the will of God, by converse with lively Christians, and by writing my own experiences of the Lord's dealings with my soul; sundry of these remaining evils remarkably decreased.

C H A P. II.

Of more general concerns of his spiritual estate and condition.

I. NOTWITHSTANDING all that the Lord hath done, there remain many sad evils, which continually afflict me; such as, (1.) That distance which the Lord keeps from me, in prayer, providences, commands, threatenings, or promises, Prov. xxx. 2. 3. (2.) The scanty manifestations of his love to my soul. Sanctification, light, life, and comfort, are but sparingly bestowed on me. (3.) Much security, and lightness of spirit in spiritual things. (4.) I can seldom attain believing, and joyful thoughts of heaven. (5.) In closing with Christ, I cannot cordially, fully, and clearly, give up myself to him alone, for evermore; but am therein plagued with much heartlessness, double-mindedness, confusion, and ignorance. (6.) I am much disposed to go about to establish my own righteousness, and to rest my hopes and happiness partly upon it. (7.) I much want the power and demonstration of the Spirit,

in praying, and speaking of spiritual things. (8.) Though I find indirect, and material returns of prayer; yet I find not direct, plain, and particular ones. (9.) Want of God's blessing on my labours, to draw others to himself. (10.) I cannot patiently wait and depend upon God, till the end of a trouble come. (11.) I cannot attain to a particular, full, and clear persuasion, of obtaining the mercies which I ask from God. (12.) I cannot get free of the fear of man, which leads me into many sinful neglects, which are afterwards very afflicting to my soul. (13.) I cannot attain to a watchful, self-diffident, fearing frame, under spiritual enlargements. (14.) I can never carry rightly in public company, or when about public business, but my soul is hurt thereby. (15.) The gospel, and its promises, do not so abundantly satisfy me, as to make me rejoice *with joy unspeakable, and full of glory*. (15.) I can never keep my resolutions, to walk closely with God in peace; but have daily challenges for such sins, as I might have prevented, had I been watchful. (17.) I am much unwilling, and indisposed to religious duties, though I ordinarily find delight in them. (18.) I do not generally grow, and go forward in the ways of God; but, after all the pains which God takes on me, I find the same ignorance, deadness, indisposition, and unprofitableness, as before. (19.) I get little light, comfort, or strength, from public ordinances; pray, watch, and prepare as I will. (20.) I find a great unwillingness to glorify God publicly, or labour to profit the souls of others; and that I little go about it in the faith of his blessing

bleſſing it. (21.) Though I have a weak opinion of divine truths, and love to them, I find not God, by a mighty power, revealing and perſuading me of them.

II. I am, nevertheless, **LEARNING** and **STUDYING**, (1.) To live by the conſtant exerciſe of faith, and not by either carnal or ſpiritual ſenſe. (2.) Conſtantly to ſubmit to the Lord's will, in croſſing mine. (3.) To exerciſe a calm and ſteady patience under all my trials. (4.) To read God's love in my worſt evils, deſertions, heart-plagues, diſappointments, afflictions. (5.) To caſt out flavish fear, and proud ſelfiſhneſs, out of my heart, and beat in true evangelical principles. (6.) To cloſe with Chriſt more fully, love him more fervently, walk with him more cloſely, and entertain kindly and familiar thoughts of God in him. (7.) To mortify my eſteem of, and inclination to worldly things. (8.) To be ſober and moderate, in all my affections and actings. (9.) To obſerve God's providences, in their cauſes, ends, and my duty with reſpect to them; and eſpecially to ſee God's wiſdom, holineſs, and love, in them. (10.) To be profitable to others, in the moſt advantageous manner. (11.) To exerciſe thankfulneſs to God for all his mercies, as pledges of heaven, and purchaſed with the blood of Chriſt. (12.) To know the glories of heaven, and draw my conſolation therefrom. (13.) To make Chriſt my **ALL IN ALL**; my wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption. (14.) To depend on God, in outward ſtraits;

straits; and recommend all things to him; and believe on him for deliverance,

III. NOTWITHSTANDING my complaints of unfruitfulness, I find some spiritual GROWTH in me. (1.) I am helped to improve time and opportunities, of doing or getting good, better than formerly. (2.) I find more sobriety and temperance, with respect to meat, drink, recreations, and company; and more strength against and hatred to sin. (3.) I have more notional and experimental knowledge of some necessary truths relative to God, to Christ, the covenant of grace, faith, sanctification, deceits of Satan, wickedness, and mistakes of my own heart, &c. (4.) I am more diligent in prayer, meditation, and reading of the scriptures, and in extraordinary devotions. (5.) My faith, being more purely founded on the word of God, acts more vigorously in opposition to objections and discouragements. (6.) I more love and esteem the Lord Jesus Christ, mourn more bitterly for his absence, desire him more ardently, and see more love and loveliness in him. (7.) I am more patient under trouble. (8.) I am more grave, watchful, and circumspect, in my conversation. (9.) I have more kindly uptakings of God in Christ, and more familiar acquaintance with him, particularly in his love. (10.) I can bear heavier burdens of trouble, or go through more difficult work. (11.) I enjoy more distinct answers of my prayers. (12.) My heart is more weaned from this world. (13.) I have more serious and deep apprehensions of God's law, and of sin, of hell, heaven, and eternity. (14.) I have

have left off several fashionable sins, to which I was much addicted. (15.) My pride is sensibly mortified. (16.) I am more spiritual and evangelical in my works, acting from regard to God's command, relying on his strength, confident of, and thankful for his acceptance. (17.) I see and observe more of God, and his ways, and am more instructed by my observations. Yet my wants and imperfections are so great, my spots so foul, and my sins so many, as make me often fear there be no real work of grace in me.

IV. Satan hath exceedingly laboured to persuade ^{me} that I am unconverted, from the following grounds. (1.) That I had not experienced that distinct, orderly, and deep work of preparation, at my first conversion, which is described in Practical books. (2.) That my way of walking with the Lord was very uneven, unsettled, and unprofitable. (3.) That my conceptions of God, heaven, and hell, and other divine things, were fearfully dark, hellish, and carnal. (4.) That my soul had seldom clearly, and distinctly, and with its whole heart, fully received Christ, acquiesced in the method of salvation, and covenanted with God. (5.) That I had but unkindly apprehensions of God in Christ, as a *stranger*, rather than as my *father, friend, and husband*. (6.) That all my enlargements, visitations, light, and change of heart, are but common mercies, not proceeding from God's special love. (7.) That the mercies which I received from God, came to me, not as the answer of my prayers, or as the result of my patient waiting, but as it were by chance ;

chance; my best mercies often tryſting with my worſt frames. (8.) That the Lord behaves to me as an enemy, croſſing my inclinations in almoſt every thing. (9.) That my prayers are not plainly and directly answered. (10.) That I want Chriſtian compaſſion, to the ſpiritual condition of my unconverted relations, and ignorant, profane, or formal neighbours. (11.) That I am ſo indiſpoſed to religious duties; unwilling to enter on them, heartleſs in them, and glad when they are over. (12.) That I want ſufficient courage to comply with difficult duties; as plain and free reproof, eſpecially of the great; or plain-dealing with my acquaintance, as to their ſpiritual concerns. (13.) That I do not long for heaven, nor rejoice in the expectations of it; and ſo it doth not ſeem to be my treasure. (14.) That my religious growth is ſo indiſcernible. (15.) That blindneſs, hardneſs, pride, carnality, and other ſins, remain in me, in ſuch an high degree! (16.) That I enjoy not the Lord himſelf in ordinances. (17.) That my thoughts of ſin, hell, and heaven, do not produce lively impreſſions in my ſoul. (18.) That ſpiritual pride runs through all my actions, even the moſt ſpiritual. (19.) That my heart is ſo ſtrangely divided, between the Lord and my idols. (20.) That my ſervices are ſo diſproportionate to my rule, or the ſervices of other ſaints. All theſe objections I have ſeriouſly conſidered; and find, that in ſo far as they are applicable to me, they do not manifeſt my utter want of grace, however much they may manifeſt the ſad weakneſs of my grace, and ſtrength of my corruption.

V. ON the other hand, I find in myself the following MARKS of a real regeneration after the image of God. (1.) A continued esteem, love of, and desire after God in Christ above all things, gifts, saints, duties, graces, and spiritual joys not excepted, 1 Pet. ii. 7. (2.) Real and fervent love to the saints as such, 1 John iii. 14. (3.) My heart is engaged to the service of Christ, accounting it most glorious and profitable, and mourning over my own unprofitableness, to his glory, 1 John iii. 16. John xv. 14. (4.) I find, upon the most serious examination, that the word of God testifies the reality of my grace, Psal. xcvi. 13. Is. viii. 20. Rom. ii. 2. (5.) I find, that when I conclude myself unconverted, my heart is drawn from God, and weakened to duty: and when I conclude my state gracious, my heart is enlarged, hates sin, and is disposed to duty. (6.) By answering all my objections, clearly and fully, the Lord hath made me believe on the Lord Jesus for all that I need; and I esteem conformity to, and enjoyment of God, the greatest mercy, Hos. xiv. 2. (7.) Storms of temptation have not destroyed, but been means of strengthening my faith, love, patience, and obedience, Luke vi. 48. (8.) The Lord hath, in the substance of it, followed the same course with me, as he useth in drawing others to himself; in convincing me of my amazing sinfulness, enlightening my mind in the knowledge of Christ, and persuading and enabling me to embrace him as offered to me in the gospel, John vi. 37. Rom. viii. 30. (9.) I find in my soul, a real inward and abiding change, from darkness to light, from sin

and

and Satan to God and his ways, wrought by the almighty power of the Spirit of God, 2 Cor. v. 17. Eph. iv. 22. 23. 24. (10.) I find, that my exercises of spirit, properties, sins, and complaints, exactly answer to those of the saints mentioned in scripture; and so I cannot condemn myself as graceless, without condemning them also. (11.) My growth in humility, knowledge, sobriety, faith, patience, love to Christ, repentance, and deadness to the world, marks me not an hypocrite, Phil. i. 6. John iv. 14. (12.) I have a respect for all the commands of God, and an hatred to all sins; and hence I love every one of those commands, and endeavour to obey them, and mourn for my sins of ignorance and infirmity against them, Luke i. 6. Psal. cxix. 6. (13.) By a diligent examination of myself, according to the scriptures, I perceive a clear difference between my graces, and those which I have seen or read to be in hypocrites, Matth. v. 20. (14.) My works, obedience, and exercise of grace, come continually through faith, and from gospel-principles, rather than from legal motives, Rom. viii. 15. 2 Cor. i. 22. 2 Tim. i. 17. Gal. iv. 6. 28. (15.) I am never satisfied with any measure of grace, performance of duty, or fellowship with God, but still desire more; which shews, that I desire it chiefly for itself, not as a mean of keeping me from hell and bringing me to heaven, Psal. iii. 11. 12. 13. 1 Cor. xv. 58. (16.) I am poor in spirit, finding great wickedness in my best performances, and mourning over them on that account, Matth. v. 3. H. lxvi. 2. (17.) I loathe, hate, and mourn over all sin, of myself or

others, of omission as well as commission, looking on sin as the greatest evil, Matth. v. 4. (18.) My heart is submissive to the will of God *as such*, in his most afflicting dispensations, Job i. 20. 21. (19.) In reading the scriptures, there is nothing which the Spirit of God so powerfully applies to my heart, as promises and encouragements to faith, holiness, and comfort, 1 Cor. xiii. 10. (20.) Under my afflictions, I find the Holy Ghost secretly suggesting, that it is for my good; and hereby my heart is much sanctified, Rom. viii. 15. (21.) I find my faults very punctually corrected; which I look on as the Lord's fatherly kindness to me, Amos iii. 2. (22.) By all his dispensations, I find the Lord putting more and more enmity between me and the world. (23.) The Lord's providence towards me hath all along been one constant track of kindness; by all means commending himself unto me, John xiii. 14. (24.) I find, that my sins, desertions, temptations, and afflictions, and every thing else, work for good to me, Psal. cxlv. 10. Rom. viii. 28. (25.) I see that all my mercies come in the channel of God's free grace to me, Gal. iv. 29. Rom. iv. 16. (26.) Amidst my anguish of spirit, occasioned by doubts of my interest in him, Jesus Christ hath, in the gospel, testified his kindness to me, and encouraged me to trust him for all things, 2 Tim. 2. 13. (27.) I remark a special hand of God himself, in all my deliverances.

VI. THE following considerations have been of great use to me, in the settlement of my long-distracted

distracted mind, with respect to the persuasion of my being truly converted. (1.) Grace may be really in the soul, though it do not appear gloriously to it, Col. iii. 3. 1 John iii. 2. Song i. 5. 6. (2.) Though all graces exist where-ever one exists, yet all graces are not alway exercised together. (3.) The actings of sin and grace, in the affections and passions, are not so much to be regarded, in the examination of our state, as their actings in the mind and will, where sin hath its principal strength, Rom. vii. 23. Mark vi. 52. (4.) True repentance consists in a sweet melting of heart for sin, and loathing and forsaking of it, rather than in any sensible apprehensions of God's wrath, 2 Cor. vii. 10. 11. (5.) The spirit of bondage, and a mere law-work, do, of themselves, produce bad effects, Rom. viii. 15. (6.) There may be love to God, and sincerity in the heart, where God hides his face, and smites *one in all the labour of his hands.* (7.) The quality, nature, and sincerity of actions and graces, are more to be looked to than their measure. (8.) It is the duty of all to believe on Christ, be their state, frame, or way, what it will, John vi. 28. 29. (9.) Afflictions, spiritual and temporal, though evil in themselves, may flow from God's love, and be intended for good, Hag. ii. 17. Hos. vi. 15. Is. xxvii. 9. (10.) God may have heard and accepted a prayer, which he doth not answer for a long time. (11.) God's love to his people, is more vented in humbling, strengthening, and sanctifying the soul, than in comforting it with extraordinary raptures, John xx. 29. (12.) God's love doth not always vent itself in

the manner his people wish. Instead of removing trouble, he often supports and comforts under it. (13.) Christ's love and our happiness appear more in him and his promise, and what he will give, than in what he hath already given, Col. iii. 3. 4. 1 John iii. 2. Luke xii. 32. (14.) Though true grace itself never perisheth, gracious frames often last but a short time, 1 John iii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 24. (15.) As God's mercy and truth are the ground of our hope, joy, life, light, and comfort, our sinfulness or weakness should never discourage us, or make us doubt of heaven, 1 Cor. i. 30. 31. 1st xxvi. 4. (16.) The Lord Jesus may enter into a soul very indiscernibly, Luke xvii. 20. 21. (17.) God's word, not his dealings with others, is our *only rule*, 2 Kings v. 11. (18.) In every saint there is indwelling corruption, bent on every wickedness; as well as real grace, which delights in the law of the Lord. (19.) At some seasons saints' graces continue in their root, but do not flourish, because it is a spiritual winter, Psal. i. 3. (20.) The exercise of faith is most pleasing to God, and profitable to ourselves; and unbelief is most hateful and dishonourable to God, and most prejudicial to us. (21.) God's word, and neither books of men, nor providences, nor suggestions, is our *only rule* of faith and practice. (22.) We ought not to look so much on the *beginning* of a Christian's life or exercise, as to the *end* of it, Deut. viii. 16. Psal. xxxvii.

VII. For the better ordering of my conversation, I fixed a number of RULES for it. Some of these were GENERAL, respecting every part
of

of my practice. As, (1.) To labour to discern in what man's chief happiness consisteth, that this may be followed as an end, John xvii. 3. (2.) To arm myself with a strong and deliberate resolution, to walk in God's way which leads to it, Psal. cxix. 106. 111. (3.) To labour to have, and maintain sound and kindly thoughts of God in my heart, Exod. xxxiv. 6. 7. Rom. x. 14. (4.) To be always occupied in duty, 1 Cor. xv. 58. Job xvii. 9. (5.) To walk by faith in the word of God, not by sense, 2 Cor. v. 7. (6.) To believe always, and never despair, Psal. lxxii. 8. Heb. iii. 6. and x. 35. Lam. iii. 26. H. xxvi. 4. (7.) To live always in close fellowship with God, Mic. vi. 8. Psal. xvi. 8. 9. Hos. ix. 12. and xii. 6. John xv. 4. 5. 6. Psal. lxxiii. 28. (8.) To be alway humble, never murmur, but justify the Lord, and submit to his dispensations, Mic. vi. 8. (9.) To keep my spirits alway sober, alway master of myself, and never drunken with the cares of this world, or with passion, 1 Pet. v. 8. Phil. iv. 5. 1 Cor. vii. 30. Luke xii. 45. (10.) To study temperance in meat, drink, sleep, and recreations, 2 Pet. i. 5. 6. Prov. xxiii. 20. 1 Cor. ix. 25. Luke xxi. 34. (11.) To beware of worldly-mindedness, or being too much engaged in worldly business, 2 Tim. ii. 4. (12.) To be always watchful, Prov. xxviii. 14. 1 Pet. v. 8. (13.) To be diligent in using all the means of grace, Prov. x. 4. (14.) To look on sin as the greatest evil, and never to be done, Jer. xlv. 4.

THE PARTICULAR RULES I fixed for my
daily

daily conversation, were; (1.) In imitation of Christ and his servants, to rise early every morning, Job i. 5. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15. (2.) When up, to fix some work to be done for the day, and how and when to do it; and at even, to call myself to account for my conduct, and bewail my failing. (3.) To spend a competent portion of time; every morning, mid-day, and evening, in prayer, reading, and meditation. (4.) Once in the month to keep a day of solemn humiliation, on account of the distressed state of the church. (5.) To spend one day more, once in six weeks, in humiliation and prayer, respecting my own spiritual condition and exercise. (6.) To spend four hours once every week extraordinary, in prayer or thanksgiving, about the special cases, spiritual or temporal, of myself or others. (7.) To spend some time every Saturday evening, in preparation for the Sabbath. (8.) To spend six or seven days together once a year, wholly and only on spiritual accounts. (9.) To make it my business every day to mortify sin, perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, to glorify God and instruct others; and at even to examine myself of my diligence and progress therein.

THE rules which I fixed for MY SPEECH, were, (1.) To speak nothing materially sinful, as lying, backbiting, scolding, or any other thing which may dishonour God, or wrong my neighbour, Psal. xxxiv. 13. (2.) To speak nothing which had not some profit or edification in it, Eph. v. 4. Matth. xii. 36. (3.) To avoid speaking much, Jam. i. 19, Prov. x. 19. (4.) To speak

speak soberly, both in matter and manner, Prov.
 vii. 11. (5.) Never to speak hastily and rashly,
 but to think well before I speak, Prov. xv. 28.
 (6.) To speak seriously, reverently, and gravely,
 especially in religious discourses, Matth. vii. 29.
 (7.) To speak in faith, and not make uncertain-
 ties the matter of discourse, Psal. cxvi. 10. 2 Cor.
 iv. 13. 1 John i. 1. 2. (8.) To intermingle fre-
 quent ejaculations to God while I speak, Neh. ii.
 4. (9.) To speak wisely and pertinently, as to
 time, purpose, and persons, Col. iii. 16. If. i. 4.
 (10.) To speak in fear, lest any wrong word
 should slip out, Psal. xxxix. 1. (11.) Never to
 make my neighbour's faults, or my own good
 deeds or worth, the subject of my talk, Psal. xv.
 3. Prov. xxvii. 2.

THE rules which I fixed for MY ACTIONS,
 were, (1.) To do nothing without foresight,
 Lam. iii. 40. Prov. iv. 26. (2.) To do every
 thing spiritually, as the Lord's work, Eph. vi. 6.
 7. 8. Col. iii. 23. (3.) To labour for spirituality
 in my outward deportment, as well as in my
 heart, 1 Pet. i. 14. 15. Zech. xiv. 20. 21.
 (4.) To mingle business with manifold ejacula-
 tions of the heart to God, Eph. vi. 18. 1 Thess.
 v. 17. (5.) To do nothing without consulting
 the Lord, and depending on him, Prov. iii. 6.
 If. xxx. 2. Psal. xxxvii. 5. Neh. ii. 4. 1 Sam. xvii.
 45. (6.) To do things heartily and quickly,
 Eccl. ix. 10. (7.) To do every thing in faith of
 its being lawful, and of God's assistance in, and
 acceptance of it, Rom. xiv. 22. 23. Heb. xi. 6.
 7. (8.) To be sober in doing every thing, with

a holy indifferency, referring the issue to God, 1 Cor. vii. 29. 30. 31. Phil. iv. 5. (9.) Never to rest in actions themselves, but seek to have the end of them, Matth. v. 16. (10.) To bound my actions by my calling, 1 Cor. vii. 24. 1 Theff. iv. 11. 1 Tim. v. 13.

OTHER rules which I fixed for MY CONVERSATION, were, (1.) To mark what deportment my heart was inclined to, immediately after I had enjoyed near fellowship with God; and always follow that. (2.) To follow that conversation in which I had most peace, after serious reflection. (3.) To study that carriage, which, I have reason to believe, Christ and his apostles would have studied in like circumstances, 1 Cor. xi. 1. and iv. 17. Matth. xi. 29. 30. (4.) To study that conversation, which is most agreeable to my profession, state, and station, 1 Theff. ii. 12. Phil. i. 27. Jam. v. 13. (5.) Not to appear to walk mournfully before the wicked, and to shun carnal mirth, Mic. i. 10. 2 Sam. i. 20. (6.) To study that conversation, which is most convincing and condemning to the wicked, edifying to souls, and glorifying to God, 1 Pet. i. 14. 15. Col. iv. 6. (7.) To study a grave serious conversation, suitable to my great work and aims, 1 Tim. iii. 2. Tit. ii. 2. (8.) To be wise and circumspect in my conversation, Eph. v. 15. Eccl. ii. 14. (9.) To walk soberly in apparel, sober in expressions, and in passions, 1 Pet. iii. 3. (10.) To walk kindly, lovingly, and courteously, Acts xxvii. 3. and xxviii. 2. 7. 1 Cor. ix. 22. Lev. xix. 17.

VIII. IN my diversified experience, I have found the Lord *doing my soul good*. (1.) By familiar fellowship with lively and circumspect Christians, Eccl. iv. 4. 9. 10. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 7. Heb. x. 24. 25. (2.) By careful observation of the nature, tendency, and language of the Lord's providences, Mic. vi. 9. Hos. xiv. 9. Psal. cvii. 43. Jer. viii. 7. Gen. xxv. 22. Exod. iii. 3. 4. (3.) By meditation on the love, power, sovereignty, and holiness of God, Job xxii. 21. John xvii. 3. Psal. ix. 10. Eph. iii. 18. 19. 2 Cor. iii. 18. (4.) By a careful study of the *covenant of grace*, in its freedom, fulness, and unchangeableness; and of the *gospel*, in its promises, offers, and invitations; and of the nature of *faith*, Gal. iii. 2. Rom. i. 16. 17. Heb. xi. (5.) By the Lord's confining me at home, Prov. xviii. 1. Numb. vi. 2. 3. Hos. ii. 14. (6.) By outward afflictions and hard measures from the world, Lam. iii. 27. Psal. xciv. 12. Heb. xii. 11. Psal. cxix. 67. 71. Prov. xxix. 15. Hos. v. 15. (7.) By studying calmness in mind and speech, and advising well with God, and waiting on him, before I spoke or acted, Is. vii. 4. and ix. 15. Exod. xiv. 13. 2 Chron. xx. 14. Phil. iv. 7. Lam. iii. 26. 1 Pet. v. 7. (8.) By diligence in prayer, meditation, reading, self-examination, and other secret duties, Matth. vi. 6. Luke xxii. 46. Psal. i. 2. 3. Job viii. 5. Prov. xviii. 1. (9.) By extraordinary humiliations of myself before God, and other occasional exercises of prayer, or the like, Dan. x. 12. Psal. cxxvi. 6. Jer. l. 5. 6. Is. lviii. 7. 8. Mark ix. 29. (10.) Since I left off hearing the curates, 2 Cor. vi. 17. 18. 1 Cor. v. 7. (11.) By employing other Christi-

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ans to pray for me, Job xlii. 8. Jam. v. 16. Eph. vi. 9. Rom. v. 30. 2 Theſſ. iii. 1. 2. (12.) By instructing, exhorting, and praying for others, especially poor ignorant people, If. xxxii. 20. Eccl. xi. 1. Prov. xi. 25. (13.) By serious consideration, of the easiness of Christ's law of love and liberty, in opposition to a slavish spirit, 1 Kings xii. 4. Luke i. 74. 75. Rom. vii. 1. 4. 6. and vi. 14. Neh. 9. 35. Deut. xxviii. 48. 1 Sam. xii. 19. 20. (14.) By consideration of baptism, and the things thereby sealed, Rom. vi. 1.—12. (15.) By reading practical books, especially those of Mr Shepherd. (16.) By putting a good construction on the Lord's afflictive providences, Exod. xx. 19. (17.) By commending the Lord to others, Psal. cv. 3. and cxlv. 5. 6. 21. (18.) By long and violent temptations, If. xxxviii. 16. Jam. i. 2. (19.) By engaging in difficult duties, notwithstanding much indisposition from within, and worldly danger from without, Jer. ii. 2. Heb. xi. 8. Rom. ii. 7. Matth. v. 10. and xvi. 24. 1 Pet. iv. 14. (20.) By earnestly studying humility, and submission to God's providence, Jam. iv. 7. (21.) By calling to mind, and meditating on the Lord's merciful dealings towards me, whether as to soul or body, Psal. cvii. 4. and xviii. 1. 2. (22.) By frequently-repeated solemn covenanting with God, Deut. xxix. 12. 13. (23.) By meditation on death, heaven, judgment, sin, God's *being* and *providence*, man's fall, Christ's death, and other like plain truths. (24.) By a speedy application to religious duties, without trifling or delay, Eccl. ix. 10. (25.) By writing on several points of religion. (26.) By serious consideration of the qualifications

tions and sins of saints and hypocrites, in order to examination of myself. (27.) By abstracting myself as much as I could from civil business.

IX. On the other hand, I have found *my soul much hurt*, (1.) By my legal temper, accompanied with Satan's violent urging of me to duties beyond my strength. This weakens and irritates me; that I either do nothing, or do it in a slavish manner, Gen. xxxiii. 13. Rom. vii. 11. Heb. xii. 13. Luke xix. 21. (2.) By familiar converse with persons carnal and graceless, 1 Cor. xv. 33. (3.) By the company of the godly, when not spiritually improved, Heb. iii. 13. (4.) By loud, violent, hasty, or much talk, Prov. xiv. 23. and xvii. 27. Jam. iii. 5. 6. Matth. xv. 8. (5.) By going much from home, and attending public occasions about worldly things. (6.) By intemperance in meat, drink, and recreations, Luke xxi. 34. Prov. xxv. 27. and xxiii. 20. 21. (7.) By omitting, or slightly performing of secret duties of religion, Matth. xxvi. 41. Prov. xxiii. 21. (8.) By neglecting of ejaculatory prayer, while I was conversing with others, Matth. xxvi. 41. (9.) By impertinent vain thoughts in the morning, and when riding, or engaged in religious duties, Jer. iv. 14. (10.) By intermitting my watchfulness over my heart, tongue, and actions, Prov. iv. 23. Matth. xxvi. 41. (11.) By unbelieving discouragements under my felt wants, sins, desertions, and temptations, 1 Sam. xii. 20. Lam. i. 9. Jer. ii. 28. Heb. xii. 12. 13. (12.) By eager intermeddling in civil affairs, Luke x. 41. and xxi. 34. (13.) By high valuing of, and seeking

ing to exalt myself before God or men, Rom. ix. 31. 32. Luke xiv. 11. (14.) By long sleeping, or trifling away time,

X. SATAN hath, *very subtilely, much hindered my progress in holiness.* (1.) By making me imagine, that true repentance consists more in contrition for sin, than in turning from it in heart and life, Joel ii. 12. Is. lviii. 6. (2.) By so amazing and confounding me with my sinful falls, as to keep me from attempting to rise again and go forward, Josh. vii. 10. Gen. xliii. 10. (3.) In making me neglect duty, because I saw I could not perform it rightly, 2 Sam. vi. 7. 8. 9. 10. (4.) By injecting thoughts materially good, but not answerable to my present exercise in religion. 2 Cor. xi. 14. Psal. i. 3. (5.) By making me neglect to aim at the particular end of duties, even when I perform them because God commands them; and no end being gained, renders them a burden at length. (6.) By making me gaze at a duty, under pretence of waiting on the Lord for preparation, till I had lost the opportunity for performing it, Acts i. 11. Matth. xx. 6. Jer. xiii. 16. (7.) By making me neglect the exercise of grace or duties, by resting in the pleasant speculation of it, and resolution to do it, Rom. ii. 13. 18. Matth. vii. 21. Jer. ii. 19. 20. (8.) By making me study the manner of duty, rather than the substance of it; and so soothing my proud aiming at excellency of duty, rather than duty itself. (9.) By urging me to do many things at once, that so all might be either neglected, or ill performed, Luke x. 41. 42. Eccl. ix. 10. (10.)

(10.) By gilding vices with the appearance of virtue or grace, 2 Cor. xi. 14. Gal. v. 13. (11.) By making me follow my own inward disposition, as a rule in duty, rather than his call of providential conveniency of doing it, Jam. v. 13. Mark xiv. 37. 38. (12.) By violently urging me to duties, that he may represent God as an hard master, and so dispirit me, 1 John iv. 18. (13.) By making me employ my concern too much in the lesser matters of religion, in order to draw me from a due attention to the more important things, Matth xxiii. 23. (14.) In making me pore too much on the evidences of my grace, in order to keep me from essaying to grow in grace, and fulfil my generation work, Heb. vi. 1. (15.) In making me found my spiritual comfort upon my own faith, frame, or works, rather than upon God's free, full, and unchangeable promise, and mercy in Christ, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Ezek. xvi. 62. (16.) By leading me out to endeavour an establishing of my own righteousness, and to regard good works as the product of my own desires or diligence, and abhor sins as contrary to my own resolutions, rather than as dishonourable to God, Prov. xix. 3. Rom. x. 3. Mark xiv. 37. Is. x. 7. Psal. lviii. 3. (17.) Under pretence of yielding myself to the direction and influence of God, I have, at other times, attempted to resolve nothing at all; and so turned careless, contrary to Phil. ii. 12. 13. (18.) Through an obstinate adherence to my intended order of duties, I have secretly resisted the Spirit of God, drawing me to some other duty, Deut. i. 41. Num. xiv. 39. (19.) By making me pray for such things as were

not proper to be granted in the time I wished, Jam. iv. 3. John v. 15. 2 Cor. xii. 8. (20.) By making me imagine, that difficult duties pressed upon me were commanded by God, chiefly in order to cross and afflict me; and this made me perform them very heartlessly, and without success. (21.) By making me undervalue common or smaller mercies, Zech. iv. 10. (22.) By making me comply with lesser evils, in order to avoid the appearance of an hypocrite. (23.) By making me improve God's absolute decree and sovereignty as an excuse for my sins, and as a reflection on his revealed will, Rom. ix. 18. 19. (24.) By making me prescribe methods of helping me to God; and then undervalue his mercy, because it came not in my way, 2 Kings v. 11. (25.) By making me strive against the outward acts of sin, while I neglected the purification of my heart, Matth. xxiii. 26. (26.) By making me neglect the life and zeal of actions, under pretence of discretion, prudence, and patience. (27.) By making me perform duties in my own strength, without looking for divine assistance. (28.) By making me neglect the outward part of repentance, under pretence of the Lord's requiring the heart. (29.) By making me listen to, and rashly believe, the suggestions of sense concerning God, or myself, or my interest in him. (30.) By making me ready to believe every thing suggested in human writings, especially if the writers were godly and learned. (31.) By making me judge of my success in duty, by outward appearances; and so discouraging me from it.

XI. NOTWITHSTANDING all my unworthiness and wickedness, I have great reason to bless him for his manifold mercies to me. (1.) In giving me such continued and perfect health. (2.) In taking such care of my education. (3.) In beating me out of all my false rests; and refuges of lies; in which, if I had continued, I had perished for ever. (4.) In bearing with, and sparing me, notwithstanding my great provocations. (5.) In taking such pains upon me, by afflictions, temptations, convictions, and mercies of all sorts, public and private, before and after my conversion. (6.) In bestowing saving grace on me, notwithstanding all the pains I was at to shift it. (7.) In recovering me from my backslidings, carelessness; and security. (8.) In suffering my manners and supplying my wants, when I was in a wilderness, in an afflicted and perplexed condition. (9.) In giving me such talents, as may be improved, for serving him in the gospel of his Son. (10.) In keeping me on his own side, in this day of fearful apostacy from, and perfidious rebellion against him. (11.) In so often refreshing me with his visits, under spiritual deadness, confusions, sorrows, and burdens. (12.) In frequently delivering me from the deepest plunges of trouble. (13.) In marvellously supporting me under my manifold and sore afflictions.—And all these mercies are so much the greater, that the Lord himself is so clearly manifested in the bestowal of them; that they are plainly marked with his special love in Christ; that he hath bestowed them on me, and not on the rest of my kindred; that his kindness is so constant; that

by all his mercies, he sanctifies and draws me nearer to himself; and that I am so loaded with his mercies, in the day of his great indignation with the land.

C H A P. III.

Of his entrance on the ministry; marriage; imprisonment; and death.

BEING much concerned to know, whether I was indeed called to the ministerial office, I set apart several days for solemn fasting and prayer, that the Lord would give me light in this matter. I saw, that by his dealings with me, the Lord had given me some insight into the exercises and doctrines of religion. I found, that the divinity of the Scriptures, and of our first Reformers, was far more agreeable to my experience, than that of *Mr Baxter*, whom I looked upon as a stated enemy to the grace of the gospel, under pretence of opposing *Antinomianism*; and many others, who less plainly declared their sentiments. By this, I thought, the Lord intended to fit me for declaring his righteousness in the great congregation. (2.) I was not only convinced, that I ought to serve the Lord in that office for which he had given me the most suitable talents; but that word, *occupy till I come*, Luke xix. 13. was deeply impressed on my soul; and I was, by means hereof, called to serve God in the gospel of his Son. (3.) Along herewith, the Spirit of God represented to my soul, the beauty and glory of the ministerial office, and inclined my heart to the work
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of it; and gave me a marvellous delight, and no small edification, in such reading or writing as more directly prepared me for it. (4.) Not only was my heart rendered averse to any other study or employment, but all my attempts to settle in any other station, were crushed and broken by providence. (5.) In my distress, I had vowed to the Lord, that if he would deliver me, and clear up my saving interest in himself, within five years, I would apply myself to the ministry. The Lord granted me my request in less than six weeks; I therefore looked on myself as bound: especially, as in my vow I had said, that I would look upon his granting of my request as a token of his calling me to serve him in the gospel. (6.) I observed, that when, notwithstanding my vow, I had shifted to make such proper appearances for the Lord, as his Spirit urged me to, he cast me into a terrible depth of spiritual trouble for many weeks. (7.) Faithful ministers of Jesus Christ, after deliberate trying of me, did solemnly set me apart to the ministerial office. (8.) The refreshment of my own soul, increase of my gifts, and the blessing of my labours to many; and even the remarkable smiles of providence upon my worldly estate, after my entrance into the ministry, though I received nothing for my labours, confirmed me of the Lord's call to it. (9.) I find God hath given me, in some measure, that rational ability; that real grace, and distinctness and strength of it; that godly and spiritual conversation; that sense of the charge of souls; that pleasure in the work; that sympathizing tenderness of heart; that fellowship with, and dependence

ence on God; that prudence, bold zeal, and humility; which ministers necessarily ought to have.

I HAVE great reason to be humbled before God, for my sad *short-comings* in the discharge of my office; in that, (1.) I have not been more sensibly affected with the great charge which the Lord hath laid upon me, and I have undertaken. (2.) I have not applied myself wholly to the word and to prayer, as my only work. (3.) I have been sadly entangled with the affairs of this life, and my heart so taken up with them. (4.) I have not had a due tendernefs towards perishing souls, or sense of God's presence, and the matters of which I spoke. (5.) I have not duly depended on the Lord for his counsel, direction, and strength, in my labours, or his blessing on them; and so have not had my ministrations purely from God. (6.) I have neglected many means of saving or edifying souls, by private conference, writing letters, and the like. (7.) My conversation hath not been so shining and convincing, as became a minister of Christ. (8.) I have been often timorous and bashful, when I should boldly have appeared against sin, and for God.

NEVERTHELESS, I have great reason to bless the Lord. (1.) That he hath so honoured me, as to call me to serve him in the gospel of his Son, who was designed, and educated by my parents, for another station and business. (2.) That by repeated conversions, sore spiritual conflicts, desertions, temptations, persecutions, and other troubles,

troubles, he, in some measure, qualified me for the ministerial work. (3.) That he so remarkably blessed the small pains I took for increasing my knowledge, and improving my parts and gifts. (4.) That he not only called, but convinced me of my call to the ministry. (5.) That I durst never preach any thing to others, but what I had some experience of in my own soul. I durst never to direct others to a way in which I myself had not walked. I never gave a mark of grace but what I found in myself. I never solved a doubt, but by such means as the Lord had solved it to myself. (6.) That the Lord always directed me to what I preached. I durst never preach that sermon, which had not been attended with some warmth and life on my own soul in studying it, before I preached it. (7.) That I did not undertake the office of the ministry from any regard to worldly gain, but to honour and serve Christ, and to do all the good I could to poor sinners; and, for the first twelve years, did not receive one farthing upon that account. (8.) That my labours were acceptable to both gracious and graceless, learned and unlearned. (9.) That he endowed me with all the qualifications needful for a minister, though I had but a small degree of some of them. (10.) That my gifts and graces, and even my outward estate, increased, after I entered into the ministry. (11.) That, as I sensibly felt my own insufficiency to do any thing for the Lord, I as sensibly found the immediate supplies of his Spirit, enabling me to perform the duties of my calling, in a gracious and comfortable manner. (12.) That he preserved

ved me from ever dishonouring my calling by any scandalous sin. (13.) That he fixed me on the side of his truth, and enabled me to suffer for it, as well as to preach it.

OBSERVE, (1.) Though Christ calls some to the ministry, who have no real grace, yet he never calls such as are scandalous, or unqualified with proper gifts. (2.) Ministers may be most useful to others, when they feel least enlargement in their own souls, in their preaching work. (3.) Ministers bid fairest to get their own souls quickened, when they are most diligent in labouring to edify others, or prepare for it. (4.) It is neither for the safety of their own, or their hearers souls, for ministers to be entangled in unnecessary *civil business*. (5.) Ministers neglect or slight performance of the duties of their office, is an especial mean of hurting their own soul. (6.) After all their sermons, ministers had need to flee to Jesus' blood for pardon, and to mourn over their short-comings, and beg grace to give them a deep sense of *what* they preach, *whose words* they preach, and to *whom* they preach. (7.) God doth not call all his ministers in a like manner. Some must be *thrust out* into the office, and others are determined willingly to accept it. (8.) Ordinarily the Lord exerciseth such as he calls, with much soul trouble and inward experience, before their entrance into the ministry. (9.) No habitual endowments of gifts or graces can make one preach aright, without actual breathings of the Holy Ghost, to stir up and excite their gifts and graces. (10.) The great
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end of ministers, in all the acts of their office, ought to be to draw mens souls to, and build them up in Christ. Where Christ is not the sense and life of preaching, we lose the text. (11.) Ministers ought to be especially acquainted with the *covenant of grace, Christ, faith, the promises, and the law of God.*

THAT same year 1672, in which I entered on the ministerial work, I, after much solemn prayer, and consultation of the Lord about that matter, was very happily married. And, by means of my wife and her relations, I was not a little delivered from embarrassments in my worldly circumstances, and had more opportunities of preaching the gospel in those days of persecution. But, to punish me for my sad unprofitableness to her, and my family, and relations, and for my carnality in the enjoyment of lawful comforts, and for the deviation of my heart from Christ and the things above towards them, the Lord removed her from me by death, in about four years after our marriage, while I was absent.

OBSERVE, Men and women can never carry a right in a married estate, unless they have been first married to Christ; and, but seldom, their hearts are afterward brought to choose Christ. (2.) Christians ought never to marry, without much acknowledgment of the Lord in that matter. (3.) The great end of Christians, in their marriage, ought to be the getting of a *meet help*, for the furtherance of their spiritual and eternal welfare.

welfare. (4.) They ought, therefore, to take the most earnest heed, that the person they marry be prudent, pious, and virtuous. It is dreadful to take a *lump of God's wrath* into our bosom. (5.) It is a great blessing, when married persons are first so united in love, as to make them walk faithfully, in sweet spiritual fellowship with God, in the exercises of religion. (6.) Grace makes persons good in all relations. (7.) God ordinarily annexeth his remarkable curse to marriages, which are *chiefly made for the sake of wealth*. (8.) It is a difficult matter, to manage in a duly affectionate, prudent, and spiritual manner, in a married estate. (9.) The loss of earthly comforts is as bitter, as the enjoyment of them was sweet. (10.) Mercies coming to us as the answer of earnest prayers, are double mercies.

No sooner had I left hearing of the curates in 1663, than I became an object of our rulers resentment. My preaching of the gospel made me much more so. In 1674 I was intercommuned, and a sum of money was promised, by the privy council, to any who should apprehend me. As I, nevertheless, continued preaching the gospel, I was, in January 1677, apprehended in Edinburgh, as we were employed in family worship, through the treachery of the maid-servant. The privy council, before which I attempted a bold and discreet confession of my principles, sent me to the Bas, in which I had a miserable imprisonment of two years and a half; but the Lord, in different forms, comforted me under it. About two years after I had been relieved from
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the Bais, the bishop of Edinburgh, and lord-advocate, understanding that I was sick, caused cite me to appear in a few weeks at Edinburgh, in the depth of winter. Contrary to the advice of my friends, I compeared; and again largely declared my principles. By the influence of the bishops, I was ordered to lie prisoner at Blackness, till I should pay a fine of five thousand merks; and give security not to preach any more, or go off the Kingdom. After seven weeks imprisonment in this sad place, I was liberated; and, in May 1682, retired, under my sentence of banishment, to London. I had not been there much above a year, when I was apprehended: after different examinations, I was committed prisoner in Newgate, and remained there twenty-four weeks; extremely well used by the keeper, but so crowded with visits, that I had little time for secret fellowship with God.

OBSERVE, (1.) Such as will live godly in this world, must, and will suffer persecution, 2 Tim. iii. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 12. (2.) Even when religion is in general favour, saints will have their daily crosses; and will be persecuted, at least with the tongue, Gal. iv. 28. 29. Gen. xxi. 29. (3.) There are special seasons of persecution, in which the devil and his agents are let loose to a fearful degree, Rev. iii. 10. Eph. vi. 13. Luke viii. 13. 22. 25. (4.) God often puts an end to the extremity of his people's personal trials, before he exercise them with public sufferings, Is. xxvii. 8. 1 Cor. x. 13. (5.) Saints are, ordinarily, first exercised with personal afflictions, in order to

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teach them to endure public sufferings the better. (6.) God often affrights his people with trouble, which never come upon them, Jonah i. 11. (7.) God seldom lays any remarkable affliction upon his people, without first warning them of it, Zeph. ii. 1.—4. (8.) Obstinacy in sinning, attended with the death of the most lively saints, and with much carnal security, forebode dreadful judgments, Is. lvii. 1. 2. (9.) Unbelieving fears and confusions, are our greatest troubles amidst affliction. (10.) The cross of Christ is most terrible and heavy, when it appears at a distance. (11.) Saints are often delivered from their troubles, when their case seems most desperate. (12.) Nothing contributes more to a Christian behaviour under trouble, than the faith of God's support in, and deliverance out of it, Jam. v. 7. 8. (13.) It is matter of humiliation, that troubles, and especially smaller ones, do us so little good, Heb. xii. 11. (14.) The more the people of God are afflicted and persecuted, the more they grow, and the gospel spreads, Exod i. 12. Phil. i. 12. (15.) Persecutors are ungodly, cruel, and deceitful. (16.) Too much respect to, and fellowship with wicked men, provokes the Lord to give his people into the hands of the wicked. (17.) It is a comfort to the saints, that their enemies are also God's enemies. (18.) Under public sufferings, we are especially called to patient submission, and Christian cheerfulness. (19.) Sufferings for the sake of Christ, are not only our duty, but our great privilege. (20.) Reproach, shame, and hatred of men, are the heaviest of Christ's crosses to bear. (21.) It is fear-
fully

fully wicked to be ashamed of the way of God, and of the truths and cross of Christ. (22.) It is very necessary to our comfort and honour, that we get our public sufferings stated entirely on account of Christ and his truths, and not on account of any fault or imprudence of ours. (23.) Persecution may at once be a correction for sin, and a testimony for Christ and his truths. (24.) Persecutors own enmity to God and godliness, is the true reason of their persecuting the saints, John xv. 19. 21. Gen. iii. 15. (25.) Christ accepts of the sufferings of his people as a testimony for him, even where their own groundless scrupulosity is an immediate reason of them. (26.) All persecution shall work for the honour of God, and good of his people, Psal. lxxvi. 10. Is. xxxi. 9. (27.) Sometimes the godly are less kind to persecuted saints, than unregenerate persons. (28.) God often very wonderfully preserves his people in the days of adversity. (29.) The wicked are ensnared, and their interests ruined, by their attempts against the people of God. (30.) Division among the godly, especially, weakens and undoes them. (31.) Great tribulations quicken our views of eternity, and are attended with the greatest consolations. (32.) The first brunt of the cross of Christ is saddest and sharpest. (33.) In appearing before persecuting judges, we are apt rather to seek to save ourselves, in any lawful way, than to honour and give bold testimony for Christ, in a way of dependence on himself. (34.) An afflicted condition is best for the people of God. (35.) There is never reason to repent of suffering for Christ.

(36.) God hath provided a large allowance for such as suffer for righteousness; but their refusal to live upon it, renders many of them lean from day to day.

AFTER the revolution, Mr Fraser was minister of Culross; and died at Edinburgh, September 1698. His last words were, *I am full of the consolations of Christ, &c.*

The CHRISTIAN, the STUDENT,
and PASTOR,

E X E M P L I F I E D;

In the LIVES of
Several Eminent DIVINES.



SECONDLY, Memoirs of the Reverend Mr
JAMES HOGG, sometime ago Minister
of Carnock.

C H A P. I.

*Of his conversion and establishment in the Lord's
way.*

THE Lord began his saving work on my
soul, with a deep conviction of my singular
and unparalleled sinfulness and guilt. Appre-
hensions of my being chargeable with the guilt of
Adam's first sin, and of the corruption of my na-
ture, so impressed my mind with a sense of my
loathsomeness and danger, as filled me with strong
fears, lest the Lord should, even in time, make
me a terror to myself, and all about me, a monu-
ment of his dreadful indignation; as an awful
warning to future generations against their abu-
sing such advantages of education, and other
valuable mercies, as I had enjoyed. These con-

victions preserved me, even when very young, from the common irregularities of children; and made me diligent in using the Lord's instituted means of grace, public, private, and secret, which were sometimes attended with no small inward sweetness and enlargement. Some of my near relations told me, that they thought they observed evidences of the real grace of God about me, in my most tender years. But, regardless of their accounts, I looked on myself as an heir of hell, a child of wrath, an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a stranger from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without Christ, and without God in the world, Eph. ii. 12. This fearful pressure of my heart was produced, by conviction of such sins as could not be much observed by others. The inward struggle between these perplexing fears on the one hand, and my own proud nature on the other, gave my spiritual enemies great advantage to work on my temper, and to render my distress more and more painful.

AMIDST these sad confusions, which proved of long continuance, I had many pleasant intervals; in which I was encouraged to expect, that the Lord would, in due time, deliver my soul from death, and put an end to my dreadful vexation. When I heard of any in a like case, and thought that no temptation had happened to me, but what was, in some respect, common to men, 1 Cor. x. 13.; and, especially, when I thought that there was a possibility of help, for such as had destroyed themselves, I was a little eased.

But

But I could not draw any comfort from such scriptures, as import, that *Christ is come to seek and save that which is lost*, Matth. xviii. 11. ; that he *wounds and heals, kills and makes alive*, Deut. xxxii. 40. ; and is a *physician to them that are sick*, Matth. ix. 12. 13. : for I durst not look on the exercise of my soul, as in any respect kindly ; but as an awful foretaste and forerunner of God's everlasting indignation, to be poured out upon me. Yet his taking away the *hard and stony heart*, Ezek. xi. 19. and xxxvi. 26. and working wonders of mercy, somewhat supported my spirit.

SOMETIMES transient views of the glory and beauty of the Lord's dispensations toward me, be the issue what it would, humbled my spirit ; and these scriptures, 1 Sam. iii. 18. *It is the Lord, let him do as it seemeth him good*, Psal. cxl. 3. *His work is honourable and glorious*, Psal. xxxix. 9. *I was dumb because thou didst it*, Lam. iii. 27. 28. 29. *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope ;—and the like, were refreshing to my soul.*

UNDER these distresses, the Lord discovered to me, that, notwithstanding all my convictions, I had greatly trusted to an arm of flesh ; as to the care of my wife and godly parents, and other relations and friends, and to my vows and covenants with God. I saw that I had spent my little ALL on other physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. I found, that all my Christ-denying shifts, did but, like the contrivances

vances of the prodigal, bring me to *perish with hunger*. The Lord also swept away my lying refuges. He removed my father by a triumphant death, and left my mother a desolate widow, with her children; and few took any care of us. Some professed friends became very cold; and others did not seem to understand my distressed condition. The inadvertencies of my speech and behaviour, arising from the perplexities of my mind, drew reproach upon me from others. These things shut me up to a retired venting of my sorrows before the Lord. That text, Jer. xvii. 5. 6. *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord; for he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh*, powerfully impressed on my heart, led me forth to a most particular, extensive, and even sweet and kindly acknowledgment of whole swarms of mine iniquities. I perceived, that the whole stream, of my deceitful and desperately wicked heart, had run out in a trusting in creatures; and that I could not see and acknowledge, that *In vain is salvation looked for from the hills and the multitude of mountains: In the Lord alone is the salvation of Israel*, Jer. iii. 23. Yet the apprehension of my real condition, made me conceive faint hopes, that the Lord would set my soul right, in his own time and way. I sometimes enjoyed sweet composure for a little; and, though I continued in the dark, I was made to *hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of God*, Lam. iii. 26. Sometimes I feared, that my bleeding wounds would close up in heartless despondency; and that I would

pine

pine away in mine iniquities. At other times, my soul was racked with terrible convulsions; yet the Lord so kept me, as I durst not return to my former lords and lovers. Though I knew not when, if ever I would be brought out of the pit, in which there was no water, and from the swelling deeps of inward distress and perplexity, I got some dark views of Jesus' infinite fulness, and sufficiency to save *to the uttermost*. This somewhat repressed my fears, that the Lord, in righteousness, had put an end to my day of grace, on account of mine iniquities, which far exceeded every conceivable measure of his wrath.

WHILE I was thus, in some measure, upheld by the views of a mere possibility of my salvation through Christ, and made to think how others, in a like condition, had been at last delivered; while I was still sinking in deep waters, where there was no standing, with mine eyes failing; while I waited for the Lord, these scriptures, *Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?* Joel ii. 14. *I will look unto the Lord: I will wait for the God of my salvation: I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me,* were somewhat sweet to my soul, even though I durst not apply them closely to myself. Meanwhile, my spiritual enemies mustered up, before my conscience, multitudes of mine iniquities; especially my sins against light and conviction, rebellious vexations of his holy Spirit, with the manifold aggravations thereof. They also strongly urged on my mind,
that

that my day of grace was past, and the Spirit of the Lord would no longer strive with me; and that the salvation of such an unparalelled sinner, could not consist with the Lord's honour; and that it was necessary, that he should make me as singular in punishment, as I had been in sinning. Sometimes also, though less violently, I was tempted to believe that I had sinned the unpardonable sin.

UNDER these harrassments, (1.) I was made to acknowledge, that it would be very just with the Lord to put an end to my day of grace, and make his Spirit strive no longer with me. I saw, that an inexpressible glory of his righteousness would shine forth, in his punishing me to the uttermost, even with everlasting destruction from his presence, and the glory of his power; the thoughts of which was very terrible to me; and that never a sinner, had such reason to *accept of the punishment of his iniquity*, as I had. I was made to condemn the least rising of my heart, against the equity and glory of my own eternal damnation. Thus, *whatsoever the law said*, it said to me, that my mouth *might be stopped*, and I *might become guilty before God*. (2.) I was made to perceive, that my spiritual enemies were contradicting the manifestations which God hath made of himself in his word; and driving me to that kind of atheism, which lies in perverted and hard thoughts of him. I thought, let me, abstracting from gross acts of wickedness, be esteemed an inexpressibly greater sinner than mine enemies can insinuate, as I am sure I am; yet
why

why should I set bounds to the unsearchable riches of JEHOVAH's grace? The love of the Father, purchase of the Son, and efficacy of the Holy Spirit, are infinitely glorious. The immense sea of God's pardoning mercy through Christ may swallow up, and cover, the most unparalleled sinner that ever breathed, 1 Cor. vi. 9. 10. 11. (3.) I was persuaded by the Lord, that he had not wholly given up with me, and abandoned me to my own lusts; and that even the rage of my spiritual enemies, manifested their fears, that I would be delivered out of their hands, Rev. xii. 12. 13. I also observed, that when they had got me under their feet, the Lord did not suffer them to trample me to death. When they *rose to slay me, and to swallow me up quick, the Lord gave me not for a prey to their teeth, but broke their snares: and though they often vexed me from my youth, and plowed upon my back, and drew long their furrows, he did cut their cords,* Psal. cxxiv. 2.—8. and cxxix. 1.—4. (4.) That text, Rom. iv. 5. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the UNGODLY,* encouraged me much. I was persuaded, that it belonged to me, more than to any other upon the face of the earth; as I found myself only and altogether UNGODLY, in the highest degree, utterly destitute of, and absolutely incapable to attain to righteousness. I also saw, that the Lord will not *break the bruised reed,* will not destroy a poor sinner, to whom he hath given an humbling and heart-breaking discovery of his sinfulness and wretchedness; nor *quench the smoking flax,* which giveth no light, but sendeth forth the most noisom

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and noxious savour, Is. xlii. 3. I saw myself to be such, and wondered how the earth could bear me; and thought my loathsomeness was perceivable to all around me, especially to such as had any fear of God, and so was ashamed to set up my head among them. (5.) These texts, Is. xlvii. 12. 13. *Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted and far from righteousness: behold, I bring near my righteousness, and my salvation shall not tarry*, Luke xix. 10. *The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost*, Matth. xi. 28. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest*, were sometimes strengthening to me. I saw that I was called; and that it would be reasonable for God to save such a poor self-condemned wretch; and I found some powerful and comfortable influences, drawing, and causing me to come willingly, as one who had heard and learned of the Father; and, in so doing, found rest to my soul, and a willingness to take Christ's sweet yoke upon me.

I HAD read nothing on conversion, and had little inclination to converse with any about my case. Such as did converse with me also, either took my distress to be no more than a natural melancholy, or thought too favourably of me. None, except Mr Thomas Hogg, whom I met with in the tolbooth of Edinburgh, among other prisoners persecuted for righteousness sake, searched me in answerableness to my real condition. I afterwards, when in great distress of mind, endeavoured to have access to converse with him, when he was prisoner in the Bass, but was refused

fused it. Nevertheless, I got a letter conveyed to him, to which he returned a most profound, clear, and encouraging answer. Though my former heaviness was removed, I had no settled persuasion of my saving interest in Christ; but was tossed hither or thither, as my frames and exercise appeared favourable, or not. I got into familiar acquaintance with some godly persons, with whom I used a great deal of freedom; and, by prayer and converse with them, received much light and pleasant instruction, which I greedily drank in. As we were all of one mind, I had little inclination to converse about the debates of the times, (between 1660 and 1688): but my chief concern was about that which related to the eternal salvation, and the particular case of my soul.

I HAD rashly drunk in the common prejudices against the writings of the famous *Mr Shepherd*; but having become acquainted with Mrs R. I began to object against them some quibbles, which passed for demonstrations with many, of unaccountable severity in dealing with souls: which she solidly confuted, and put me to silence, and gave me a loan of his *Sound Believer*; which I carefully perused, and found great satisfaction in this, and his other works. I found, that they answered to my inward exercise, and unfolded the true spring of my rebellions and vexations; namely, my ignorance and pride, venting themselves in fretting against the Lord, or fainting under his rod. I was so far from thinking him too severe, that I rather suspected he was too conde-

scending. He carries the law work, beyond any that I have seen, to an happy issue; to a deep sense of our having destroyed ourselves, and being utterly unable to help ourselves; and to accept the punishment of our iniquity, as altogether just and righteous. This humiliation of soul, I saw to be the very hinge of spiritual exercise. He, and others of his stamp, explain what a marriage to the law is, and the manner of divorce from it, in order to marriage with Christ. His discoveries of the most refined, or *gospel-hypocrite*, are managed in such a way, as to cherish and encourage the weakest believer. I am sure, that though none can be more weak than I, I found encouragement from his writings; I fear too much, rather than too little.

WHEN matters had long continued thus with me, sometimes a little enlightened, and anon overclouded by darkness, melancholy, and temptation, working on my humour and inward lusts, I was sent to Holland, to prosecute the study of divinity at one of their universities; (as, on account of the persecution, I had no access in Scotland). At my very entrance, I was like to be altogether swallowed up by inward distress. (1.) I was deeply convinced of my former misimprovement of time, and of the means of education which I had enjoyed; and especially, of my slothful and careless walking, after I thought the Lord had begun graciously to manifest himself to my soul. (2.) Finding no fruits answerable to these promising beginnings, I was strongly disposed to conclude, that they had all been but
painted

painted delusions; and that I had been but feeding on ashes, and a deceived heart had turned me aside, and I had entertained a lie in my right hand. (3.) I was violently, and almost constantly, tempted to think, that the Lord, in his righteous judgment, had wholly blasted me, that I would never be capable of serving him in any station; but remain an useless, and most hurtful weight upon the face of the earth. *From him that bath not, shall be taken away even that which he seemed to have*, Luke viii. 18. (4.) I even found an unfitness for, and inattention to my studies, which increased my suspicions; and, to my great grief, made me fear the name of the Lord would be blasphemed on my account, notwithstanding my friends had stretched themselves, to promote my education for his service. (5.) After much struggling, my proud heart was brought down, and I concluded, that the ministerial work was, in every respect, too high for me; and that I might look on it as a great honour, if the Lord would but fit me to serve him in the meanest station upon earth. And, when I have looked on the most abject lawful employments, I thought, O how happy were I, if my soul were healed, and I were fitted to serve the Lord in any of these, with a quiet mind: *Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thine hired servants*, Luke xv. 18. 19. (6.) Having, with much confusion and heaviness, applied closely to my studies, the damp was intirely removed off my spirit. (7.) My studies having become very pleasant to me, I launched too far into the pu-

blic disputations of the college, being encouraged herein by my teachers ; and, notwithstanding clear convictions of its sinfulness and danger, and inward vexation about it, an itch of applause strongly prevailed in my heart. (8.) Several of the Dutch rulers took special notice of me, and would have procured me a settlement in their country ; but I, being convinced of the sinfulness of some compliances, without which there was no access to any station answerable to my studies, could not yield ; but determined, in ~~in~~ the Lord's strength, never, upon any account whatsoever, to engage into any thing which I judged to be sinful. And, ever since, it hath been the desire of my soul, to search every matter of truth and duty to the bottom. And my temper being too soft, and ready to faint, I want to undergo the strictest search, with respect to all my spiritual concerns ; and, since I can expect little searching from men, I desire that the Lord himself would *search me and try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in his way everlasting*, Psal. cxxxix. 23. 24. (9.) Notwithstanding I succeeded in my studies beyond expectation, that text, 2 Cor. iii. 14. 15. *But their minds were blinded ; for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart*, grievously wounded my spirit, and drew forth my soul into the most bitter lamentations. (10.) I was often greatly distressed, under a deep sense of my *profaneness* of heart, in hearing and speaking of the mysteries of the gospel.

gospel, as if they had been but common or philosophical points, in our prosecution of our studies. However little some others were affected with this, I saw that my wickedness, in this matter, was far more aggravated, than the like transgression could be in any other. I saw, that the Lord *will not hold them guiltless that take his name in vain*, by an unholy and irreverent use of his names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words, or works; and that where-ever the fear of the Lord is in the heart, it will proportionally manifest itself, in a reverend and high esteem of whatsoever, through his blessing, maketh him known. This put me to a sad stand; and I lamented my sin in this matter, with much brokenness of heart before the Lord. But alas! even in this deep sense of my fearful wickedness, I found my hellish pride working, and prompting me to depend, in part, on a righteousness of my own, in opposition to a complete regard to Jesus Christ, as the Lord my righteousness. I found, that my want of these gifts and graces went nearer my heart, than my sad estrangement from him; and that I irregularly esteemed them, instead of being wholly taken up with, and, as it were, swallowed up in their source and giver. I thought, how heavenly a life might I have lived, when my only business was, to search into what the Lord had revealed concerning himself, had not the darkness and vail on my mind hindered me; so that seeing, I saw, and perceived not; hearing, I heard, but understood not, *Is. vi. 9. 10. Mark iv. 12.* Alas! thought I, are these judicial strokes from the Lord? Is my heart made fat,

and my ears dull of hearing, in his righteous judgments? In this sad distress I long continued, with some occasional enlightenings of my mind, kindly mourning over the blindness and hardness of my heart, and cries to the Lord for deliverance. But my speedy relapses into my wonted lethargy, made me fear, that the Lord, in righteous judgment, had sent forth a withering wind to nip all my blossoms, and blast all my hopes; and that he had denied me *eyes to see, ears to hear, or an heart to understand.* (11.) Amidst this sore and long distress, I revealed a little of my case to a much esteemed, and, I hope, godly divine, of that country; but I quickly found, that his apprehensions of the real evidences of grace in the heart, were too lax; and that the Lord had not given him such experience, as was necessary for understanding the intricate perplexities of my soul. I therefore withdrew, as soon as decency could permit, much vexed that I had opened my mind to him; and even fearing, that I had represented my case in too favourable a light. I then resolved, to make my moan only to the Lord.

AFTER I had, for a considerable time, lived in great suspense, sometimes better, and sometimes worse, when I was not so much as thinking on my case, light suddenly broke into my heart. I immediately retired, sweetly meditating on that text, *Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eye to behold the sun,* Eccl. xi. 7. O how sweet the light was to me, who had been long shut up in a dark dungeon! For some time, I could

could do nothing, but cry, O for light, for light, for more light ! *O send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me, and bring me to thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles !* Psal. xliii. 3. After I had thus cried, not without some experience of a gracious answer, and expectation of more, I quickly found my soul brought out of prison, and breathing in a free and heavenly air ; altogether astonished at the amazing mercy and grace of God in Christ, and the surprising manifestations of it, which I enjoyed. But alas ! I was soon tempted to think it all delusive, because I had not, immediately before, been under any spiritual exercise about my case ; and to think none of my preceding concern had proceeded from the spirit of adoption, and so this could not be an answer to former prayers. In answer to these suggestions, (1.) I readily granted, that I, and all my best works, instead of meriting any regard from God, did more than deserve his most dreadful judgments, Is. lxiv. 6. (2.) I saw the unsearchable riches of his grace, shining more clearly in the freedom of this mercy. *Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money ; neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices ; but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins ; thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, &c.* Is. xliii. 24. 25. (3.) I saw that the Lord thus prevented me from having any temptation to sacrifice to my own net. Had this singular manifestation immediately followed any fervent prayer of mine, my proud heart, and Satan, would have taken advantage against me, which now they
had

had not. And the Lord of the mercy was the more endeared to my soul, as I saw *him only* in it; and that the whole praise belonged only, and wholly to him. And nothing has been more heavy to my soul, than my miscarriages under soul-exercise, and my hard thoughts of the Lord, and risings of heart against him, and my desponding fears, that he would *answer my prayers by terrible things in righteousness*, Psal. lxxv. 5. Never any in the world had less shadow of ground, to be taken up with any exercise of their mind, than I; and yet I had need to be weaned from this form of idolatry.

THE Lord having thus brought me to the light, (1.) I cheerfully, and not without shame and blushing before the Lord, laid aside all my aspiring thoughts and projects, and abstracted from all public appearances, in which I had before too much abounded. I disdained that empty air of applause, which had before tickled my ambitious humour, notwithstanding many checks and challenges of conscience, for such whorish straying of heart from the Lord. Except when the order of the university required me to speak, I continued a silent hearer. Having one day pressed in, to hear a newly inaugurated professor defend his public thesis, I was, very unexpectedly, ordered to enter the lists with him; and, much against my will, obliged to continue almost till the solemnity was finished. Nevertheless, the Lord, by this, without any design of mine, kept up my credit, and satisfied my friends, that it was no failure of my intellectuals, through melancholy, which

which had occasioned my late retirement from public appearances.

2. Now spiritual occasions were greatly sweetened: the scripture had another relish than ever before; sermons were generally delightful, and meditation was ravishing. Even our polemical exercises in the college, had their own pleasure and profit. I beheld the glory of God in all the creatures around me, and my soul pressed through them to Him. *One thing I desired of the Lord, and that I sought to obtain, that all the days of my life I might dwell in his house, and behold his beauty,* Psal. xxvii. 4. God having, by an unexpected providence, brought to my hand Mr Shepherd's *Parable of the ten virgins*, I found no small pleasure, and, I hope, some spiritual advantage, in the perusal of it. I could not read much of it at once, as I found so much substance in it, and so clear discoveries of my own heart, as drew forth my soul in immediate addresses to the Lord, in acknowledgments of the perverse way in which I had walked. I delighted much in his discoveries of a legal spirit, and the differences, which he states, between the true believer and the most subtle gospel-hypocrite.

3. ALL probable appearance of our future external support being gone, through the persecution of our friends in Scotland, the Lord stirred up others, particularly some of the Dutch, to shew us kindness; and what was especially comfortable to us, gave me and my elder brother an opportunity of earning our bread by our own labour,

bour, in teaching the younger students, while we continued to prosecute our own studies. Some of the professors not only contrived this work for us, but from time to time recommended students to our care, who, being of the richer sort, rewarded our diligence; and, contrary to my fears, I found myself much profited in my studies, by labouring to instruct others. And indeed, I dare recommend a well regulated and laborious diligence, in a lawful calling, as an especial mean of promoting right spiritual exercise, even under the most oppressive weights of inward trouble.

4. In this period of spiritual prosperity, I had much clearer manifestations of Jesus Christ than ever before. Having opportunity of a providential retirement, I, for almost three or four days on end, had my soul filled with the *light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor iv. 6. O the inexpressible and ravishing beauty which I was made to behold in his person, offices, yoke, and cross; and in every thing by which he maketh himself known! Formerly, I had little more than an opinion, or rational deductions, concerning these things; but now, my soul was filled with the most glorious and delicious irradiations from the word, by the *spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ*. Having formerly much hurt my soul, by a legal and selfish manner of personal covenanting with God, at this time I did not incline to such dealing with him. But (1.) I was not only firmly persuaded of Jesus Christ's infinite ability and willingness

willingness to save to the uttermost, Heb. vii. 25. ; but I found the beginnings of salvation already wrought in me, in a deliverance from the power of sin and Satan, and giving me such views of the Pearl of great price, that I was in some measure ready to part with all things for him. (2.) By this manifestation, my soul was exceedingly engaged to him, and to his way; earnestly desirous to know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings. (3.) As I had destroyed myself, my desire was to be intirely under his hand, that he might recover me, and finish the work which he had begun in me, with *shoutings of grace, grace unto it*, Zech. iv. 6. (4.) I humbly requested, that he would not let me lye as an useless weight upon the face of the earth, but graciously fit me for any piece of service, however mean. Thus my transporting views of his stupendous condescension, and love in wooing, and offering, and giving himself, and all his fulness, to such a wretch as I am, did so delightfully overwhelm my soul, that I shall not say I gave myself wholly to him; but rather that he, by his almighty power, and efficacious persuasion, did invincibly seize upon, and render me his most willing captive. Who can come, when the Father doth not draw? or withstand the entrance of the light, of the omnipotent efficaciousness of mercy and grace, carrying understanding and will and every thing else in the soul alongst with it, in the most pleasant and free manner, towards him who alone is *altogether lovely*? *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm;*

arm; for love is strong as death, &c. Song viii. 6. 7.

5. FOR a considerable time after, my walk up through the wilderness was very comfortable. In this *kindness of youth, and love of espousals*, the frame of my soul was very pleasant; spiritual exercises were ordinarily very delightful, though not without some strivings with Satan and my indwelling corruptions. The Lord brought me into the wilderness, and spake comfortably to my heart, and restrained mine enemies from harassing me, as they did afterward. I then flattered myself, that they were brought down; and that, till I arrived at Immanuel's land above, I would have little else to do, but walk on in *the comforts of the Holy Ghost*.

NOTWITHSTANDING all these favours shewed me by the Lord, much childish weakness in religion remained with me. (1) Even small troubles or temptations were apt to disquiet my spirit, and render me unfit for the immediate worship of God, or a calm and Christian walk. And, though the Lord ordinarily soon removed the occasions of my perplexities, without any clear issue or victory, yet their returning so frequently, made me fear, lest my building, which seemed to be so easily overturned, had been *founded on the sand*. Thus I was, like a child dandled on the knees, destitute of solid activity or consideration. (2) I was very short-sighted, in discerning or judging of persons or doctrines. I often read, and heard with pleasure, that which

I afterward disrelifhed. I wondered at the different sentiments, of fuch as had far greater insight into matters than I had. (3.) I was fometimes furprized at the inward diftreffes of faints, recorded in fcripture, or otherwife. And though I inclined to hope, that I would not meet with fuch things, I had fome apprehenfions that they might be before me. (4.) The Lord having given my fpiritual enemies fuch a confounding ftroke, that they flirred but little for a time, I expected that matters would never be worfe again, but I would proceed in my religious courfe, in a fmooth and eafy way.

AFTER I had, for a confiderable time, walked in this pleafant manner, not without a fad mixture of legal fatigue, (1.) All my fenfible delights vanished as in a moment; and while my frail body appeared drawing near to death, my foul languifhed under guilt, pollution, and diftrefs. I often endeavoured, but to no purpofe, to recover my wonted livelinefs. Some of my friends appearing extraordinarily cold, I was aftonifhed to obferve God and men at once righteoufly forfaking me. But I durft not give way to murmuring, but left my complaint upon myfelf; and concluded, that fomething about me was difpleafing to God. (2.) Having accefs to converse with Mr Thomas Hogg, I reprefented to him, how that, when it was well with my foul, I had laboured to have my mind *confantly* employed about fpiritual things; but now my heart was fo bewildered, perplexed, and disjointed, that I could not perform any fpiritual duty; and that

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my mind especially wandered when I was engaged in the immediate worship of God, or when I was reading or hearing of spiritual matters. He represented to me, that, in my great strictness, I had been, and still was, much under the influence of a *legal principle* and temper; and that I had reason to bless the Lord, for bringing me off from such an intense labour in spiritual things, as tended either to crack my intellectuals, destroy my body, make me weary of my life, take up with mere formality in religion, or even become loose and profane. He represented to me, that Jesus Christ having redeemed our bodies, as well as our souls, we should take due care of both, for his sake; and that his *yoke is easy*, and his *burden is light*, and true exercise of religion advantageous to our whole man, in every proper respect. He represented superstition, as a perverse and horrible religion, not kindly, but blended with noxious severities. His discourse so far eased me, as I saw that my perplexed case could be, and was truly understood. I darkly perceived, that it was no small mercy, to have a just view of the venomous nature of my disease. And being shut up to the pleasant way of living by faith on the Son of God, I was earnestly desirous, and entertained some hopes, that he would teach me this exercise.

By this searching discourse of Mr Thomas Hogg, I perceived plainly, that mine eyes had seen the Lord Jesus Christ, and I had sold all for his sake; and that I had no reason to raze foundations, though I had much reason to mourn before

fore the Lord, that I had built so much *wood, hay, and stubble* on the foundation, 1 Cor. iii. 12. 15. (2.) I saw, that though the Lord had graciously manifested himself to me, the vilest of sinners, I had learned but very little of the exercise of living by faith on Christ. I had read many excellent things about it, and imagined that I had formed distinct conceptions of it; but my experience manifested, that I was sadly unacquainted with the teachings of God concerning it. However clear our notions of spiritual things may appear, yet we really know nothing of them aright, but as the Lord teacheth us by the all-powerful illumination of his Spirit, through his word. He that thinks he knows them otherwise, *knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.* (3.) The discoveries of Christ to my soul having been attended with remarkable influences, and even a lively exercise of my weak graces, I secretly and insensibly looked on myself, as possessed of a stock in hand; and thus fell into a legal way of acting from, and for self, with little believing dependence on Christ, the fountain of life; and hence, my soul was sadly disordered, instead of being kindly humbled for my declinings and revoltings from the Lord. And, when I got into a lively frame, I esteemed and applauded myself; being much taken up with gifts and graces received from Christ, but little with himself. I lived little in the faith of God's own testimony, *sitting to my seal that he is true*: but my soul was swayed in its fears, joys, and griefs, by my experimental appearances; and having little of that joy brought in by believing, I became an easy prey

to every temptation. (4.) Notwithstanding my finding some pleasure in overstretching my faculties, in a kind of bastard devotion, yet I found the law a rigorous master; whereas a true life of faith, while it is opposite, in the highest degree, to all sloth and untenderness, is pleasant and cherishing to both soul and body.

BEFORE this time I had much, but perversely, delighted in reading the *life and letters* of Mr Joseph Allan; his applauded conduct being so like my own legal exercise. But I now saw, that his exorbitant complaints and labours, and his disabling of his body for the Lord's service by them, or by his carelessness about it, flowed from his *legal Baxterian* principles. I was enabled more clearly to discern a legal spirit, doctrine, or book. And I earnestly beseech my friends to avoid, to the uttermost, *whatever is of a legal strain*. These subtle and soul-ruining distempers, will most insensibly insinuate themselves, and poison both heart and practice, even under the choicest means for battering them down; and much more by legal sermons, or books, which shelter and feed them. Such doctrines are not the channel of kindly convictions, or sanctifying comforts. My soul, being now revived, began to learn a *more excellent way*.

SOMETIME after this, the Lord provided for me, at the Hague, the charge of instructing two most agreeable young noblemen. Here I lived in an agreeable family, and had access to converse with persons of quality, and others, who were travelling

travelling heavenward. Many of these met in religious societies, for prayer and spiritual conference, in which I enjoyed no small pleasure. But it grieved me to see some of the members; in their discourses, apparently encroach on the ministerial work; and, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, meddle with things too high for them. I was also grieved, to see religion so much hurt in that country, by their toleration of, or connivance at every form of false religion, and by their want of proper church discipline; and by the magistrates Erastian encroachments on the sole headship of Jesus Christ, and the intrinsic power of his church.

HAVING much opportunity of spiritual conference, I lived in this family, with some considerable degree of inward liberty and comfort, for a time. But, at last, all of a sudden, while I was walking in my chamber, a flood of horrible thoughts, concerning God and religion, were forced in upon, and overflowed my heart. And though they did not make me look on all the former work of God, on my soul, as a delusion, yet they so confounded me, that I could not use my spiritual weapons to oppose them. Fearing, lest my heaviness and confusion might prejudice any in the family, or others, against the good way of the Lord, I begged, that he would give me such composure, and vigour of spirit, and pleasantness of behaviour, as might altogether cover the sad distress of my mind. My request was so far granted, that I was nothing hindered in my ordinary business, and was even quickened for spiritual

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exercifes; the temptations being either kept off, or much reſtrained, while I was employed in them.

I IMPARTED my caſe to the principal ſervant of the family, who had much experience of ſuch depths of inward diſtreſs. He moſt tenderly ſympathized with me. I alſo revealed it to a noted divine of that country: but he directed me to a method of relief almoſt intirely legal. Alas! how few are qualified to *ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to a weary ſoul*. I had much more pleaſure in converſing with a well accompliſhed young gentleman, who had not yet obtained a diſtinct ſettlement in the way of the Lord. Our free and familiar opening of our ſpiritual condition, one to another, proved uſeful to us both. O what an advantage it might be for Chriſtians, thus to exerciſe mutual freedom, with proper perſons, and to *bear one another's burdens, rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep*, Gal. vi. 2. Rom. xii. 15.

ABOUT this time, a few ſelect Chriſtians, ſome of them of high rank, and two miniſters, agreed to obſerve a private faſt, to which I was invited. After ſeveral others had prayed, I, very contrary to my inclination, was required to ſucceed; and the order of the meeting admitted of no refusal. In prayer I was led out, without any deſign of mine, to more than ordinary earneſtneſs, and into ſome acknowledgments, which ſomewhat correſponded with my own inward exerciſe; and, in conſequence of which, my mind

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was not a little disburdened. At parting, a pious and judicious lady challenged me for unkindness, in never coming to see her. I excused myself, on account of my own insignificancy. But, upon her insisting, I engaged to visit her, when it should be convenient for her. When I went, she told me, that as she had been long entangled after a like manner, she well understood the wilderness and depths of temptation, into which I had been brought. And I found, from her account, that her inward distress had been fully as great as mine; and that on a certain day, which she had set apart in her father's house for solemn prayer, she found her trouble and perplexity stretched to the uttermost, that she was like to faint and give over; when the Lord, all of a sudden, brought her soul out of prison, bestowed on her the clearest manifestations of his glory, *in the face of Jesus Christ*, and plentifully filled her soul *with all the fulness of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Eph. iii. 19.

In her distress, she had written to a renowned Scotch divine, then sojourning in Holland, on account of the persecution in Scotland; whose writings have made him famous at home and abroad, (I suppose Mr John Brown of Warraphray), expecting some seasonable advice from him; but was astonished, to find him in as entangled a case as herself, if not worse. In his letters, which she shewed me, I found him heavily bewailing the unhingedness of his soul; and that he could not settle in the way of believing any one divine truth, while all the fundamental principles

principles of religion were subtilely opposed, contradicted, and blasphemed in his soul, by his spiritual enemies. He observes, that human learning is of no use for protecting or relieving a soul in such a case; and that the most distinct notions, which one can have of divine truths, rather confound than direct the soul, while it is entangled in such perplexing temptations. He admires their happiness, who are savingly *taught of God*; and acknowledgeth, that he was obliged to learn again, the *very first principles of the oracles of God*; the *wood, hay, and stubble* of his mere rational notions being burnt up, 1 Cor. iii. 12. 15. These things made me see, that no new thing had happened unto me; and that it is the same divine teaching which settleth both great and small; and that the weakest believer may have more of it than the greatest scholar.

SOMETIME after, I went to Rotterdam, to converse with Mr Thomas Hogg. Notwithstanding his confinement to his bed by sickness, he tenderly communed with me, and told me, that though I had been, for a time, dandled on the knees as an infant, I must not expect to continue always a child, but to lay my account with working and wrestling. He informed me, how the Lord had tried him, and had carried him through, and delivered him. He shewed me the reasonings, by which the temptations had been enforced on him, and opposed by him; and that the horrible suggestions, or more formed temptations, were set home on his mind, with a subtilty and force more than human; that meanwhile, many
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solid and pleasant thoughts were powerfully born in on his mind, to confirm that great truth, *that God is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*; that at one time his struggle with the temptation was so violent, that for some hours together, there was scarcely a hair of his head unimpressed; that certainly malignant devils would soon swallow up the poor weak saints, unless they were singularly restrained by God; that though the degrees of the trouble were abated, yet he never got deliverance, till it pleased the Lord to irradiate his soul, by his word, and bestow upon him the most sweetly overwhelming manifestation of Jesus Christ; which, for a time, drew forth his soul into the highest raptures of praise. He further observed, (1.) That he then found these scripture-expressions, *I am the Lord; I am God, and there is none else*, and the like, (which he had formerly looked on as superfluous, and scarce ever doubted,) made the especial channels, through which the most large and powerful influences were conveyed to his soul. (2.) That though his proud nature attempted to overcome such temptations, by legal endeavours, and sometimes seemed to obtain some advantage against them; yet the law, being *the ministration of death, not of the spirit*, all these did but entangle him more and more, and carry off his soul from the true relief, and render it a more easy prey to its spiritual enemies. (3.) That the prayer of faith was remarkably useful for defeating those enemies; and that the advantages gained against them by such means, are truly solid and lasting. (4.) He advised me not to think strange of the violence

violence and continuance of such conflicts, as all would issue unto my great advantage, and establishment in the Lord's way.

To illustrate the above-mentioned condition of my soul, it may not be improper to observe, (1.) Though man, in his fallen state, be utterly destitute of all spiritual light and life, alienated from the life of God through ignorance, and mere enmity against him, Eph. iv. 18. 19. Rom. viii. 7. 8. ; yet his dark notions of the divine nature, though wholly poisoned and perverted, may be accompanied with some blossomings of moral honesty, Rom. ii. 14. (2.) When, besides these notions concerning God and our duty, we enjoy and carefully attend the ordinances of spiritual instruction, and therein experience the common influences of the Holy Ghost, such stately and magnificent appearances of real holiness may be produced, as neither we, nor the most discerning Christians, with whom we converse, can readily take for any thing but truly gracious experiences. The seed of divine truth sown on the *stony ground*, where it can have *no root*, may *immediately spring up*, and make its appearance before that sown upon *good ground*, Matth. xiii. 5. 6. 20. 21. (3.) Though every saint be endowed with such a saving knowledge of spiritual things, as is essentially different from all his former light and knowledge, yet much dross and darkness remain with him. Proud of my small stock of rational arguments, I mustered them up in opposition to temptations, not without some success in diverting them ; yet, being

ing under the prevalent influence of a selfish and legal principle, I was thus carried off from the *simplicity which is in Christ*, and the pleasant exercise of believing on him ; and hence, never found the strength of my spiritual enemies broken. And though my attempts to contemplate God in his works of creation and providence, were sometimes very pleasant and strengthening, yet they never remarkably abated the force of my corruptions. (4.) In the state of innocency, man was, and knew himself perfectly happy, without any pride ; but being fallen, he retains an ill grounded persuasion of his remaining goodness, which leads him to attempt a mixing of the two covenants of works and grace, and to seek righteousness by the works of the law, and so promote his own estrangement from the grace of the gospel. (5.) Though *the secret of the Lord be with all them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant* ; yet, through the weakness of their faith, and by the working of their remaining pride, many notions concerning spiritual things, which are taken up on the authority of men, whom we esteem eminent in parts or grace, or which are the fruit of our own reasonings, rather strengthen than weaken temptations, when they are employed in opposition to them.

AFTER manifold conflicts with my spiritual enemies, and some victories over them, the Lord began to teach me more distinctly, the way of his communicating spiritual light and life to my soul. Satan and my corruptions, by their craft and violence, shut me up, till I could see no probable way
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of escape, 2 Chron. xx. 12. I had then given over all further struggling with them, as certain to fall into their hands at last, had not the Lord prevented my being *tempted above that which I was able to bear*, 1 Cor. x. 13. At length, after my legal struggling had made much inward noise, without any proper success, he granted me some quietness of mind, by discovering his truths to me. *In returning and rest ye shall be saved, and in quietness and confidence shall be your strength*, Is. xxx. 15. On this I perceived, (1.) That all that which God hath testified, concerning himself, is really to be found in him, and that not by parts, but by perfect unity; his holiness being nothing but himself, an holy God, &c. Deut. vi. 4. (2.) Hence, it must be the want of the knowledge and faith of what God is in himself, that maketh us so ready to stagger concerning his truths, providences, or our duty, or any other spiritual thing, especially when we are sore tempted. If we beheld the beauty of the Lord, we would never fear, but only believe, Mark v. 36. Psal. xxvii. 4. 13. Job xl. 2. 4. 5. and xlii. 2.—6. (3.) In perfect suitableness to their circumstances in this world, the Lord so reveals himself to all his people, as they see his glory in his word and providence, and know the truth in Jesus Christ, according to the measure of the light bestowed upon them, Luke x. 21. (4.) As all divine truths centre in God himself, it is manifest, that according to the measure of saving light, the knowledge of him, and of his truths and ways, go together, John xvii. 3. *The Lord is ONE, and his name, the manifestation of himself*

self is ONE, Zech. xiv. 9. And, however we may answer the quibbles of our spiritual enemies, by our reasonings, yet, till the Lord give *eyes to see*, there will be no real deliverance; no change, making us *children of the light*, and of *the day*, not of *the night*, nor of *darkness*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. 1 Thess. v. 5. (5.) Spiritual light, by manifesting God in Christ, who is ALL IN ALL, fills the soul with correspondent joy, 1 John i. 1.—4. 5. John xvi. 22. Rom. xiv. 17. with Col. ii. 9. 10. And as the discoveries of his being GOD, and of his being OUR GOD and OUR ALL in the promise, are inseparably connected in all the declarations, offers, and invitations of the gospel, there can be no real believing of God's testimony concerning himself, without some assurance included in it, though a poor tossed believer do not discern it. (6.) Spiritual light and life being inseparably connected, our soul is necessarily filled with holiness and comfort, and temptations are repressed, according to the measure of such light bestowed on us. The knowledge of the truth maketh us pure and free indeed, 2 Pet. i. 3. 4. John viii. 32. Though I obtain little spiritual enlargement, I find that I enjoy it, only when the Sun of righteousness shineth upon my soul. And since the Lord hath made light so sweet to me, Eccl. xi. 7. it comforteth me much, that heaven is the *inheritance of the saints* IN LIGHT, Col. i. 12. (7.) Since the entrance of spiritual light into men's hearts hath the principal influence in destroying the kingdom of sin and Satan there, it is no wonder, they do all that they can to oppose it. (8.) The Lord, in this il-

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lumination, giving no discoveries of himself, but what are already revealed in his word, he makes a believer perceive clearly, the agreement of his word, and of his work, *If. lix. 21.*

Not only did the Lord more generally establish me in his way, but, after much struggling with temptation, I received a gracious, powerful, and particular establishment, in the great fundamentals of religion, relative to the *existence of God, the divine authority of the scriptures*, and the like. The existence of God is so manifested, by its own light, to the consciences of all men, whether they will or not, and so irrefragably and sensibly demonstrated in the works of creation and providence, that the horrible rage of our spiritual enemies against it doth but manifest their pure malice against God and men. Nevertheless, even these considerations, though sometimes refreshing to my mind, diverted me from laying full stress upon the Lord's own testimony, concerning this truth, in his word, *Heb. xi. 3. 6.* Meanwhile Satan, and my own inward corruptions, used manifold stratagems, in managing their cause in my soul. (1.) They raised thick clouds of carnal reasonings, to darken such scriptures as were hard to be understood, so that I saw an absolute need of almighty power, for bringing into captivity every high thought to the obedience of Christ, *2 Cor. x. 4. 5.* (2.) Such scriptures as, through the darkness of my mind, seemed to countenance any gross error, were urged upon me, with a subtlety and force far exceeding any thing I ever perceived in the reasonings of the
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most subtle hereticks. This hath me often admire the mercy of God, in restraining Satan from suggesting such strong objections against the truth, to atheists, libertines, and hereticks, as he permits him to suggest to the saints; and in making even the things hard to be understood, in scripture, plain to them, by the shining of his Spirit upon his word. (3.) The apparent inconsistencies of scripture were vehemently urged home on my mind; nor, till the Lord, by his word, bestowed upon me a special illumination, could all my rational convictions, of the perfect harmony of these discordant-like passages, fix my mind. (4.) The strange appearances of providence, particularly, in the afflictions of the godly and prosperity of the wicked, were no less subtly and vehemently inculcated on my thoughts.

By these temptations to atheism, I learned, (1.) That however strongly our mind may assent to this truth, *that there is a God*, yet, unless that assent be chiefly founded upon God's own testimony, published in his word, declaring *that* and *what* he is in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, we can never be cured of our atheism. Even devils assent to the great truths of the gospel, in a firm and affecting manner, Jam. ii. 19. Matth. viii. 29. Mark i. 24.; no wonder then, the children of devils have a faith like that of their father. (2.) As long as there remains any reigning prejudices against the strictness and spirituality of the Lord's way, and against the glories of his providence, atheism still reigns in our heart, 1 Cor. ii. 14. There is nothing but a

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mere difference of degree, and manner of atheism, among all the unregenerate, Psal. xiv. 1. Eph. ii. 12. (3.) God being at once the BEGINNING and END of all things, none can know or acknowledge him, as the CAUSE of all things, who do not propose him to themselves as their LAST END. Hence, Satan may not only not oppose, but even cherish, a mere contemplative persuasion of divine truths; as that, in so far as it is trusted to, strengthens his kingdom, 1 Cor. i. 21. Rom. i. 21. (4.) Even they, who are altogether destitute of saving grace, may exceedingly give themselves to such enquiries, observations, and improvements, as tend to the further clearing, and confirmation of divine truths, Rom. ii. 17. to 21. But never, till the Lord enlightened my soul, could I, with pleasure, search into these things, from a *desire toward the Lord, and the remembrance of his name*, II. xxvi. 8. 9. Psal. cxi. 2. (5.) As I was spinning a system of divinity out of my own bowels, in a self-flattering way, and any exercise of faith which I had was fearfully mingled with a legal strain, which prompted me to trust in, and honour myself; I cannot sufficiently adore the mercy of that dispensation, which, by removing all merely rational props, and delivering me from an undue regard to them, shut me up to receive all revealed truths, upon his one simple testimony, Heb. xi. 3. Gen. i. 1. And, as I had long gone in a bad tract, it required much work from the Lord to pull me out of it, and to cast down every high thought and imagination. As it was altogether contrary to my corrupt and proud nature to go without itself,

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and fight against Christ's enemies, in his own strength, and by his Spirit; my inward lusts gave great advantage to the temptation of Satan, and enabled the violence and craft of it to cut exceeding deep into my soul. It therefore required great work from God to unbottom me; so as I might build all my exercises and hopes upon Christ alone, in a manner suited to that *simplicity which is in him*. It was exceedingly distressing to me, to have all my defences swept away, as by an overflowing flood.

WHILE I was in this fearful distress, God, like a tender parent, was peculiarly kind to me. He not only exceedingly refreshed my soul on some occasions, but made means useful to me, which appeared very unlikely to answer such ends, and made even bitter things sweet. (1.) I was enabled to act faith more purely upon the testimony of God, without any other prop, Jonah ii. 2. 3. 4. 2 Chron. xx. 12. 20. (2.) Through the exercise of faith, as the mother grace, the other graces of the spirit, in my soul, were drawn forth into their respective exercise, and strengthened, and the sanctification of my nature and life promoted, 2 Pet. i. 5.—8. (3.) I found my love not quenched, but quickened by the floods of temptation, Song viii. 6. 7. (4.) By my inward distress, I was preserved from spiritual security, 2 Cor. xii. 7. 8. 9. (5.) My heart was strongly drawn out in love toward others. I had such a tender regard to the people of God, that I durst not indulge myself in speaking or acting any thing, which might prove stumbling

to them, Psal. lxxiii. 15. And in social meetings, and otherwise, I was led out to do all I could for the edification of others. And I frequently found light and life conveyed into my own soul, while I was exerting myself for the spiritual advantage of others. (6.) The Lord, from time to time, so restrained mine enemies, as I might breathe, and be fitted for a new battle. (7.) In the very heat of the spiritual conflict, I was sometimes made to see the issue afar off; and, like a ship tossed at sea, I got views of an happy issue, which sometimes appeared near at hand, and sometimes further off. And, according to the measure of the discovery, I found myself less or more quieted, strengthened, or encouraged, in my opposition to the temptation, Psal. xxvii. 1. 2. and iii. 1. 2. 3. Often my deliverance was long held forth to me, in the promise and providence of God, to encourage me to run and fight for it. In this manner, distressed believers are borne up amidst their perplexities and faintings, relative to both their temporal and spiritual concerns. And their deliverance being brought near, from time to time, is easily and quickly completed at last. I have often wondered, that I did not observe this sooner, when God had made it so plain and palpable.

AMIDST the rage of these spiritual enemies, I also had sometimes a pleasant remembrance of former experiences, and was led out to cry, *Return to thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee*, Psal. cxvi. 7.; but I was quickly driven back, as by a contrary tide. (1.) Ha-
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ving found that, in the day of my distress, created enjoyments had turned out *vanity and vexation of spirit*, I was certain, that none of them, nor the extracted marrow of them all, could have afforded my soul such sweet repose, as I had experienced. (2.) I had often fearfully confounded and bewildered myself, by seeking rest in legal performances. (3.) While I had been labouring, and heavy laden, my eyes had been opened to behold the Lord Jesus, in whom the weary are at rest; and his sweet invitation for such to come to himself, and *find rest to their souls*, Matth. xi. 28. had been the mean of conveying such light, life, and power, into my soul, as graciously drew, and made me willing to come to him: Upon this, I had found a sweetness which ten thousand worlds cannot afford. Jesus Christ had taken such place in my heart, that I had enough *in him alone*; and without him, all things were but empty, burdensome, and nauseous to my soul, Psal. iv. 6. 7. Even while my soul was a field of frequent battles, I saw, through a cloud, the Lord maintaining his own work in me, and stamping his image on me, answerably to the scope of gospel-truth. (4.) My remembrance how the Lord had wounded and healed me, killed and made me alive, helped to make me hope, that at length he would heal and quicken me again.

At last the Lord delivered and established me, concerning which it may be observed, (1.) No human reasoning or knowledge, however valuable in its own place, hath any influence in breaking the

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the real power of a temptation to atheism, or other wickedness, or in procuring any spiritual deliverance; except in so far as it is intirely subordinated to an immediate believing of God's own testimony in his word. (2.) In so far as our assent to revealed truth, concerning the existence or character of God, doth not rest wholly upon his own testimony, our faith is mingled with dross: for, in so far as we credit that matter upon any other bottom, we hold God's testimony an insufficient ground of belief; and so, instead of believing him infinitely true and faithful, we *make him a liar*. (3.) Hence, when we depend on our own reasoning, Satan subtilely improves our intellectual powers to attend to, receive, and even inforce his suggestions; and thus, insensibly decoys us into more inextricable darkness. (4.) The Lord, in his time, delivered me from these atheistical temptations, to doubt or discredit his existence, by pleasantly testifying unto my soul by his word; Hear O *Israel the Lord our God is one Lord*, Deut. vi. 4. *Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I AM HE. Before me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour. Ye are my witnesses that I AM GOD. Yea, before the day was, I AM HE*, Is. xliii. 10.—13. ; and especially that word, *I AM THAT I AM*, Exod. iii. 14. Thus I was fully satisfied, that GOD is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb xi. 6. And beholding his glory, in the glass of his word, I was changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by
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the Spirit of the Lord. (5.) I found, that Christ, by a single manifestation of himself in his word, can manifest their devices, break their strength, and put to flight the most powerful and crafty enemies of our soul.

HAVING been thus graciously established in that fundamental truth, that *God truly exists*, and *is whatever he hath manifested himself to be* in his word, I afterward found my mind impressed with the following useful remarks: (1.) That very light which manifests God in Christ as ALL IN ALL, manifests the whole course of his providence, particularly that which relates to the eternal state of angels and men, to be incomprehensibly perfect and excellent. O the inconceivable wickedness of fretting at his providence, when it thwarts our inclinations; or, in thinking or speaking of him as an hard master, when his providences are so dark or terrible, that we cannot comprehend them. *It is good, that a man should both hope, and quietly wait, for the salvation of the Lord;* that while bearing the yoke, he sit alone and keep silence, and put his mouth in the dust, if so there may be hope, Lam. iii. 25.—29. *We have sinned, do unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee, deliver us only, we pray thee, this day,* Judg. x. 15. (2.) His whole word must be like himself, true, perfect, wise, and good, founded on his *sole authority*, Psal. xii. 6. Prov. xxx. 5. 6. (3.) The reason why the Lord permits such temptations, and suspicions concerning his existence, nature, and everlasting love, to follow after the most ravishing manifestations of his glory, is to teach
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us compliance with his will, and oblige us to an earnest improvement of his word, 2 Cor. xii. 7. 8. 9. (4.) All forming of resolutions, or attempting of projects, without acknowledging the Lord, and aiming at his glory as our chief end, is a plain opposition to his glorious perfection and will, Matth. vi. 33. Creatures are truly comfortable, only in so far as we enjoy them as coming from our gracious God, and as helping us forward to the enjoyment of him, Is. lv. 2. He leads men in the way of righteousness, that he may cause those that love him to *inherit substance*, and may *fill all their treasures*, Prov. viii. 20. 21.

IN all this dependence upon God, (1.) Our eye must be single, and matters rightly stated, with respect to our chief and last end, 1 Pet. iv. 11. 1 Cor. x. 31. Psal. lxxiii. 25. 26. (2.) We must take all our direction from the word of God itself, not from any impression made on our mind in the application of it; as it is only by light derived from it, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, that our faith, and other graces, can be quickened to a lively exercise. (3.) However rational, prudent, and answerable to the ends proposed, our projects may be, yet, if we get no light from the word of God, directing and encouraging to prosecute them, we ought to lay them aside; as nothing can compensate the least alienation of our soul from Christ. Thus, right eyes must be plucked out, and right hands or feet cut off, for his sake, Matth. v. 29. 30. (4.) All our endeavours ought, therefore, to
concentre,

concentre, in seeking more light from the Lord, through his word. Under the light of his countenance, the new creature liveth. How atheistical then, when, in our deliberations about the public, and especially church-affairs, the mind of the Lord is not thus consulted. (5.) Whatever is done according to the Lord's will, flows from a solid persuasion and pleasant sense of his authority; and so is done *in the name of the Lord Jesus*, Col. iii. 17. Jam. iv. 12. Psal. cxvi. 16. and cxxiii. 2. All the new-covenant relations of God to us, as our *father, husband*, and the like, excite and engage our hearts to this kindly subjection. This humble and obedient temper flows from the true faith of God's existence, and of what he is as manifested in Christ: it is calculated to *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*, and tends to spread abroad the good favour of it over the consciences, even of the most profligate. (6.) As God hath all glory and perfection in himself, nothing can be enjoyed as a mercy, in which God himself is not enjoyed, in order to a more full and perfect enjoyment of him. And as all creatures, in themselves, are but *vanity*, and have been poisoned by the entrance of sin into the world, there can be no true sweetness found in them, but as Christ is enjoyed in them. Hence, only *the meek inherit the earth*, by tasting the true relish of creatures, in seeing and enjoying Christ in and through them. A little that a just man hath, is thus better than the riches of many wicked, Matth. v. 5. Psal. xxxvii. 11. 16. *They have all, and abound*, Phil. iv. 18. 19. Hence, it necessarily follows, that no imaginable advantage

advantage can compensate the loss which a soul sustains, by grieving the Holy Ghost, or falling into estrangement from God, by any act or course defiling and uneasy to the conscience. How great then the prevalence of atheism, when carnal considerations, and prospect of worldly advantages, sway men to act contrary to their light, or without any direction from the Lord !

I HAD also much inward perplexity, whether any regard ought to be given to human reason in the matters of religion, particularly with respect to the doctrines of it ; and what that regard ought to be. (1.) It is certain, that, notwithstanding mens utter blindness with respect to a spiritual apprehension of divine things, they still retain some knowledge of these matters, imprinted on their mind by God himself, Rom. i. 19. 20. and ii. 14. (2.) This natural knowledge of God, and what pertains to him, being mingled with so much darkness, and being so much perverted by the wickedness of our heart, its dictates are so uncertain and obscure, that all true and saving knowledge of God must be produced by the saving illuminations of his own Spirit, through his word, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Heb. xi. 3. 6. I therefore depended on the Lord alone, to manifest himself to my soul, *as he doth not unto the world* ; and to establish me on himself, as the only foundation revealed in the gospel, Is. xxviii. 16. 1 Cor. iii. 11. (3.) I found by experience, under my temptations, that natural reasonings do not avail any thing to the settlement of a perplexed soul, unless in so far as they are intirely subjected

subjected to the revelation of Christ. *To the unbelieving, nothing is pure ; their mind and conscience being defiled.* Walking in the light of *sparks of our own kindling*, but issues in eternal sorrow. It is but a *feeding on ashes*, a turning aside under the power of a deceived heart, with a *lie in our right hand*, Tit. i. 15. If. l. 11. and xliv. 20. (4.) A Christian can only be really established, in his own mind, concerning any thing spiritual, when the same illumination of the Holy Ghost, which manifests God in Christ to him in the gospel, doth discover what we are to believe concerning him. It is only he who reasons by faith, under the influence and direction of God's Spirit, that will walk regularly and surely ; while he that *leans to his own understanding*, and *trusts to his own heart*, will manifest himself a fool, 2 Cor. v. 7. Prov. iii. 5. 6. and xxviii. 26. 1 Cor. iii. 18. An acting of faith, in acknowledging the Lord, and waiting for direction and encouragement from his word, in the most common affairs of life, would greatly promote our spiritual growth in grace, and good works, Psal. xvi. 8.

SATAN's remarkable success in leading men into gross errors, is owing to such things as the following: (1.) The very power of spiritual darkness, blindness, and error especially, consists in a vain imagination of light. Because they think they see, *their sin* (their darkness) *remaineth*, John ix. 40. Rev. iii. 17. Rom. ii. 17.—21. (2.) Hence proceeds a proud valuation of themselves, on account of their own silly, senseless, notions, 1 Cor. viii. 1. John vii. 48. Deut. xxix.

4. (3.) Hence are produced such perverse and inconsistent imaginations, concerning matters, as mens diversified humours or circumstances bend their minds. (4.) This wisdom of the flesh being *enmity against God*, Satan improves these imaginations, and inclinations of their heart, to render their apprehensions of God, and of divine things, more and more erroneous: And, in so doing, (1.) He improves mens natural abilities, in an apparent answerableness to promote their own carnal honour, pleasure, or profit. (2.) Having pushed them into one error, he improves their pride to make them adhere to it, and invent or embrace other errors, in order to defend it. (3.) He labours to make learned and devout persons principal inventors and propagators of error; in order that it may be the more revered, and readily embraced, or adhered to, by others. (4.) Men being much tickled with the prettiness, or apparent usefulness, of their new opinion, this mightily entangles their affection to it, and fixeth their mind in it, Col. ii. 2. Gen. iii. 5. 6. 2 Cor. xi. 2. (5.) A diligent, and especially a believing search, into the secrets of divine truth, is very contrary to the slothful and perverse inclinations of our corrupt heart, and his temptations: and if any search be made, it is often superficial and selfish, without any single dependance upon the Holy Ghost, for special instruction; and so can produce no settlement on Christ as the alone foundation, 1 Cor. iii. 11. (6.) These who are orthodox in their judgment, being much estranged from all divine illumination, by the word and spirit of Christ, too often
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rest their persuasion of their principles, upon no better foundation than their own reasonings, and the testimony of others; upon which the erroneous also build their misapprehensions. Notwithstanding all their painted accomplishments, the veil of spiritual blindness, and the power of alienation from the life of God, remains in their full strength in their soul.

IN establishing my soul, in the faith of that which he hath revealed in his word concerning himself, (1.) The Lord thoroughly convinced me, of my own ignorance and blindness in every spiritual matter, that I saw myself altogether *jealous, ignorant, and brutish* before him, Prov. xxx. ii. 3. Psal. lxxiii. 22. Job xlii. 3. 5. 6. (2.) I found myself peculiarly ignorant concerning God himself, as manifested in Christ, in his being, attributes, and Persons; and concerning the mysteries of the gospel. In these matters, I found myself below the beasts that perish, even the most stupid, Is. i. 3. Jer. viii. 7. Job xv. 12. (3.) I found, that Satan, and my own corrupt heart, had, at least, entangled me into many hard and perverse thoughts of God. (4.) I found, that all my natural reasonings were easily overthrown, by the subtilty and violence of his temptations. (5.) When all refuge failed me, it pleased the Lord to manifest himself in Christ through his word, and by his Spirit, to my soul, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Psal. xxxiii. 9. This made me see myself altogether overpowered, and filled with darkness, weakness, and wickedness. (6.) The light of his countenance, shining into my soul, led and

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me into a pleasant consideration of divine things, John xvii. 3. (7.) With much satisfaction and delight, I observed, that because we cannot comprehend him as he is in himself, he allows us to apprehend him, as it were by parts, in his several attributes; and hath manifested himself in our nature, Exod. xxxiv. 6. 7. 1 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Cor. iii. 18. (8.) Though I could not comprehend what the Lord discovered to me in his word, yet I was firmly persuaded of its excellency; even as he who looks at the meridian sun is certain that he sees him, and that he is glorious, though he cannot conceive, or tell, what his light or glory is. (9.) Having seen the incomprehensible greatness and glory of God, and of the mysteries of religion, I was led to a deep concern, that I might never attempt to express them but in proper words; and I conceived an indignation against all using of the enticing words of mans wisdom in the matters of God, Job xlii. 3. 1 Cor. ii. 1. 4. 5. 13. (10.) I was made fearful of adventuring one step in my conversation, without the Lord's special direction, Jer. x. 23. Prov. xvi. 9. (11.) Knowing that the grosser kind of atheism is detested among all nations, Satan and our corrupt heart dress it ^{up} in another form; ascribing to God things unworthy of him, and drawing us off from our dependance on him: but the Lord, in manifesting himself in Christ to my soul, not only firmly persuaded me, that he is whatever he hath declared himself to be in his word; but also confirmed my mind against that atheism, which is interwoven with the Pelagian and Armenian errors; which represent him, as ^a *god*

god who cannot certainly know all things, and who is subject to changes and passions; who hath not the government of sinful actions under his power, and cannot certainly fix the time of mens death.

THE Lord also pleasantly fixed my mind, in the faith of the glorious mystery of *three Persons in one Godhead*. I was made clearly to perceive, from his word, (1.) That his infinite perfection can only be fully known by himself, Job xi. 7. (2.) Whatever he reveals concerning himself, in his word, must therefore be believed upon his own testimony, notwithstanding our inability to comprehend the full meaning of his words. (3.) It is most dreadful presumption in us, to conceive, or inculcate upon others, any thing concerning God, which he hath not manifested concerning himself. If he hath left a veil on his own mysteries, it is an exalting of ourselves above him to attempt to explain them. And if our explications of them be overthrown, we are apt to fall a doubting of that which he hath plainly revealed. (4.) As God hath plentifully revealed these mysteries in his word, we ought to rest satisfied, in humbly knowing and believing the plain scriptural expressions concerning them, tho' the things represented in them infinitely surpass our comprehension. (5.) His own declarations of his mind, in his word, being applied to my soul by his spirit, made me discern and believe the certainty of this mystery, of the 'Trinity of Persons in one Godhead; and that there can be no right gospel-worship of God, but in so far as it is truly and cordially believed.

AFTER no small inward conflict and perplexity, concerning the divine authority of the scriptures, I had my mind fully convinced and established in this point. While, by powerful illumination through the scripture, the Lord persuaded my soul of his own existence and perfections, manifested in Christ, he, by making me to believe what he testified, made me, necessarily, to believe the scripture to be *his own testimony*. Nevertheless, some other considerations assisted towards my settlement on this head. (1.) The scriptures exactly represent the heart of man, which God only can search. Hence, as soon as one hath his eyes opened, to discern the light of the scriptures, he discerns the depths of his inward wickedness; and the more fully this light shineth, the more fully are the secrets of his heart manifested, 1 Cor. xiv. 25.; whereas, without this saving illumination by the scriptures, the most learned men are often the greatest strangers to their own heart. (2.) The scriptures have a marvellous influence in breaking the force, or weakening the roots of the strongest temptations, and in meekening and sweetening the mind under the greatest distresses, Psal. cxix. 92. and xciv. 17. 18. and xlv. 1.—4.; in rendering the most simple wise and prudent, Psal. xix. 7. 8. 9. and cxix. 97.—100.; in elevating the soul, and filling it with inexpressible joy, under heavy troubles, Rom. v. 3. 4. 5. 2 Cor. vi. 9. 10.; in fitting men, through faith, for the most heroic achievements, Heb. xi. 33. 34. 35.; and in raising their heart above every private and selfish end, Matth. v. 44. 45. 2 Cor. xii. 15. Rom. xii.

18.—21. Acts v. 41. and xx. 23. 24. and xxi. 13. 1 Cor. iv. 9. 13. (3.) There is a marvellous agreement between the experience of exercised souls, in every age, station, and circumstance, and that which is recorded in scripture. (4.) They, even in a few words, make an extensive discovery of moral good and evil, in a manner calculated to impress mens consciences, and correct their former misapprehensions, Psal. cxix. 96.

THE Lord also manifested to me the perfection of the scriptures. He not only expressly testified, that they are able to *make men wise unto salvation, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. 16. 17. Psal. xix. 7.—10.; but I found, (1.) That, in all my diversified temptations, the Lord had, by his word, manifested himself to me in an exact suitableness and sufficiency to answer my case, had not my faith been so fettered, that I could not credit it. All that is proper to be known by us, concerning God, is therein revealed; and all that is proper to be done by us, is therein commanded. (2.) I found the scriptures sufficient to give solid rest unto a soul; discovering to it, and leading it off from, all unsubstantial things, to that which is fully satisfying and quieting, Psal. cxix. 49. 50. Prov. xviii. 14. (3.) I found them sufficient to break the power of all temptations, however subtle, 2 Cor. x. 5. If. xxxv. 8. Psal. xii. 6. (4.) I found, that they not only clearly represented the image of God,
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which was lost by sin, but are sufficient means of restoring it, Deut. x. 12. Mic. vi. 8. Matth. xxii. 37. 39. 2 Cor. x. 4. 5. Tit. ii. 11.—14. (5.) I found, that they plainly reveal, to the weakest, many important things, which the wisest Heathens, notwithstanding all their light of nature or tradition, were altogether ignorant of, or uncertain about.

I WAS also delightfully confirmed, in the belief of the purity of the scriptures, that, (1.) Every thing which they teach concerning God, is altogether worthy of him ; and every thing which they require of us is proper to be done, for his glory. (2.) The doctrines contained in them are so far above the reach of human minds, that they cannot be understood or received, without divine instruction, 1 Cor. ii. 7. and i. 23. 24. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Eph. iii. 10. (3.) All the mysteries contained in them are so connected into one body or system, that if one be really embraced, they must all be embraced ; and if one be denied, or injured, all must be injured, Eph. iv. 4. 5. 6. (4.) By the scriptures, all saints obtain such uniform views of divine things, as promote in them a progressive course of holiness, Heb. vi. 3. Prov. iv. 18. (5.) The scriptures represent truth and error, in such opposition one to another, that the one cannot be seen without the other, any more than a mountain without a valley, Rom. xi. 6. Gal. ii. 21. and v. 4. (6.) No alteration can be made upon the scriptures. If any thing be taken from them, their close connection would appear marred and broken. If any thing be added

ded for confutation or confirmation, the deceit would quickly appear to one under the enlightening influence of the Spirit of God. If one part were changed, either the whole behoved to be answerably changed, or the connexion, strength, and similarity, would be marred.

THAT the *Scriptures* were not corrupted before our Saviour's incarnation is manifest, from his repeated approbation of them as they stood, John v. 39. Luke xvi. 29. 31. and xxiv. 27. 44. 45. Matth. xxii. 29. Besides other proofs that they have neither before, nor since, been corrupted, it is observable, (1.) They still contain the fullest proof, in opposition to the several errors which have been vented, or adopted, by Jews, Arians, Pelagians, Papists, and others, who could be supposed capable of corrupting them. (2.) The holy doctrines contained in them, had been, and still are drawn out, in a multitude of pious writings and discourses; and, by the Holy Ghost, written in the hearts of multitudes of saints, and exemplified in their conversation. (3.) As the word and Spirit of God are so inseparably connected, that we cannot hope to enjoy the latter but through the former, he must preserve the channel of his own influences pure and uncorrupted, Is. lix. 21. (5.) As for the critical disputes, relative to the original characters of scripture, or the like, they did not suit the perplexed case of my soul; nor could any rational evidences of that kind have availed, without the all-powerful testimony of the Holy Ghost, conveyed,

conveyed, through his own word, into my heart, Psal. xliii. 3. 1 Tim. i. 4. 5.

I HAD no remarkable perplexity of mind, relative to the perspicuity of the scriptures. But I saw plainly, (1.) That nothing less than the saving illumination of the Holy Ghost, can make one spiritually discern the truths of God concerning himself, revealed in his word, 1 Cor. ii. 9. 10. 14. (2.) Nothing can hinder the effectual teaching of the Holy Ghost by the word, Is. xxxv. 8. Matth. xi. 25. Gal. i. 15. (3.) The word and Spirit of God being closely connected in the gospel-covenant, the prejudices rooted in our hearts, against the truths of revelation, cannot be removed, but by his effectual influence, 1 Cor. ii. 4. 5. 14. 2 Cor. i. 24. 1 Thess. ii. 15. (4.) By his efficacious spiritual illuminations, through the word, the most subtle and strong temptations of Satan, are effectually resisted and defeated; and, without them, the clearest truths or arguments, may be misunderstood or perverted, and so rendered useless and hurtful, 2 Pet. iii. 16. 17.; and no real victory can be obtained over the powers of darkness by them, Eph. vi. 17.

I HAD no small struggling of mind, concerning that eternal life and immortality brought to light by the gospel. And whatever rational assurance I had of a future eternal state, I never obtained any victory over the temptation, but by believing the plain testimony of God in his word. (1.) I was made to see, that, since God hath interposed his

his infallible testimony, it is most stupid, and most wicked, to indulge or cherish any suspicions about the truth of these things, on account of the sublimity of their nature. To do so, is to doubt, whether God ought to be credited in any thing. As his authority is no object of our senses, faith, in receiving it, must be an *evidence of things not seen*, Heb. xi. 1. (2.) Amidst my struggles with temptation, I often, with no small pleasure and inward confirmation, observed, that God's discoveries of himself in his word, necessarily require an eternal state, 1 Cor. xv. 16. 17. 1 John v. 20. John xi. 25. Hence, all deep and kindly convictions of sin flow from quick apprehensions of eternity, Job xxxi. 14. Hos. vi. 4. : and all saving illumination, or change of the heart, lead men to the apprehensions of eternal glories, 1 Cor. xv. 19. 2 Cor. iv. 18. Tit. ii. 13. And as this spiritual light increaseth in the soul, so do believing views of an eternal state, and the ravishing glories of it, 2 Cor. iv. 18. and v. 1.—8. 2 Tim. iv. 7. 8. 2 Sam. ii. 3. 5. (3.) I saw that, without the faith of an eternal state, the promises of scripture could not have their truth, or favour, or the threatenings their strength and efficacy. The enjoyment of promises here, might but render men more miserable, through fears of annihilation, or the like; and wickedness might render them what they accounted more happy, Mal. ii. 17. and iii. 15. (4.) I saw that all our religious worship, and regular conversation, are so inlaid with the faith of an eternal state hereafter, that nothing of it can be right, or acceptably performed, without it, Tit. ii. 11. 12. 13. Jude 20.

21. This made me often disregard satanical temptations in opposition to this truth, and labour to proceed in the way of my duty, John vii. 17. and i. 46. (5.) I perceived what glorious fruits of obedience and suffering flow from the firm faith of eternal happiness, 2 Cor. iv. 17. 18. Rom. viii. 17. 18. Psal. xvii. 15.

I HAD not much inward conflict, relative to the perversions of God's truth by the open enemies of the gospel. It was the legal bias of my own heart that chiefly plagued me, with respect to the Pelagian errors. I have long found, that my heart hath disappointed me as often as I trusted to it; nor have I had the right use of my natural or acquired talents, but in the way of a believing dependance on God himself in Christ, Prov. xxviii. 26. and xvi. 1. For my establishment in the truth, the Lord made me to observe, (1.) That he had, in his word, represented the weakness and wickedness of men, in their natural state, in the plainest, strongest, and most express manner, Eph. v. 8. and ii. 1. 2. 3. Rom. viii. 7. 8. 1 Cor. ii. 14. Is. xl. 15. 17. Psal. lxii. 9. 2 Cor. iii. 5.; and that, as this weakness and wickedness originate from darkness, so they are discovered and removed, in proportion to the entrance of spiritual light into the soul, John viii. 32. Jer. xvii. 5. and ix. 23. (2.) That the scriptures having delineated the nothingness and loathsomeness of fallen man, in so full, lively, and powerful a manner, as no created understanding could have conceived, it is impossible to evade the belief of it, without plainly giving the lie to
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God himself, Rom. iii. 10.—19. and viii. 7. 8. Eph. ii. 1.—5. and iv. 18. 19. Rom. i. 28.—32. Jer. xiii. 23. (3.) In agreeableness to the whole current of God's word, this truth, of the weakness and wickedness of fallen men, is, by the Holy Ghost, written on every renewed heart, 1 Cor. xv. 10. Gal. ii. 20. Psal. lxxiii. 22. Prov. xxx. 2. 3. Job. xl. 4. Is. lxiv. 6. (4.) All the promises of scripture must be understood to have the whole of their accomplishment founded on, and flowing from, the free grace and mercy of God, Zech. iv. 6. and vi. 13. Rev. v. 9. and vii. 10. 12.

THE controversies concerning divine truths, agitated among learned and godly men, perplexed me not a little. But, the Lord, in order to my establishment, (1.) Made me see it to be a great mercy, that he had so clearly and abundantly expressed his mind, concerning all fundamental truths, that all saints agree in them, and, ordinarily, in the meaning of the scriptures which support them. (2.) The scriptural representation, of the imperfect and childish knowledge of the greatest saints in this life, 1 Cor. xiii. 9. to 12. was remarkably blessed for the satisfaction of my mind. (3.) Observing that those things, about which learned and godly men dispute, are not plainly and directly revealed in the word of God, but rather consequences which they draw from texts of scripture, I was led to suspect a delusive influence, when men were exceeding positive in their own apprehensions of them. (4.) I saw a beauty in the Lord's permitting learned

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and godly men to differ in their apprehensions concerning such truths; as it tended to wean his people from depending on them, or trusting to their direction, and to make them cautious of separating from the truly godly, on account of their unadvised words, Phil. iii. 15. 16. This I have much attended to in my own conduct.

IN searching the scriptures, I have found the following RULES very useful to my soul: (1.) No part of scripture appears mean, if it be rightly understood. (2.) Though there be a most lively and alluring simplicity in the true explication of scripture, yet nothing but spiritual experience can make that evidence rightly understood. (3.) As a passage of scripture, truly understood, under the illuminating influence of the Holy Ghost, doth, by its own light and power, manifest itself to be the true mind of God, it is not safe to deal too *much in criticisms*; as they are apt to lead men into uncertain speculations. (4.) If a truth be manifested to our conscience as clearly taught, or enforced, in many places of scripture, we ought to hold it fast, notwithstanding many apparent difficulties, still waiting on the Lord, till he solve them in his own time and way, Prov. ii. 1.—7. (5.) Though every adult child of God be, in his own measure, enlightened in the knowledge of the scriptures by the Holy Ghost, all of them ought earnestly to endeavour to obtain more and more of his illuminations, Hos. vi. 3. 2 Pet. i. 19. Prov. iv. 7. (6.) As we must carefully beware of imposing a meaning of our own upon any text of scripture, so we ought to beware of con-

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fining its sense, and so neglecting to dig further into its meaning. In many cases, a proper con-fociation of parallel texts, will be found of great use for explaining of the Lord's word, which is exceeding broad *.

WHILE I had wrestled with the above mentioned temptations, and while the Lord was graciously settling and establishing me in the fundamental truths of religion, I had much cried to the Lord for the saving illumination of his spirit. I was therefore deeply concerned to have the difference between saving knowledge of divine truths, and these notions of them which may be acquired by natural diligence, especially under the common operation of the spirit of God. And here, (1.) I observed, that any small light which I received was attended with a proportionate conviction, and humbling sense of my own darkness, Psal. lxxiii. 22. Prov. xxx. 2. 3. and an earnest desire of further illumination by the Holy Ghost, Psal. cxix. 18. (2.) I found it plainly supernatural, producing in me such heart-ravishing and attracting discoveries, as no natural reasoning could effect, John iii. 8. (3.) In proportion to the measure of this light which I enjoyed, I found my conscience more tender, and kindly disposed to a careful obedience to the law of God, cost me what it would, and be it opposed by whom

* From experience, I am persuaded, that this method of searching into the meaning of God's word, is by far the most delightful, edifying, and instructive; and that commentaries ought to be used chiefly as helps, to assist us in comparing parallel passages of scripture.

it would, Gal. i. 15. 16. (4.) I found, that this light determined all the powers of my soul, more and more to center in God himself, as manifested in Christ, as my ALL AND IN ALL, 1 Cor. ii. 2. Gal. vi. 14. Psal. iv. 6. 7. and xxvii. 4. and lxxiii. 25. 26. and xvi. 5. 6. (5.) I found, that God in Christ manifested to me delightfully satiated my soul, amidst every want and trouble, and made me look on all other things as husks, ashes, and vanity, 1 Cor. ii. 9. 2 Cor. iv. 17. with Hos. xii. 1. Is. xlv. 20. Jer. ii. 13. and iii. 23. (6.) Hence, this saving illumination, led me out to such a pleasant contentment with that lot, which the Lord had, in his providence, assigned to me, as no created enjoyment, or natural reasoning, could produce, Heb. iv. 3. 10. Phil. iv. 11. 12. 18. Psal. lxxiii. 25. 26.

BEING not a little concerned to understand the real nature of *believing*, I observed, (1.) That no saving faith can have any place, where ignorance of the things of God reigns in the heart: And even the remains of this spiritual darkness, assisted by our inward lusts, renders the saints staggerers at the promise of God, and slow of heart to believe. (2.) In proportion to the removal of this darkness, not by rational reasoning, but by the illumination of the Holy Ghost, through the word, do faith, and its attendant fruits, of joy, peace, and holiness, prevail in the soul, John ix. 35.—38. And, as nothing more effectually strengthens the kingdom of Satan in the heart, than an ill-grounded persuasion of deliverance from his delusions, so a firm crediting, and

and holding fast the Lord's promises, upon his own testimony, makes the soul prosper in every respect. (3.) In the day of power, the wounded soul is, by the enlightening work of God's Spirit, through his word, made to see the true God as manifested in Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 4. 6. (4.) The Lord having thus manifested himself, the exercise of faith lies, in receiving him upon his own authority, and his own testimony concerning himself, and every thing relating to a free, full, and everlasting salvation through him. It is a firm assent to that which the Lord hath testified concerning himself, wholly founded upon his own authority, John iii. 33. (5.) As the saving manifestation of God in Christ increaseth in clearness, his testimony is proportionally further understood, and more firmly believed, and closely applied. (6.) As the spiritual darkness of the soul is removed, the power of sin and Satan is more and more broken and weakened, Acts xxvi. 18. 2 Thess. i. 10. 2 Pet. i. 3.—8. Gal. v. 6. (7.) All the scriptural representations of faith delightfully agree, with our taking it up as a receiving of God's testimony concerning his Son, upon his own authority, manifested by the saving illumination of his Spirit, in his word. Upon the testimony of God in his word, through the illumination of the Holy Ghost, as a spirit of bondage, we believe the sinfulness and misery of our natural state, and our utter inability to recover ourselves, and the fearful wickedness of seeking righteousness by the works of the law. Upon the testimony of God in his word, manifested by the saving illumination of his Spirit,

we, looking on ourselves as altogether vile and undone in ourselves, discern and believe what Christ is in himself, and what he is made to us in the gospel. (8.) The more clear the spiritual discoveries of Christ, and of God in him, *in the word* be, our assent to the testimony of God in it is the more firm and appropriating.

IT hath often refreshed my soul to observe, that this view of faith, is, (1.) Most agreeable to that *simplicity which is in Christ*, and is easily understood by a spiritual mind, 2 Cor. xi. 3. 1 Cor. ii. 11. 12. (2.) It delightfully agrees with the divorce of the soul from sin, self, and the broken law, and with its union to Jesus Christ, Rom. vii. 4. 2 Cor. xi. 2. (3.) It directly opposeth every form and degree of legal doctrine: and, indeed, is but a plain account of the Lord's saving work upon the soul, in the manner represented in his word, Acts xxvi. 18. Col. i. 13. Hos. vi. 3. Psal. xliii. 3. and xxvii. 4. Phil. ii. 12. 13. (4.) It represents the whole progress of Christians in holiness and comfort, as produced by, and in proportion to, the Lord's manifestation of himself in his word, Psal. xliii. 3. 4. and xxvii. 4. John xiv. 22. Is. lix. 21. 2 Pet. i. 3.—8. 19. The faith of God's testimony, working by love, brancheth out itself in all the forms of new obedience.

THE truth of this saving faith is manifested, by its killing our inward corruptions, and purifying our heart, Acts xv. 9.; its rendering Christ, and every mean of manifesting him, precious to us,

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1 Pet. ii. 7. ; its rendering spiritual ignorance our burden, and saving light our delight, Is. ii. 5. It makes our soul sensible of the absolute need of God's almighty power to cause faith to act, as well as to implant it at first, Phil. i. 29. 2 Cor. iv. 13. It can indulge no sloth or wickedness; and loves to be thoroughly tried, Psal. lxvi. 18. and cxxxix. 23. 24. It delightfully excites to, and produceth good works, Jam. ii. 26. It leads out to universal love to the image of God, wherever it appears, Matth. xviii. 5. 6. Psal. lxxiii. 15. It makes the mercy and love of God in Christ the principal motives to holiness, 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. To know the increase of such a faith in us, we must observe how it establissheth our minds, in opposition to contrary reasonings, doubts, and fears; how distinctly it withstands and overcomes our spiritual enemies; how fruitful it is, in breaking those temptations which easily beset us, and making us abound in the works of righteousness; with what courage it adventures upon hard services for Christ, and what joy and peace attend it.

I HAD also much perplexity, relative to the infinite mercy and love of God, inlaid in his sweet relations of *Father*, *Husband*, and the like, Psal. ciii. 13. and xxxvi. 9. 10. For though, when the Sun of righteousness shined on my heart, I could, in some measure, discern and believe it, Jer. ii. 2. Hos. vi. 3. Prov. iv. 18. ; yet, when I met with distress, contrary to my expectation, or in ways and degrees far beyond what I had laid my account with, I was strongly tempted

ed to hard thoughts of God; and, indeed, this hath all along been the strongest, and most intricate, of all the devices of Satan against me. My natural temper, being inclined to melancholy, gave him great advantage against me. His frequent returns to me in this form, mightily secured him room and interest in my soul. The fearful aspect of providence, in the gross corruptions, and great distress of the church, also afforded him occasions to work upon, Jer. xii. 1. 2. If. lix. 14. 15. Psal. xxxvii. lxxiii. lxxvii. lxxxviii. I did not apprehend, how the Lord would make such dispensations issue in the establishment of his people, Exod. v. 22. 23. Matth. vii. 24. 25. The Lord also rendered my trials of long continuance, without any distinct decision of the matter, by a clear manifestation of himself in his word, Psal. lxxxiii. 1. 2. 1 Pet. i. 6. He often brought matters to an extremity, before he granted deliverance, Exod. v. 23. and vi. 2. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. 1 Cor. x. 13. Song iii. 4. Much of our sinful darkness consists, in an utter estrangement from right impressions of the sovereign and free mercy of God, revealed in the gospel, 2 Cor. iv. 3. 4. In this matter too, temptations more unobservedly enter into the soul, taking it off from the true foundation, Psal. lxxiii. 1. 2. ; and rankle the spirits, and unfit them for all spiritual worship or service, 1 Tim. ii. 8. Matth. xxv. 24. 25. Heb. xii. 1. And, when the mind is thus disquieted and racked with cares, other temptations have the door opened for them, Jon. i. 3. and iv. 9. Matth. vi. 24. 25.

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IN breaking the power of this temptation, (1.) The Lord graciously proclaimed his name to my soul, Exod. xxxiv. 6. 7. Mic. vii. 18. (2.) Even when I was pressed above measure, having the sentence of death in myself, he, one way or other, delivered or supported me; meekening my spirit, lessening my trouble, quickening my hope, or keeping me at anchor till the storm was blown over, Psal. cxxx. 3. 4. Lam. iii. 27. 28. 29. Is. xxvii. 8. (3.) He often manifested much of his goodness to me, in the very midst of my greatest troubles; and his peace ruling in my mind, made me to rejoice in himself as the God of my salvation, 2 Cor. vi. 9. 10. Phil. iv. 7. Hab. iii. 17. 18. 2 Sam. xxx. 6. Lev. x. 3. Psal. xciv. 17. 18. 19. Rom. v. 3. 4. 5. (4.) He so timed his favours, as to render them peculiarly sweet, Psal. xlii. cxxxvi. cvii. and xciv. 17. 18. 19. (5.) By enabling me to some measure of holy silence under the dispensation, as coming from him, he made some very piercing and provoking troubles turn out remarkably to my spiritual advantage, Numb. xii. 1. 2. 3. Psal. xxxix. 9. 11. Rom. xii. 21. (6.) He manifested much mercy, in his condescension towards me, in his inculcating pleasant instructions upon me, and in covering my weaknesses from the world; and, some way or other, making all my troubles turn out to my spiritual profit, 2 Pct. ii. 7. 8. Psal. xvi. 6. Heb. xii. 6.—11.

By this kind dealing of God with me, (1.) I found myself proportionally forced from the dregs of a legal temper, to which nothing more effectually

tually leads, than hard thoughts of God, 2 Tim. i. 7. Matth., xxv. 24. (2.) As no exercise is more dutiful or pleasant, than rejoicing in God through Christ, Col. iii. 17. Psal. xxxi. 4. Phil. iv. 4. and iii. 3. Rom. xiv. 17. it must be produced by manifestations of his goodness. And according as one is believably persuaded of the fundamental truths of the gospel, will he be disposed cheerfully to forego, or suffer, any thing the Lord pleaseth, Job i. 21. 22. 2 Sam. xv. 25. 26. Is. xxxix. 8. Lam. iii. 27. Matth. v. 10. 11. Heb. xii. 6. (3.) I found, that the Lord's manifestation of himself in Christ, tendeth to discover the most secret snares, or the most refined idols, and to lead in the paths of righteousness, Is. ii. 18. 20. (4.) I found, that God's manifestations of himself in Christ, powerfully restrain and weaken our sinful passions, anger, wrath, malice, &c. And honourable thoughts of God, and compassion and love towards our neighbour, go together, Eph. iv. 31. 32. Col. iii. 12. Matth. xi. 28. 29. 2 Cor. x. 1. (5.) By the faith of the Lord's goodness, a soul is sweetly quieted and strengthened under such distresses, as would otherwise prove very perplexing, Is. l. 10. 1 Pet. i. 8. 1 Sam. iii. 18. Prov. xvi. 3. Psal. cxix. 67. 71. (6.) As an establishment in the faith of the Lord's goodness, includes a proportionate establishment in the faith of the whole gospel; so the love of Christ, being thus shed abroad in the heart, forms the whole man into a truly evangelical and heavenly frame of love; which greatly manifests the beauty of holiness, and tends to the

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gaining and edification of others, Psal. xviii. 1. and cxvi. 1. 2. 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. Jude 20. 21. 22.

C H A P. II.

Of his entrance on, and progress in his ministerial work.

I WAS greatly perplexed concerning my call from God to the ministerial work. My apprehensions of the great importance of it, and of my utter insufficiency for it, so impressed my afflicted soul, that I was often at the point of giving over all thoughts of preparation for it. Though the intricate temptations which I had met with, relative to the revealed truths of God, obliged me to search into them, yet my inward perplexity made me mind little else. When I thought how my friends, who had supported me in my education, would be disappointed in their expectations, I had little other comfort, than that either the Lord would cut me off by death, before I had an opportunity to enter on the ministry, or would give a gracious issue to my trouble. In this case, I could do little else than make a confused moan to the Lord, till he manifested himself to my soul, as above related. (2.) When the Lord gave me some composure of mind, finding that I had need to learn the very first principles of the oracles of God, and that my soul was much hurt by my ignorance of divine truth, I was obliged to improve the means of instruction which I had, be the issue what it would. I saw, I had a call to improve the price put into my hand;

hand; and, accordingly, applied to my studies with great earnestness. (3.) When the Lord more fully removed the darkness of my mind, I perceived such ravishing glory and sweetness in his revealed manifestations of himself, in the contrivance, purchase, and conveyance of redemption to sinful men, as made me so delight in reading, hearing, thinking on, or conversing about the truths of the gospel, that I could not be taken off from it, nor engage myself in any other study, no not for my own private information, 1 Tim. iv. 15. Thus, that which had been my terror, and had pierced me through with many sorrows, became my delight and element; although I did not obtain perfect clearness, with respect to the Lord's calling me to any further step. (4.) The hot persecution in my native country, having forced many faithful ministers from their public work, I was advised and intreated to think of exercising the ministry in Holland, or to a Dutch congregation in England. But my conscience did not permit me to comply with some things required of intrants to Dutch congregations. (5.) There being so little prospect of access to officiate in my own country, I several times attempted to apply to other business; but all my projects were disappointed, except in so far as they shut me up to the study of divinity, and enabled me to prosecute it. (6.) It especially cleared my way, that I could find no peace or comfort before God, in attending any other study; and that he made this an especial channel of conveying his gracious influences to my heart. By this I perceived, that I ought to occupy my talents

Talents, which were suited to this study, in no other.

WHILE the terrible perplexity and confusion of my mind continued, I had made little progress in my studies: but when the Lord lifted up on me the light of his countenance, I, with great pleasure and earnestness, applied myself to the study of divinity, and of *ecclesiastical and civil history*, as far as connected with it; as I observed, (1.) That indistinct views of it renders one an easy prey to the cavils of adversaries. (2.) The temptations which had harassed my mind, obliged me to search after the fullest evidence of revealed truths, and thoroughly to consider the horrid objections which had been made against them. This the Lord, in his providence, made use of, as a mean of my establishment, by admitting the *Spirit of God, speaking in the scripture, to be the only supreme judge of controversies*. (3.) My temptations relative to the inconsistency of scripture texts, also shut me up, not only to a diligent perusal of human writings on that head, but to press after a decision of that matter, by the powerful illumination of the Spirit of God, through his word. (4.) Though I had some pleasure in reading practical human writings, yet I found them useful only in so far as, thereby, that which the Lord had graciously manifested to my soul was more deeply impressed, John xiv. 21. 22. Eph. v. 13. (5.) I found it for my advantage, as well as my duty, to cultivate the most free and familiar intercourse with the godly, with respect to my spiritual concerns, and to consult them for advice therein. And I

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sometimes smarted for my folly, when I neglected this, Psal. xxv. 14. As I had no freedom to comply with some things required by the Dutch, in order to ministerial fellowship; and my friends, who had sent me abroad for my education, desired and expected my return, if providence permitted; these, and other things, made me think it my duty to employ any small talents, the Lord had given me, in my own country. Nevertheless, the Christian kindness, and edification of soul, which I had received in Holland, made it inexpressibly uneasy for me to leave that place. (1.) Amidst my struggles on this point, that text, *By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that, in blessing, I will bless thee, &c.* was made useful for my encouragement and direction. (2.) Having returned to Scotland, I found, that matters in the church, after the Revolution, were not stated, with respect to peace and truth, as I wished. I knew my natural temper was soft and compliant, or ready to faint. It cost me, therefore, no small exercise, how to avoid extremes on both hands. I had a great and just aversion to the schismatical separation from the Revolution-church, which had been formed upon such grounds, as would really destroy the purest churches on earth, 1 John iv. 6. Matth. x. 14. Luke x. 11. 16. John x. 3. 4. 5. I, nevertheless, thought it my duty, to carry kindly towards such of these dissenters, as were truly godly, and behaved themselves soberly; and found this the most effectual expedient for reclaiming them. On the other hand, I was heartily grieved,

ved, that the sole headship of Christ over his church, and her intrinsic power, were not duly asserted and maintained, in opposition to Erastian encroachments, Gal. v. 1. Acts xv. 10. Eph. v. 11.; and that the late curates were entrusted with the charge of souls, without so much as a profession of repentance; and that other unfit persons were admitted to *minister*, or *rule*, in the church, 2 Tim. ii. 2. Tit. ii. 7. 8. 1 Tim. v. 22.; that a free and full confession of our most gross defections was refused in our national fasts; and that there was such a promiscuous admission to the Lord's table, in many places; and that some ministers were so disposed to court the favour of the great. (3.) Notwithstanding my perplexity, how to act wisely and faithfully, my own light, and the advice of Mr Thomas Hogg, and other godly friends, determined me to a readiness to use my talents in Scotland; where, alone, I could see a cleanly entrance into the ministerial office. The presbytery, for their own reasons, assigned me difficult subjects for my trial, viz. discourses on John xvii. 3. Col. i. 27. Jude 20. which grieved my friends: but, as these subjects corresponded with my former exercises, it proved a mercy, rather than an hardship, to me.

HAVING been licensed, it grieved me more and more, to observe, (1.) That the great deliverance, which the Lord had wrought for the nation, had not melted their hearts into any kindly sense of their sins, Zech. xiii. 10. Luke xxii. 61. 62. Prov. xxviii. 13.; but they generally appeared disposed to cover and extenuate them. (2.) Though I

question not the power of magistrates, authoritatively to enjoin fasts, whatever be the neglect of church-rulers, yet I could not well approve his appointment of one at this time; especially, as it was appointed on the Lord's day, which ought to be spent in a joyful commemoration of Christ's resurrection. (3.) Yet, considering that a free testimony against the sins of the land was very necessary at this time, I preached from Lam. v. 16. *The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us, for we have sinned:* and used no small freedom, which was acceptable to the mourners in Zion; but not to others, though indeed they gave me an honourable dismissal. (4.) Two competing calls having come out for me, I resisted neither; but, being afraid to offend the managers of our church by refusing both, I sincerely declared my mind. My ordination was appointed, as fairly as I could have wished, at Dalsersse, in the presbytery of Hamilton.

BEING thus ordained to the ministry, (1.) I not only had my own share of temporal hardships; but, notwithstanding their high profession, I found many of my people ignorant or immoral. Both in public and private, I laboured to discover to them their delusion. This astonished them, and made them secretly dislike me. My life had been very uncomfortable among them, if the Lord had not favoured me with delightful evidences of a gracious change wrought, by means of my ministrations, in some, especially of the younger sort, who had not been rooted in any formal delusion. (2.) Upon account of their high profession,

fession, I at first thought, that my proper work was to build on the foundation of their knowledge already laid. In Holland, I had been acquainted with a commonalty, who not only had a considerable knowledge of the doctrinal, but even of the controversial parts of divinity, and I expected the like in my own congregation. But I soon found many of them, that needed to be taught the very first principles of Christianity; and accordingly applied myself to instruct them in these, 1 Cor. iii. 1. 2. 3. and ii. 1.—5. In so doing, I found great sweetness to my own soul, and most refreshful evidences of success in others. (3.) For trying the state of my hearers, I drew up a kind of *secret catechism*, consisting of plain questions, which I proposed and illustrated, in a suitableness to the need of those with whom I dealt. Some of these questions, relative to the gracious work of the Spirit of God, I followed with such closeness, that they became very trying to myself. (4.) My own sad experience of all mixtures of the covenants of work and grace, in legal doctrines and tempers, led me to the utmost earnestness in discovering those deceits; and in shewing, that the law hath not the promises, nor can be the *ministration of the Spirit*, or the mean of faithfulness to God in heart or life. The Lord even led me to discern the legal strain of some books, which were in great repute, and which I had highly esteemed, before the Lord had more clearly shown me his new covenant, Psal. xxv. 14. Luke xvi. 15. (5.) Though I was, in every respect, the most weak, sinful, and unworthy, that ever the Lord had thrust forth to

labour in his vineyard, and before him, was fearfully guilty of sloth and carelessness, as to a previous digesting, in my own spiritual exercise, the matters which I preached to others, he made my practical discourses useful to the godly in my own congregation, and in other places in which I sometimes sojourned. But they wrought in others a secret disgust; and the more plain they were, my hearers, who contented themselves with a form of godliness, held them to be the more dark and unintelligible. My sincere endeavours, to discover the lie that was in their right-hand, exceedingly galled them*.

AFTER he had laboured, in the congregation of Carnock, between thirty and forty years, and his ministrations had been remarkably blessed to exercised souls, he died at Edinburgh, amidst the prayers and supplications of his Christian friends.

* Follows in the MSS. an account of the General Assemblies, 1692 and 1694; and of the trouble which he met with from the presbytery of Hamilton, and at the General Assembly 1695, in consequence of his not taking the oath of allegiance, when imposed by the parliament upon ministers, as a qualification of admission to their office, or the full exercise of it; and of his giving up his charge at Dalsersf, and coming to Carnock. But, as these things do not so properly enter into the plan of this work, they are here omitted.

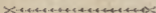
He wrote a preface to that incomparable book the Narrow of Modern Divinity dated Carnock Decb 3. 1717.

I most sincerely wish the above book was in the hands of many both ministers & people. It is one of the most rich and scarce Jewels I ever met with.
Dec. 8. 90.

The CHRISTIAN, the STUDENT,
and PASTOR,

E X E M P L I F I E D;

In the LIVES of
Several Eminent DIVINES.



THIRDLY, Memoirs of the Reverend Mr
THOMAS HALYBURTON, late Profes-
sor of Divinity at St Andrews.

C H A P. I.

Of his convictions, conversion, and temptations.

BEING born, of eminently godly parents, at
Duplin, near Perth, in 1674, I had singular
advantages in the first period of my life. I con-
stantly heard the sound of divine truths ring-
ing in mine ears, in their instructions. I had
the beauty of holiness constantly represented to
me, in their lively and circumspect conversation.
I was, by their care, kept from bad company,
which might infect me. Thus, I was restrained
from the common gross out-breakings of children,
and habituated to such outward duties of reli-
gion as I was capable of, and to abominate the
more gross breaches of the law of God. Mean-
while, my heart was set upon the less discern-
ible

ible violations of it; nor had I any quarrel with sin itself, but with the consequences of it. A selfish fear of punishment, and proud aversion to be thought ill of by others; or, at best, a natural conscience enlightened by education, were the only springs of my performances of duty, or abstinence from sin. I was even prone to such sins, suited to my age, as I could commit secretly, Jer. ii. 33. Rom. viii. 7. 8. Gen. viii. 21. Ezek. viii. 12. That which appeared good about me, was purely the effect of forcible custom, and a bribe to my natural conscience, to make it hold its peace, or a sacrifice to self, Zech. vii. 5. 6. Is. i. 13. My indwelling corruptions, being dammed up from breaking out in open profaneness, broke out in a form of religion opposite to the power of it, which is no less hateful to God, 2 Tim. iii. 5. Prov. 21. 4. 27. and xv. 8. 1 Tim. v. 24. Matth. xii. 33. Nay, drove me into lying, in order to avoid correction, into sabbath breaking, revenge, hatred of reprovers, and the like; which have been very bitter to me since. These things shewed what a monster of wickedness I had appeared, had not the Lord restrained me, Prov. xxii. 15. 1 Sam. xxv. 32. Notwithstanding my innumerable errors, Psal. xix. 12. I was unconcerned about them, and *pure in my own eyes*, Prov. xxx. 12. Rev. iii. 17. Jer. ii. 23. 34.

REFLECTION. O WHAT exact notice the Lord takes; and how deeply he resents those things, which most men look on as pardonable follies! Jer. xxii. 21. How dreadful, to possess the iniquities of our youth; and to lie down in
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our graves, with bones full of the sins of our youth ! Job xiii. 26. 27. and xx. 11. What an exact record our conscience keeps of our sins ! How fearfully it will justify the severity of God, by manifesting its accounts at the last day ! Job xiii. 27. Rev. xx. 12. What reason to be ashamed of spending the first ten years of a short life, without almost one rational thought, or in any thing not sinful ! Jer. xxxi. 4. 19. How manifest the imputation of Adam's first sin, as the ground of the Lord's sending us into the world under such pollution, and power of indwelling sin ! How absurd to imagine, that men, destitute of the supernatural grace of God, have any truly good and virtuous inclinations ! Their best appearances, are but sins in disguise : and even profane persons are more ready to receive the gospel of Christ, than those that have a shadow of virtue, Matth. xxi. 28. 31.

My father, who had been driven from his charge for nonconformity to prelacy, dying in 1682, my mother, about three years after, by the heat of the persecution, was obliged to retire to Holland. An apprehended danger in our passage, awakened my sleeping conscience, to upbraid me with my sins, and fill me with apprehensions of the wrath of God, Jer. ii. 27. ; but my concern amounted to no more, than a sad mixture of natural fear, and selfish desire of preservation from death and damnation, without any regard to the glory of God ; and led me out to legal engagements, that I would be better than formerly, and keep all the commands of God, if he should

should bring me safe to land. Nor could my mother's warning persuade me, who was so ignorant of my own heart, that I would not perform them, Josh. xxiv. 16. 19. 21. But we had no sooner settled at Rotterdam, than I returned to my former courses; and proceeded from evil to worse, notwithstanding the multiplied means of grace I there enjoyed, among the Scotch sufferers. Nay, their frequent sermons, prayers, and catechisings, proved a burden to me, Is. v. 4. Mal. i. 12. Some things soon crossing my inclinations, I, instead of crying to God in my trouble, only laboured to get out of it, and to revenge myself upon the real and supposed authors of it, Psal. x. 4. Job xxxv. 9. 10. Is. xxii. 8. 11.

I HAD frequent convictions of conscience, produced by the preaching of the word, or the light of my education; but these, like the starts of a sleeping man, disturbed by some sudden noise, were succeeded by more deep security in sin. (1.) If these convictions were troublesome, I promised them an after-hearing, Acts xxiv. 25. (2.) If they were less troublesome, I, observing that they pushed me to holiness, pored on the difficulties attending it; and thus blunted their edge, and frightened myself from compliance, Prov. xxii. 13. (3.) If they were slight, I got rid of them, by withdrawing from the means of grace, Jam. i. 23. 24. (4.) Sometimes I promised compliance, but never more regarded it, Matth. xxi. 30. (5.) Sometimes they issued in mere slothful, inactive, and fruitless wishes to be better, Prov. xiii. 4. and xxi. 25. (6.) When they were
very

very troublesome, I endeavoured to do something that was materially good; and rested on that, as sufficient to procure God's favour, and atone for my bygone faults, Luke xviii. 10. 12. (7.) Sometimes I laboured to lessen and extenuate my sin, as much as I could, Hof. xii. 8. (8.) When other shifts failed, I betook myself to carnal diversions.

RETURNING to my aunt's family in Perth, in December 1686, I saw nothing of religion there; and I readily followed their example. Notwithstanding the awful impressions which my religious education left on my mind, I turned remiss with respect to worshipping of God; and my aversion to gross sins sensibly decreased, and I conceived a desire after, and delight in them. My learning became a burden to me, and I betook myself to many sinful shifts to get the time shuffled over, Psal. l. 17. 18. 21. Who knows to what lengths I might have gone, had I staid long here. But, to my great grief, my mother fearing this, came and carried me back to Holland, and put me to Erasmus' school, where I had the best means of education, Jer. ii. 25. I began to delight in learning, and quickly turned proud of my success; but, in other respects, I became worse and worse, under all the means which the Lord used to bring me near to himself, Jer. xiii. 11.

HAVING returned to Perth, about six months after, in consequence of King James' indulgence, I continued as unconcerned about my soul as ever :

ver. However well I behaved under my mother's eye, I went along with my companions in all their follies and extravagancies, and even enticed them to what I knew to be unlawful. But the general noise of an apprehended *popish massacre* revived my religious concern; the effects of which became more deep and lasting than formerly, P^{sal.} lxxviii. 34. 35. By means of sermons and catechising, my mind was further enlightened in the notional knowledge of both law and gospel. I more and more clearly apprehended what was sin or duty; and what would be the fearful consequences of the one, and advantages of the other. My conscience being better informed, its challenges, when awakened, became more frequent, sharp, and not easily evaded, John xv. 22. My own bodily infirmity, and fears of *the massacre*, kept death, judgment, and eternal damnation, ever in my thoughts, Is. xxxiii. 14. This threw me into continual grievous disquiet, and a dreadful strait betwixt two. On the one hand, my convictions obliged me to search the scriptures; and that increasing them, I found there was no way to get rid of them but by becoming religious. On the other hand, I saw, that if I earnestly engaged in religion, I might soon be called to suffer and die for it: and what to chuse I knew not, Heb. vii. 11.

No sooner was the danger of *the massacre*, in 1688, over, than I endeavoured to relieve myself from my convictions. (1.) By promises to abstain from those sins, the convictions of which had been most distressing to me, Exod ix. 28. (2.) By resolutions

solutions to enquire into the Lord's mind concerning my duty, and to comply with it. But, when I found that sermons and practical books gave not such directions as my unrenewed heart wished, I was grieved, and stuck there, Matth. xix. 16. 21. 22. (3.) By a more careful attendance on religious exercises, Rom. x. 3. 4. But these shifts afforded me no real rest : for, (1.) My first sins of omission or commission, contrary to my light, after the subsiding of my convictions, marred all my quiet ; and I trembled at the thoughts of appearing before God in so ragged a righteousness. (2.) Serious thoughts of an approaching death, disturbed all my false peace, Matth. viii. 27. (3.) Convictions of new sins awakened challenges for my former ones, and made me see that they were still unpardoned, H. x. 2. 3. and l. 11. By these tossings, without any arguments influencing me, I was brought to doubt of the BEING of a God, or things eternal, Prov. iv. 19. I was more and more persuaded, that I could never have inward peace, till I got some other certain evidences of the truths of religion than I yet knew. But I knew not how to obtain it ; as I had hitherto spent my *money for that which is not bread*, and my *labour for that which satisfieth not*, H. lv. 2. Reading how Mr Robert Bruce received full certainty concerning the existence of God, after much shaking about it, I conceived some hope, that perhaps I might, at last, attain to like certainty, Mark viii. 33. But alas ! the *vail still remained on my heart*, 2 Cor. iii. 14. 15. Mr Donaldson, an aged minister, having asked me, If I sought the blessing of God on my learn-

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ing? and I having answered, That I had not, told me, with an austere look, That *unsanctified learning had done much mischief to the church of God*. His words leaving a deep impression on me, I afterward, when in any strait, prayed for the Lord's help and blessing.

IN harvest 1690, or 1691, my mother carried me to Edinburgh, for my better education; where the Lord carried on his work in me by his word, searching and wounding my heart, Rev. i. 16. 1 Cor. xiv. 25. Heb. iv. 12; and by his rod, which made his word more affecting to me, Jer. xxii. 21. Hof. v. 15. Job xxxvi. 8. 9. (1.) As my knowledge increased, my convictions of sin became stronger and stronger, Rom. iii. 20. and vii. 7.; and made me see, that the Lord was wroth with me for many sins, which I had not formerly noticed, Psal. l. 21. (2.) By new afflictions, the impressions of death were rivetted in me, and I kept in bondage through fear of it, Heb. ii. 15. (3.) The word of God daily meeting with my conscience, forced me to try the sincerity of that religion which I now professed, made me, like Judas, unwilling to say, *Lord is it I?* Matth. xxvi. 20.—23.; and, like Herod, *to do many things, and hear the word of the Lord gladly*, Mark vi. 20.

INSTIGATED by these things, I applied with more earnestness to the exercises of religion. I lamented the condition of my soul with tears, and read and prayed concerning it. But these fits of seriousness lasted no longer than the force of the convictions

convictions which occasioned them, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17. 18. Many were the fruitless shifts, which I took to obtain ease of mind, Hof. v. 13. when I had any marks of grace represented to me from the word of God, which tended to discover my naughtiness. (1.) If any thing mentioned did but seem to make for me, I greedily gripped to that, being very unwilling to believe myself *an hypocrite*, Matth. xix. 20. (2.) When I found any thing required which I neither had, nor could think to comply with, I resolved to make amends for the want of it some other way, 2 Kings v. 8. (3.) When marks were offered, which I neither could pretend to have, nor could shift, I inclined to think, that he who had represented them was mistaken, Gen. iii. 1. 4. (4.) When, through my own unwillingness to admit God's light, I remained in doubt, I was ready to blame ministers and books, for not plainly telling me the state of my soul, John x. 24. (5.) When a mark of grace exceedingly distressed my conscience, I shifted the present consideration of it, Acts xxiv. 25. (6.) Sometimes I slipped over that which tended to condemn me, John iii. 20. (7.) I earnestly sought for the very lowest marks of grace, and how little could suffice to keep me from hell, and ensure my admission into heaven; as I desired no more, and that with an indulgence of my best beloved lusts, Matth. xix. 16. (8.) When none of these things could ease my mind, I resolved to do whatever the Lord required: but I always retracted, when any thing contrary to my inclination was demanded of me, Luke ix. 57. 58. (9.) When the Lord convin-

eed me, that I behoved to give up with every idol, I begged no more than a small delay, Luke ix. 61. 62. But, as God's commands require present obedience, 2 Cor. vi. 2. Heb. iii. 15. all excuses or delays are, in his account, a *real refusal*. (10.) When, after all, I could not find myself to be regenerated, I blamed my religious education, as making my conversion less discernible, than if I had been once profane. I really was not desirous of light in this matter, unless it was agreeable to my own corrupt heart, If. lix. 9. 10. Psal. lxxxii. 5. Prov. xiv. 6. Jer. xvii. 9.

NOTWITHSTANDING all my religious appearances, my state and nature remained wholly wrong. (1.) Being convinced of my need of a righteousness, but ignorant of Christ, I sought it by the works of the law, Rom. x. 3. and ix. 32. (2.) The reigning enmity of my heart against God and his law still continued, Rom. viii. 7. (3.) All my inward exercise, was only a tossing between light and the love of sin. I would, by no means, part with my beloved idols. (4.) Self was the animating principle of any form of religion which I had. (5.) My religious seriousness came and went with my convictions and troubles, and was not abiding, Hof. vi. 4. Providence having brought *Clark's Martyrology* to my hand, I read it greedily, and was then, and afterward, not a little impressed by it. The manifest peace, joy, and courage of the martyrs, persuaded me, that there was a supernatural power and reality in religion, which I was yet ignorant of, but had some faint desires of it, Dan. iii.

28. 29. Numb. xviii. 11. Meanwhile, the Lord, by bodily infirmity, restrained me from many common follies, to which I was much inclined, Hof. ii. 6. ; and, at the same time, provided me with such companions, as took the most tender care of me at the college; and thus led me, *though I knew him not*, Hof. ii. 8. Is. xlv. 5. Jer. ii. 17. Thus, he was *good to the unthankful and evil*, Luke vi. 35.

My teacher falling sick, and the air not agreeing with my mother and me, we removed to St Andrews, where I fell under the instruction of Mr Taylor, and the ministry of Mr Forrester. Thus the Lord chased me from place to place, for my good, Deut. xxxii. 10. Jer. ii. 6. 7. Here he manifested the sovereignty of his grace, in continued striving with me, Ezek. xx. 6. 8. 9. and xxxvi. 32. ; and, under the ministry of Mr Forrester,* led me to discern the more secret evils of my heart, particularly the amazing and abominable pride of it, 1 Cor. iv. 7. ; and its wicked straying after idols, especially in the time of worship, Ezek. xi. 21. and xiv. 4. 7. ; to discern the sin and danger of formality in religious services, and of my trusting to them, and resting on the bare performance of them, Luke xviii. 12. Zech. vii. 5.

NEVERTHELESS, I still betook myself to wicked and vain courses of relief. Like Pharaoh, I engaged to amend those things, in which I had formerly failed, Exod. viii. 27. 28. ; and, at last, entered into a most solemn covenant with God,

to that effect, Deut. v. 23. 28. Luke ix. 57. I then concluded that all was right: for, (1.) Looking on my amendment as a sufficient atonement, and my engagement as a performance, I enjoyed a sort of pleasant peace, Prov. vii. 14. (2.) I found an unusual delight in hearing of sermons, 1 Cor. xiv. 25. Heb. vi. 5. Matth. xiii. 20. (3.) My common gifts increasing, I took them for special grace, and contented myself with a *lamp* of profession, without any oil, Matth. xxv. 3. But the Lord in mercy, suffered me not to rest here, Jer. ii. 35. 36. 37.: for, (1.) My imaginary peace, which I had obtained by making this covenant was quickly lost, by my breaking of it, whenever a temptation fell in my way. (2.) Upon such breaches, I not only met with new challenges, but old ones revived, Jer. ii. 22. (3.) I found that my heart was not sound; and that there had been secret reserves in my engagements, in favour of some sins from which my heart was not divorced, Deut. v. 29. (4.) The restraints being taken off my indwelling corruptions, they quickly hurried me into acts of wickedness, directly contrary to my *covenant with death*; which threw me into the utmost confusion, 11. xxviii. 19. 20.

NOTWITHSTANDING my conviction of the vanity of these selfish and anti-evangelic courses, I still clung to them. (1.) When I found my peace lost, by my breaking of my covenant, I endeavoured to recover it, by renewing it; still trusting to that heart which had so often deceived me, 1 Kings xx. 25. (2.) When I found
my

my service deficient, I contrived to compensate it with some extraordinary multiplication of duties, or the like, Mic. vi. 6. 7. But still my lying refuges failed me, and I was truly miserable in pursuing after them, Is. xxx. 1. 2. 3. And had not the Lord, in his infinite mercy, prevented it, the issue had been dreadful. (1.) If he had not further striven with me by more and more searching convictions, I had contented myself with a mere form of religion, seeking my life by the labour of my hand, Is. lvii. 10. (2.) If my convictions had been carried on, and I left to follow my own inclinations, I would have laboured in the fire all my days; in a continual change of *making and breaking* covenants with God, and of *false peace*, and *racking convictions* attending it, Hab. ii. 13. Is. lv. 2. Jer. xvii. 11. Or, (3.) After I had wearied myself in these vain courses, I would have given up with all religion as a vain thing, and abandoned myself to atheism and profaneness, Mal. iii. 14. Or, (4.) Being often and sadly disappointed, I would have given up myself to utter despair, or self-murder, in order to obtain shelter from my convictions, 2 Kings vi. 33. Matth. xxvii. 3. 4. 5. And indeed I had, by turns, experience of all these four issues.

THE repeated violations of my repeated engagements to God threw me into great perplexity, to find where the fault lay. I found personal covenanting with God mentioned in scripture, recommended by ministers, and commended by Christians, as a thing useful to their soul. I knew, that I had sometimes engaged *without any known*
guile,

guile, and with great earnestness and solemnity. But, though I could not then, I have since been made to see it. (1.) Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, I still went about to establish my own, in opposition to Christ's being the end of the law for righteousness. And though in words I renounced it, yet I fought righteousness and peace, not in Christ, but in my own covenanting, Rom. x. 3. 4. (2.) Though, in words, I allowed the righteousness of Christ to procure the pardon of my past sins, my peace, hope, and trust, were founded on the exactness of my own practice! And hence, when challenged for sin by my conscience, I had not recourse to the blood of Christ, but to the renewing of my covenant, in order to obtain peace, Rom. ix. 32. (3.) The consent which I gave to the law of God, sprang not from the reconcilment of my heart to the holiness of it, but from the force of my convictions, Rom. viii. 7. (4.) I engaged to live a *new life*, with an *old unrenewed heart*, Matth. xii. 33. (5.) My eye was not single: I aimed only at my own ease and safety, without any regard to the glory of God, Matth. vi. 22. and xix. 16. (6.) I covenanted with the Lord before he had captivated my heart by his kindness, and made me truly willing to receive and serve him. I was willing to be saved from hell, and to obtain heaven; but not in the Lord's way, or to his end.

BEING occupied in the study of natural theology, Satan, and my own corruptions, threw me into great disquiet concerning the fundamental truths of religion, particularly the *existence of God*.

God. Thus the Lord made the subtil and abstract notions, in which I delighted, an occasion of great perplexity. My success in philosophical studies puffed me up with a vain conceit of my abilities, and emboldened me to proceed further in my researches than was meet; and my natural curiosity led me to enquire, without fear, into things too high for me, Job xi. 12. Col. ii. 18. Being disappointed of the satisfaction I expected, the atheism and enmity of my carnal heart disposed me to reject or doubt the leading truths of God, rather than suspect my own weakness and ignorance, John iii. 9. Rom. i. 22. Meanwhile, Satan injected into my mind the most subtle arguments against the BEING of God, Eph. vi. 16. These things threw my soul into more dreadful perplexity than ever.

NOTWITHSTANDING the continued reign of this atheism and enmity in my heart, the Lord kept me from yielding; and made my soul to start back, with terror, from the conclusion aimed at by Satan's suggestions. I durst not admit that *there is no God*, when my own existence, and every thing around me, manifested the contrary, Rom. i. 19. 20. Apprehensive of an approaching death, I dreaded to admit a conclusion, which would make me despair of any future relief, Psal. xi. 3. While my soul was disturbed by pretended arguments, I betook myself to my own foolish reasonings, and selfish means of relief, but with little advantage, Job xi. 7. Psal. lxxiii. 16. For though the arguments I formed extorted an assent, yet they did not enlighten my

my mind with any satisfying views of that God, whose existence they proved, in order to make me holy and happy, John xiv. v. Though they forced a temporary assent, they did not dissolve the contrary objections: and hence, whenever their light removed, these objections re-appeared in their full strength, 1 Cor. i. 21.

THOUGH I found my mind entangled by my carnal reasonings in favours of the truth, I still pursued them. I expected that increase of knowledge would have relieved me: but the more I laboured to obtain it, the more insufficient I found it, Eccl. i. 18. The further I searched, the more difficulties I found. I therefore spent my weary hours in vain wishes for some extraordinary revelation to clear this, Luke xvi. 30. By this I became more and more convinced, that I needed further evidence of, and establishment in, the truths of God, than I had ever attained. The singular quietness concerning these truths, which I felt in hearing the word of God, made me hope that the evidence which I wanted might come from the Lord. I was also made to observe the insufficiency of my natural abilities to reach satisfaction about natural things, and to solve the objections against plain truths, which I could not but admit. This was afterwards of considerable use to me.

UNDER all these struggles, my inward corruptions grew stronger and stronger, through the temptations I met with, and the weak and improper resistance I made to them, Rom. vii. 8. 9.

11. Meanwhile I still applied to my legal courses, or turned remiss and careless about spiritual concerns, Jer. ii. 36. Hof. vi. 4. My form of religion became more and more specious. (1.) I carefully avoided such sins, secret or open, as were plainly contrary to the light of my conscience, and laboured to keep at a distance from the occasions of them, 2 Pet. ii. 20. (2.) I attended religious exercises, public, private, and secret, more exactly than formerly, not without some concern about my inward frame in them, Matth. iii. 14. Is. xlv. 8. 2. (3.) I mourned bitterly, when I was ensnared into the commission of sin, or omission of duty, Mal. iii. 14. (4.) As I had an awful regard to the fearers of God before, I now began to have a secret love to them, and pleasure in their company, and in conversing with them about the matters of religion, Matth. v. 16. (5.) I had frequent tastes of the good word of God, which made me delight in approaching to him, Heb. vi. 4. 5. Is. lviii. 2. (6.) Especially in my straits, I obtained remarkable answers of my prayers, 1 Kings. xxi. 29. By these things I got a *name to live*, but remained really dead, Rev. iii. 1. (1.) My natural ignorance of spiritual things remained still uncured, 2 Cor. iii. 14. 15. Eph. iv. 18. (2.) The enmity of my heart against the law of God, especially in some instances, remained in full force, Rom. viii. 7. with vii. 8. 12. 22. Psal. cxix. 6. I complied with it in some measure, not because I delighted in holiness, but because I saw I could not be saved without it. (3.) I sought righteousness, as it were by the works of the law, being ignorant of the necessity,

cessity, security, and glory of the method of salvation, through the righteousness and strength of Christ alone, Rom. ix. 32. with x. 3. 4. Psal. lxxi. 16. (4.) I still chiefly aimed at my own selfish advantage in my salvation, without any regard to the glory of God.

REFLECTION. How absurd and false, the doctrine of mens natural purity of heart, or ability to perform any thing spiritually good ! Is. lv. 7. Jer. xvii. 9. 1 Kings viii. 38. Jer. xxxi. 18. Job xxiv. 13. Hos. iv. 16. and ii. 6. Is. lvii. 17. Prov. xxviii. 26. What a depth of deceitfulness is in the heart of man, and what shifts it will use to counteract the operations of God's Spirit ! Jer. xvii. 9. Psal. xix. 12. How far men may go in religion, and yet come short of the reality of it ! Mark vi. 20. Acts xxvi. 28. 2 Pet. ii. 20. Heb. vi. 4. 5. Luke xiii. 24. Matth. vii. 21. 22. How astonishing the patience of God, in suffering my manners so long ; and his mercy, in pursuing his gracious work on my soul so steadily ! Acts xiii. 18. Ezek. xx. 14. Is. lv. 8. How reasonable, though *supernatural*, is God's work on men's hearts, in leading them out to a deep concern about those things, which reason must pronounce worthy of the highest regard ; in improving the faculties of their soul, by his influence upon them ; in observing the natural order of these faculties ; enlightening the mind in order to his swaying of the will ; in leading to serious consideration, and never hurrying on his work by violence ; never obliging to part with any thing, till he shew that it is contrary to our interest,

interest, as well as to our duty; in making men find pleasure, as well as profit, in their compliance with his calls! Jer. ii. 31. Mal. i. 10. Hof. ii. 4. If. lv. 2. and xlvi. 8. Ezek. xviii. 25. with John iii. 8. and v. 25. Rom. iv. 17. Prov. xx. 27. Jer. xvii. 18. Job xxiii. 13. If. xlii. iv. Psal. cxviii. 23.

HAVING studied philosophy three years, I was much tickled with it; and especially, the first year, so much puffed up with a conceit of my own knowledge, I inclined to go abroad to complete myself in it; but was afraid to put my life in any danger by sea, so long as the state of my soul was so unsettled. Accordingly, I engaged as chaplain to the Earl of Wemyss. My want of breeding answerable to this family, for a time, forced me to much retiredness, and crying to the Lord for help how to behave aright. Though herein I sought mine own honour, not his, yet he graciously heard me, and enabled me to maintain the respect due to my station. And the more difficulty I met with, I kept the closer to my form of religion.

HERE I was often, and sometimes unnecessarily, engaged in disputing concerning the truth of religion, the divine authority of the scriptures, and the most important doctrines delivered in them; by which I was drawn to read the writings of Deists, and other adversaries of the truth, that I might know how to defend it. This proved very hurtful to me, Tit. iii. 9. 2 Tim. iii. 13. and ii. 16. 17. Prov. ix. 6. and xiv. 7. and xix.

27. For, (1.) I was not rooted and grounded in the truth, having neither a distinct rational view of the ground on which the scripture is received, nor a practical acquaintance with the light, life, and power of it on my heart; and so wanted that *armour of light* which is necessary in such disputes, Eph. iii. 17. Col. ii. 2. 7. Rom. xiii. 12. (2.) The still unsubdued power of ignorance and enmity remaining in my heart, inclined me to reject or cavil at the truths of God, Col. ii. 23. Eph. iv. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 1 John ii. 9. (3.) Many of the objections striking at the foundation, were new and surprizing to me, and dressed up in the most specious forms, Eph. iv. 14. (4.) I was not exercised to that watchfulness and sobriety, which were necessary to prevent Satan's gaining an advantage against me, 1 Pet. v. 8.

FINDING all things ready for him, Satan (1.) Stirred up the atheism, ignorance, and enmity of my heart, to exert itself against the truths of God, in foolish enquiries, *Whether or How* such things could be so? and *what authority* I had to believe them to be so? Psal. lxxiii. 11. John iii. 9. Matth. xxi. 23. (2.) He employed some, smooth and sober persons to oppose those truths, with reasonable-like arguments, Mark xii. 34. Psal. lv. 21. Rom. xvi. 18. (3.) He injected into my mind subtle queries; and especially when I was at prayer, or otherwise serious, he suggested to me the most hellish oaths and blasphemies, which made me tremble, Gen. iii. 1. 4. Eph. vi. 11. 12. 16. Matth. iv. 9. By these means,

means, my soul was thrown into the most terrible perplexity, concerning the existence of God, Psal. xlii. 3. 10. and xiv. 1. Exod. v. 2.; concerning the apparent disorders of his providence towards the godly and wicked, Psal. lxxiii. 2.—13.; concerning the scripture, as if it *wanted sufficient evidence of divine original and authority*, John vi. 30.; as *obscure*, John x. 24.; as *rigid*, John vi. 20.; as *blasphemous*, Matth. xxvi. 25.; as *self-contradictory*, John xii. 34.; as *not accomplished* in its promises and threatenings, 2 Pet. iii. 4. Jer. xv. 18. and xvii. 15. Ezek. xii. 22.; and the gospel-mystery of it as peculiarly *absurd and foolish*, setting up new gods, 1 Cor. i. 23. Acts xviii. 18. John iii. 9. Meanwhile, he urged me to a bastard humility; and suggested, that it was vain for me to expect satisfaction in those points, when so many learned men, after all their researches, had found reason to reject them, John vii. 48. 49.

In this grievous perplexity, in which my tears were my meat day and night, Psal. xlii. 3. I still betook myself to improper means of relief. (1.) I attempted to extricate myself by my own reasonings: but Satan esteemed them as stubble and rotten wood, Psal. lxxiii. 16. Job xli. 27. (2.) I read books intended for establishing the truths of religion; but they overlooked many of my scruples, and afforded me no satisfaction with respect to the things which they mentioned, Job viii. 8. 9. and vi. 25. Eccl. xii. 11. (3.) I wished for some extraordinary manifestation of the truth: but the Lord rejected my request,

Luke xvi. 30. 31. (4.) When all these failed, I sat down discouraged: but my sloth increased my trouble, Eccl. iv. 5. Prov. xxi. 25. (5.) I sometimes applied to prayer; but in a wrong manner, and for a selfish end, Jam. iv. 5.

I HAD altogether sunk under the weight of my trouble, and abandoned myself to despair, if the Lord had not occasionally abated the force of it. (1.) When I was violently pressed to renounce the scriptures, &c. the Lord powerfully convinced me, that if I did so, I could have no satisfactory prospect of an eternal state, John vi. 68. (2.) I could not but observe, that they who appeared truly religious, were the better part of mankind: and so durst not admit conclusions, which imported that they were all most wofully deceived, Psal. lxxiii. 15. (3.) I could not but observe the remarkable folly of them who denied revealed religion. I saw, that, as haters of the light, they were at no due pains to be satisfied; and rather sought to find what might strengthen their doubts, and encourage their impiety, John vii. 17. Prov. xiv. 6. and xxviii. 5. (4.) In the lives, and especially the death of so many martyrs, I perceived a certain reality and power of religion, in which the finger of God appeared, Heb. xi. 35. (5.) I perceived the same in some well known instances of little children, Psal. viii. 2. (6.) Satan's violent opposition to the scriptures, appeared to me an evidence that they were indeed the word of God, Matth. xii. 26. (7.) The piercing, and powerful virtue of the word on my own heart, obliged me to own, that

that God was in it, Heb. iv. 12. 1 Cor. xiv. 25. (8.) Sometimes Satan departed from me for a season, Luke iv. 13. (9.) The Lord some how begot, and cherished in my soul, a secret hope of deliverance, Psal. xlii. 5. 8. 11. John xiii. 7. (10.) I saw, that other tempted persons had been delivered; and sometimes I hoped, that Satan's uncommon rage foreboded that his time would be but short, Rev. xii. 12. By these means I was encouraged to persevere in a close attendance upon the duties of religion, public, private, and secret, Prov. viii. 34. I was enabled to conceal my perplexity from others, who might have been stumbled or hardened by it, 2 Sam. i. 20. Psal. lxxiii. 15. I was helped to contend for the truth, as if I had had no doubts about it; in doing of which, I often found some satisfaction to my own soul, Ezek. xxix. 19.

By this perplexing exercise of soul, I learned, (1.) The necessity of *resisting* the devil, and the vanity and danger of reasoning with him; as he easily evaded or overturned all my reasonings, and subtilly enforced, or impudently injected his own, 1 Pet. v. 9. Jam. iv. 7. Matth. iv. 10. 11. Jude 9. (2.) What a mercy that God, in his providence, hides the strongest objections against religion from atheists and heretics; and, in compassion to his weak saints, permits them not to be published! Job xxxviii. 11. Rev. xx. 1. When men stand at a distance from religion, they neither see the difficulties nor the advantages which attend it. Nor is it when their hearts are quiet in his interest, but when Christ threat-

ens to cast him out, that Satan exerts all his fraud and force to maintain his station, Luke xi. 21. Mark ix. 20. (3.) My impressions of my own frailty, and fears of death, were much increased, Psal. xc. 10. 11. Heb. ii. 15. (4.) My vain hopes of high attainments in learning were overturned; and I feared, that I should never attain as much knowledge as was necessary for my own happiness, Eccl. vii. 23. (5) I was made bitterly to repent my rashness in intending the ministry, and resolved to do it no more, unless the Lord should satisfy me about the truths of which I doubted. I could not, *without horror*, think of speaking to others, that which I did not believe with my own heart, 2 Cor. xi. 13. (6.) I was incited to a more earnest performance of religious duties. (7.) I perceived an absolute necessity of further evidence of divine truth than I had ever attained, or knew how to attain.

MEANWHILE my circumstances tended to increase my trouble, and give advantage to my corruptions. Most of the converse I had was with such as helped forward my doubts, Prov. xiii. 20. I had no friend, to whom I could with freedom, or prospect of satisfaction, impart my mind, Eccl. iv. 10. My endeavours to conceal my distress added to it, Psal. xxxii. 3. My trouble rendered me indisposed to either study or diversion. My slothful posture exposed me to temptation, and strengthened my corruptions, Prov. xxiv. 30. 31. Hereon my wicked heart vented itself in vain and sluggish desires, Prov. xiii. 4; in foolish contrivances, how to ease my smart, without any due regard

regard to the Lord, Psal. lxxvii. 3. 6. ; in self-dispiriting complaints, Psal. lxxvii. 3. ; in sinful wishing, that I had never been born, or had died an infant, Job iii. 1. 11. ; or had been bred to some mean employment, or had a cottage in the wilderness, where I might abandon myself to continual grief, Jer. ix. 2. : And sometimes in fearful murmurings against God, and his providence towards me, Job xxx. 20. Jer, xv. 18. Psal. ~~lxxiii.~~ ~~lxxvii.~~ ~~lxxxviii.~~

FINDING me wearied in my vain struggling, and inclined to sleep, and still empty of Christ, Satan returned to me with *seven other spirits worse than himself*, my own corruptions, and made my condition worse than ever, Matth. xii. 43. 44. Psal. xxxviii. 19. But the Lord, intending to carry on his work in my soul, applied his law, in its spiritual meaning, to my conscience, more closely than ever. I felt more discernibly the stirring of my corruptions; and fretted by the light of God's word let into my mind, my selfishness, sloth, formality, and other indwelling lusts, raged the more, Rom. vii. 8. 9. By this means I was plunged into deeper guilt, and my challenges of conscience were sharpened, Psal. xxxviii. 3. 4. But still I applied to physicians of no value, rather than to the Lord. Having escaped the grosser pollutions of the world, I was now much exercised about the secret workings of sin in my heart; and these I laboured to extenuate or excuse, from the strength of my temptations, not without some reflections on God himself, as exposing me to them, Gen. iii. 12. I sometimes endeavoured

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to persuade myself, that the things for which conscience challenged me were not sinful, even though I had vowed against them, Prov. xx. 25. When this would not do, I with grief lamented my breaches of my engagements to God, and renewed them, especially in opposition to such sins as did most easily beset me, Exod. x. 16. 17. Josh. xxiv. 21. But these courses restrained me no longer from sin, than till I met with a new temptation; and but strengthened my corruptions; Jer. ii. 20. And hence, instead of procuring me peace; they increased my inward disquiet and wasted my spirit, Psal. xxxii. 3. 4.

My compliance with the convictions of God's spirit was carried a great length. I kept myself from open pollutions; I was careful in duties of worship; I was much employed in secret devotion; I received the word with joy. My conscience often challenged me for my secret pride; unbelief, and other spiritual evils. I resolved and strove against sins, even such as I loved best, Rev. iii. 12. Tit. iii. 5. Nevertheless, I still remained a stranger to the real power of religion. I had no spiritual uptaking of God's method of salvation, through the imputed righteousness of Christ; of its glorious efficacy, tendency, and design, Rom. x. 3. I only aimed at the saving of myself, without any regard to the glory of God, Matth. vi. 22. I sought relief, in whole or in part, by my own works of the law, Rom. ix. 32. My consent to the destruction of my beloved lusts, produced by the force of my convictions, was neither without reluctance, nor without some reservation;
Exod.

Exod. x. 8. My heart remained still averſe to ſpirituality of mind, and a fixedneſs of thought on heavenly things. I could not think of being alway ſpiritual, Rom. viii. 7.

I WAS at laſt brought to *an extremity*. My innumerable tranſgreſſions were ſet in order before me, in their dreadful nature and aggravations; and all my defences, excuſes, or extenuations of them, were rejected, Pſal. l. 21. and xl. 12. Rom. iii. 19. My vain attempts to relieve myſelf, not only diſappointed me, but increaſed my anguiſh, Iſ. xxxvi. 6. Job. vi. 20. The wrath of God was dropped into my ſoul, and the poiſon of his arows drank up my ſpirit, Job vi. 4. I remained unſatisfied concerning the truths of religion; all of which Sâtan ſometimes aſſaulted at once, which threw me into dreadful confuſion; and mine enemies told me, that there was no help for me in God, Pſal. cxviii. 11. 12. and iii. 2. All the methods I could take, to bear down my corruptions, did but increaſe their ſtrength and rage, Rom. vii. 9. 11. Hence I was dreadfully caſt down, and became weary of my life, Job vii. 13. 16. and x. 21. Pſal. lxxvii. 2. Deut. xxviii. 66. 67. I feared that my ſins were too great to be forgiven, Lam. iii. 10.—20. I thought it a wonder, that I, who ſo richly deſerved utter deſtruction from the Almighty, was not already conſumed, Lam. i. 18. and iii. 20. 21. I feared that the Lord would make me a *terror to myſelf, and all around me*, Jer. xx. 4.; and that he would make ſome dreadful diſcovery of my wickedneſs, that would make me a reproach to religion,

ligion, Psal. xxxix. 8. Satan daily urged me to give over, and take some desperate course, Is. lvii. 10. Thus I went about dejected, weary, and heavy laden; weary of my distress, and weary of the vain courses I had taken for relief, and altogether uncertain what to do, or whither to go, Psal. xiii. 2.

If this extremity had lasted much longer, and if the Lord had not secretly supported me, when it was at the greatest, my soul had sunk under the weight of it, Psal. lxxiii. 22. 23. But about the end of January 1698, when, I think, I was at secret prayer, *in very great distress*, the Lord stepped in, and said to me, *Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help*, Hos. xiii. 9. In this discovery of himself to my soul, (1.) He shewed me, that there are *forgivenesses* with him, *mercy, and plenteous redemption*, Psal. cxxx. 4. 7. He made *all his goodness pass before me*, and *proclaimed his name, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquities, transgression, and sin; and who will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, and will shew mercy to whom he will shew mercy*, Exod. xxxiii. 19. and xxxiv. 5. 6. 7. (2.) He revealed Christ, the mediator of the new covenant, in his glory, as the *only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, and his *blood of sprinkling* to my soul, Heb. xii. 22. 29. John i. 14. Psal. xlv. 2. (3.) He shewed me, that though he rejected all that I could offer to him, yet he was well pleased in Christ, Psal. xl. 6. 7. (4.) He made me

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not only see, that there was a full and free justification by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ, whom he hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood; but also to see, how God was just in justifying the ungodly who believe in Jesus, which quite ravished my heart, Rom. iii. 24. 25. 26. and iv. 5. (5.) He opened up the gospel-call, and made me see, that to me, even to me, was the word of this salvation sent: and I was secretly invited to come and *take the water of life*, and *rest* of the new covenant, freely, Acts xiii. 26. Rev. xxii. 17. Matth. xi. 28. (6.) To my great satisfaction, he shewed me, that his design in saving sinners was that no flesh might glory in his sight; but that he might be exalted in shewing mercy, and manifest to the ages to come, *the exceeding riches of his grace*; and that we should be *to the praise of the glory of his grace*, 1 Cor. i. 29. 31. Eph. i. 6. 7. and ii. 7. If. xxx. 18. (7.) He revealed to my soul, that full and suitable provision that is made, against all the guilt and power of sin, in Christ, If. xlv. 24. 1 John ii. 1. 2. (8.) While he made this discovery of a redemption, every way suited to promote his glory, and my eternal happiness, my soul was, by a glorious and sweet power, carried out to rest in it as worthy of God, and every way suitable and satisfying in my case, Psal. ix. 10. and cxix. 93.

ALL these discoveries were made to me only by the word of God; not indeed by one particular text, but by many promises and declarations of it brought to my remembrance, John xiv. 26.
Psal.

Pfal. cxix. 18. and cvii. 20 and cx. 2. 3. Rom. i. 16. But it was not the word alone, that conveyed the discovery into my heart; but a burning light from the Lord shone into my mind, to give me the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, John vi. 63. and Psal. xxxvi. 9. and cxix. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 6. I perceived a great difference between this light and all my former notions of spiritual things. It was, (1.) *Heavenly*; coming by God's heavenly word, manifesting heavenly things, and leading me toward heaven, Acts ix. 3. (2.) *True*; giving me a true manifestation of the true God, and the one Mediator between God and man, and a true view of my state towards God, John i. 9. (3.) *Pleasant*; leading to a pleasure in God the fountain of it, Eccl. xi. 7. (4.) *Distinct and clear*; manifesting spiritual things in their glory, order, and tendency, 2 Cor. iv. 6. John ii. 27. (5.) *Satisfying*; making my soul rest in the discoveries made, as true and certain, Matth. iv. 2. (6.) *Quickening*; refreshing and healing, John viii. 12. 2 Cor. iv. 6. (7.) *Great*; making great discoveries of divine things, beyond any former knowledge that I had of these matters. (8.) *Powerful*; dissipating all the ignorance which formerly overspread my mind, and making all my frightful temptations flee before it, Psal. lxxviii. 1. Song. iii. 8. with Is. lvii. 19. (9.) *Composing*; giving me the quiet exercise of all my faculties, and improving my former knowledge.

THE effects of this discovery were many and delightful. (1.) It made me, in a cordial and fixed manner, approve of God's method of saving

ving sinners by Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his grace. It made me fixedly adhere to this truth, that *God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son*, 1 John v. 11. It led me to a fixed and resolute rejection of all other ways of relief, Hof. xiv. 8. John vi. 68. In all my after exercises about my guilt, it led me to Christ alone, Phil. iii. 8. 9. It led me to rejoice in Christ Jesus, so as nothing could disturb me, while I, at any time, beheld his glory, 2 Thess. ii. 16. Rom. v. 2. Phil. iii. 3. In all my bad cases, I was satisfied, that a manifestation of the Lord would rectify matters, Job xxiii. 3. 6. I could never approve myself, but when I found my soul moulded into a compliance with the design of the gospel, emptied of self, subjected to the Lord, and careful to have him alone exalted, Phil. i. 20. (2) It, in some measure, set me right as to my chief end, in chiefly aiming at the Lord's honour, and at my own happiness in subordination to it, Matth. vi. 22. I desired that God might be glorified in my life, or by my death, Phil. i. 20. I looked on shame and confusion of face as my only due; and that the whole glory of my salvation belonged only to God, Dan. ix. 8. 9. When I observed self-seeking to advance itself to the prejudice of the Lord's honour, I strove, and cried to him against it, Psal. cxv. 1. I looked upon it as one of my worst enemies, was grieved on account of the felt remains of it, never satisfied but when it is brought under; and, according as I discerned this light of the glory of God, I found its interest weakened in my soul; and I fought not mine own self,

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but Christ Jesus the Lord, Gal. ii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 10. 2 Cor. x. 5. and iv. 5. 6. Rom. vii. 24. 25. Phil. iii. 8. 9. It endeared the Lord and his ways exceedingly to me, that he had so ordered it, that men, in aiming at his glory, should find their own salvation. (3.) Beholding his glory, I was so changed into his image, that his law, as *holy, just, and good, spiritual, and exceeding broad*, and the duties which it commanded, were my delight, Rom. vii. 12. 14. 20. 22. Psal. cxix. 96. 128. 1 John v. 3. Matth. xi. 29. Phil. iii. 7. I saw a peculiar beauty in those laws, which struck against those sins which had the deepest root in my temper, and the greatest advantages from my circumstances and temptations, Psal. xviii. 23. I valued men as they appeared humbly conform to the law of God, Psal. xvi. 3. My desires towards it were strong and frequent, Psal. cxix. 5. 20. 33. 112. My own, or others breaches of it, were my grief and burden, Psal. cxix. 136. I justified the law against my own self, Rom. vii. 10. 16. 19. 20. Nothing more endeared heaven to me, than the perfect holiness which I expected there, Psal. xvii. 15. I looked on the remains of sin in me, as a most dreadful misery, Rom. vii. 24. (4.) It produced in me the exercise of evangelical repentance, very different from any sorrow about sin which I had been formerly acquainted with. Now my sorrow flowed from a sense of sin, as an enmity and rebellion against a God of infinite kindness, to an unworthy wretch, Zech. xii. 10. It filled me with love to him, and delight in drawing near to, and serving him, Luke xv. 20. 21. The
more

more he manifested of his kindness, I was the more ashamed of my sin against him, Ezek. xvi. 63. Jer. xxxi. 19. I took pleasure in the surprising manifestations of God's favour to such a wretch, and in acknowledging my own unworthiness and ingratitude. I was glad to serve the Lord in the meanest form, as a mark of my detestation of my former disobedience, Psal. lxxiii. 22. 23. Luke xv. 19. In short, my sorrow, coming from God, led me to God in a way of duty; it wrought in me a carefulness to avoid sin and please God, an indignation against sin, fear of offending God, vehement desire to have sin removed, God glorified, and holiness promoted. It humbled my soul, and made me willing to bear the indignation of the Lord when I had sinned against him, 2 Cor. vii. 10. (5.) It produced in me a humble and comfortable hope of my own eternal salvation through Christ. I was satisfied, that this was the way, in which I might expect peace and security, Is. xxx. 21. I was sweetly satisfied, that my expectation should not be cut off, Prov. xxiii. 18. My hope animated me to the duties of holiness, and increased my shame and humiliation before God, Is. xxv. 9. 1 John iii. 3. Ezek. xvi. 63. (6.) It produced in me an high regard to the ordinances of God's worship, as his instituted means of obtaining discoveries of his beauty. It made me earnest to obtain discoveries of his glory, and thereby of my own sins and duties, and to cry for the same to others, Psal. xxvii. 4. And the more the Lord discovered himself in them, I was the more lively, humble, bold, and denied to self, Psal. lxxiii. 8. and cxix.

32. and lxxv. 4. Job xlii. 5. 6. I was sensible of the Lord's hiding, and manifesting himself in some measure; and of the necessity of the exercise of grace, particularly of faith, in all approaches to God. (7.) It produced a love to all that seemed to have any thing of the Lord's image, however different in their tempers, principles, as to lesser things, &c. evidencing itself in prayer for, and sympathy with them. And this love was more or less lively, as my soul was in a better or worse case, 1 John iii. 14. (8.) I found my care for the concerns of the Lord to be enlarged. I desired to have the Lord exalted, his church prosper, and I was grieved for affronts done to him, Psal. cxxii. 6. 7. Psal. cxix. 158. (9.) I found my heart disposed to forgive injuries, and to pray earnestly for their good who injured me, Luke vi. 27. 28. Psal. xxxv. 13. (10.) It produced in me a willing and chearful endeavour after holiness, in all manner of conversation, 2 Cor. v. 14. 15.

INDEED, through my astonishment at the surprising kindness and condescension of God to me, in this discovery, Exod. iii. 3. Is. lii. 15. Psal. cxxvi. 1. 2. 3. My fixing mine eyes so intently on his glory, and on the mystery of justification and peace with him through the blood of his Son, and through my own remaining ignorance, I did not at first perceive all the above-mentioned effects of it, and continued sadly ignorant of many important things concerning my daily use of Christ's righteousness, and improvement of him for promoting of sanctification, John

xiv. 9. and xiii. 7. and xvi. 13. Acts xii. 11. 12. and xxvi. 18.

THIS discovery, which shone for about *ten days* in its brightness, and long after in lesser degrees, was extremely sweet and ravishing: (1.) It found me when condemned by God and my own conscience. I was sinking under the terrors of an immediate execution of the sentence. Though my labour, and the weak and wasted condition of my body, urged me to sleep, I durst not close mine eyes, lest I should have awakened in hell. No wonder then the news of pardon, peace, and favour with God, were sweet to me, Jon. ii. 4. 5. 6. (2.) Jesus Christ, God in him, the mystery of godliness, and wonders of God's law, which were discovered, were *glorious* things, John i. 18. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Is. lxiv. 4. 1 Pet. i. 12. And they were *new* to me, Is. lii. 15. Prov. xxv. 25. (3.) The light of God's word, in which they were discovered, was clear, heart-warming, and *reviving*, such as I had never known before, Eccl. xi. 7. (4.) New discoveries of spiritual things were *daily* made to me, and this short time taught me more than by all my study I had learned before; and taught me what I had learned before, in a quite different manner, Is. viii. 11. Psal. xix. 2. Prov. iv. 18. (5.) My mind was almost wholly taken up about spiritual things; and whatever occurred in reading, meditation, observation, or converse, was spiritualized by and to it, Phil. iiii. 20. Tit. i. 15. (6.) I found the joy of the Lord my strength, and was carred out with extraordinary pleasure and diligence in duty, Nehi.

viii. 10. Psal. cxii. 1. Psal. lviii. 2. and cxix. 32. Song vi. 12. (7.) Meanwhile the Lord daily instructed me out of the scriptures, and I understood them in a new and heart-warming manner, Luke xxiv. 32. with If. xxix. 11. (8.) By this appearance of the glory of the Lord, my terrors disappeared, my corruptions were subdued and born down, and Satan chained, that they could not then disturb me, Psal. xviii. 12. 14. 17. (9.) By keeping his glory continually in my view, the Lord kept me humble and self denied. I loathed and detested SELF, Job xlii. 6. Num. xiii. 33. If. xl. 22. 17.; and gloried only in the Lord, rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh, Phil. iii. 3. Job v. 18.

IN this marvellous, sweet, and lasting manifestation of himself, the Lord intended, (1.) Tenderly to bind up and heal, and somewhat strengthen my broken and wounded soul, Psal. cxlvii. 3. and cxi. 1. Luke x. 34. If. xl. 11. (2.) To cure my hard thoughts of himself, to which I had been fearfully accustomed in my distress, Psal. lxxvii. 8. 9. Lam. iii. 17. Job ix. 6. Ezek. xviii. 32. and xxxiii. 11. Jer. xv. 18. and xxx. 14. 17. (3.) To make me chearfully sell all for the *pearl of great price*, and so as never after to repent my bargain, Matth. xiii. 45. 46. (4.) To prepare and strengthen me for that wilderness-journey and fearful warfare which were before me, 1 Kings xix. 6. 7. Exod. xiii. 17. Prov. xxi. 1. Dan. iv. 16. Psal. lxxvii. 10. (5.) To undeceive me, and reprove me for my hard thoughts of his way, particularly of habitual want of spirituality of

of mind, Psal. lxxiii. 22. Job xlii. 3. and xl. 4. 5. Matth. xix. 26. and xii. 33.

NEVERTHELESS, my own ignorance led me into many sad mistakes. (1.) I fancied that my ravishing frame would last alway, Matth. xvii. 4. Psal. xxx. 6. 7. (2.) I thought my corruptions, which appeared not, to be dead; and that I would have no occasion to wrestle with them afterwards, Exod. xiv. 13. Is. ii. 4. (3.) I stinted myself to such a bent and course of religious walking, as neither our circumstances, temptations, nor duty in this world, will admit of. I could not endure to read books, which were really proper for my station. I even grudged the time spent in necessary refreshment of my body by meat or sleep. Thus I secretly inclined to seek righteousness, *as it were by the works of the law*, being deceived into a voluntary humiliation and mortification, vainly puffed up to it by my fleshly mind, Rom. ix. 32. Col. ii. 18. 23. (4.) I began to look upon enlargement and success in religious duties as my due from God, which I should always have, Luke x. 17. 20. (5.) I looked on the stock of grace, which I had gotten, as sufficient to carry me through all my difficulties, without any constant dependence on that which is in Christ, Is. xl. 31. 2 Cor. xii. 9. Psal. xxx. 7.

BUT the Lord quickly undeceived me. He hid himself from me, Psal. xxx. 7. He permitted my corruptions to stir, and furiously assault me. He suffered Satan to buffet me with his temptations,
2 Cor.

2 Cor. xii. 7. Hereon I fell into deep sorrow, Psal. xxx. 7. I began to question the truth of former manifestations, Luke xxiv. 21.; and to doubt of my throughbearing, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1.; and even to quarrel secretly with the Lord, as if he had beguiled me with respect to my deliverance, Exod. v. 22. 23. Under this perplexing case, I often ran to wrong means of relief. I complained, and then *my soul was overwhelmed*. I thought on God, but not finding the discoveries of him as before, *I was troubled*. I enquired into the cause of my distress, but often I went too far, and fell a chiding with God; the observation of which sunk my spirits, Jer. xv. 18. I essayed to perform duty as before; but the Lord was departed, and mine enemies had got between me and my spiritual strength, Judg. xvi. 20.

I now, with grief, remembered my late pleasant manifestation and comforts. But yet, except in the violence of my conflict, I saw that things were better with me now than formerly. For, (1.) The Lord gave frequent blinks of his countenance, and spake kindly to my soul, Song ii. 9. and v. 4. (2.) He, by opening the scriptures to me, shewed me somewhat of his glory, my own case, or the end of mine enemies, Psal. lxiii. 2. 3. Luke xxiv. 32. (3.) He sometimes allowed me intimate familiarity with him in prayer, Rom. vi. 2. Job xxiii. 3. Psal. lxii. 8. (4.) Though I could not now run after Christ, I longed to be drawn near him, and refused to be thrust from him, Psal. lxxxiv. 2. and ci. 2. Song i. 4. John vi. 68. Job xiii. 15. (5.) Though I could not run in the

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way of his commandments, I longed for that enlargement of heart, which would make me run, Pſal. cxix. 32. 5. 17. 35. Rom. vii. 22. (6.) Though I could not delight in duty, I abhorred the thoughts of delighting in ſin, Rom. vii. 23. 24. (7.) I could not reſt in my ſpiritual deadneſs, but lothed myſelf on account of it, wearied of it, and cried for deliverance, Pſal. lxxxv. 6. Job xxix. 2. Rom. vii. 23.

MEANWHILE my inward corruptions, and eſpecially thoſe which I formerly inclined to have ſpared, attacked, and frequently foiled me, Eph. vi. 12. Heb. xii. 1. Rom. vii. 21. 19. 23. I objected to them, that I had now no more to do with them, being engaged to the Lord, Judg. xi. 35. 1ſ. xxvi. 13. I eſſayed to reaſon againſt compliance with them, Gen. xxxix. 9. When they perſiſted, I eſſayed to flee from them: but alas! they were in my boſom, Prov. iv. 14. 15. I prayed that the Lord would rebuke them, Zech. iii. 2. I complained of them as his enemies, and proteſted againſt them, Hab. i. 2. Rom. vii. 20. But after all, they perſiſted, and I was often foiled, and hereon fell into grievous diſcouragements. (1.) I began to doubt of my ſincerity; or if the Lord was really with me, Judg. vi. 13. (2.) I began to conclude, that I ſhould at laſt periſh by their hand, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. (3.) My conſcience being defiled, I durſt not look up to God for deliverance, Pſal. xl. 12.

I COULD not then, but have ſince, perceived the cauſes of my unſucceſſful oppoſition. (1.) In the

the beginning of this conflict I trusted too much to grace already received, Matth. xxvi. 33. (2.) My spiritual enemies attacked me, when I was off my watch, Matth. xxiv. 43. (3.) They pushed me to vain work, which did not answer the state of things in this world, and to oppose that which was not sinful in itself, but in the excess of it, 1 Cor. v. 10. Eph. iv. 26. Eccl. vii. 9. Matth. iv. 3. (4.) Under pretence of inconveniency or difficulty, I still neglected some means of God's appointment, 1 Sam. xiii. 13. 15. 20. 22. Mark ix. 28. 29. (5.) I was often sleepy and slothful, Matth. xiii. 25. Prov. xxiii. 21. (6.) I was very ignorant of faith's daily improvement of Christ, and God's free grace, for sanctification, John v. 40. Heb. iv. 16. (7.) I aimed at victory over my corruptions, in order to obtain ease and honour to myself, Jam. iv. 3. (8.) I did not persevere in prayer for the necessary supplies of grace, Luke xviii. 1. 2 Chron. xv. 2. Is. xl. 3. . Notwithstanding all these dreadful mistakes on my part, the Lord, (1.) Kept me from giving over my opposition to sin, Psal. xxxvii. 24. (2.) He often assisted me very seasonably, Psal. lxxiii. 22. 23. 24. (3.) When I was overcome, he prevented my fulfilment of the sinful deed, 1 Sam. xxv. 32. (4.) He sometimes gave me a cleanly victory over temptation, Psal. cvi. 43. (5.) He so cleared my sincerity, that I durst appeal to himself concerning it; and hereby I was made the more afraid of offending him, Psal. cxxxix. 21. 22. (6.) He frequently hinted to me, that the issue would be comfortable, Prov. xxiii. 18. and xxiv. 14.

(7.)

(7.) In the use of proper means, he at last gave me a victory, 1 Cor. xv. 57.

By this sharp trial the Lord taught me, (1.) That the Christian life in this world is a *wildernefs*, a *warfare*, Song viii. 5. 1 Cor. ix. 7. (2.) That the grace which is fufficient for us, is not in our hand, but in the Lord's, in the promise to be pled, 2 Cor. xii. 29. (3.) That he himself is the sovereign and wise disposer of his own grace, Heb. iv. 16. Eph. iv. 7. (4.) That saints have no promises of full deliverance from sin in this word; nor of freedom from gross sins, but in the diligent use of means appointed by God, 1 John i. 8. 2 Pet. i. 8. (5.) That the more we distrust self, we are the stronger in the Lord, 2 Cor. xii. 10. (6.) The use, necessity, and glory, of that provision which is made for believers guilt by the covenant of grace, 1 John ii. 1. (7.) His holy jealousy and displeasure at my cleaving to sin so long, and my forbearance of my beloved lusts, Judg. ii. 3. Psal. xcix. 8. (8.) That there was a great deal of more wickedness in my heart, than I had suspected, Deut. viii. 2. (9.) That this world is not my rest, and to make me value heaven, Mic. ii. 10. (10.) The inconceivable extent of that forgiveness which is with him, Exod. xxxiv. 7. Matth. xviii. 22. If. lv. 9. (11.) He fitted me to compassionate and comfort others who are tempted, 2 Cor. i. 4. Heb. ii. 18.

My powerful corruptions, spurred on by the temptations of Satan, carried me into many grievous sins against light and love, and solemn obligations.

gations. I was sometimes for a time hardened and insensible, Heb. iii. 13. The Lord hid himself, Psal. lxvi. 18. ; and my graces languished, Rev. iii. 2. At other times I had no sooner fallen, than my heart smote me, 1 Sam. xxiv. 5. Matth. xxvi. 75 ; but sooner, or later, the Lord set my sins in order before me, by trysting me with some outward affliction, while he hid himself from me, Job xxxvi. 8. 9. Hof. v. 15. By plainly marking my sin in my punishment ; making those sins on which I had doted, my principal plagues, Rom. i. 21.—28. Ezek. xxiii. 9. ; and especially, by making his word and spirit take hold of my conscience in ordinances, 2 Sam xii, 7. Amos iii. 2. In consequence of such convictions, a sense of his wrath was impressed on my conscience, which sometimes was very terrible, Psal. cii. 10. Jer. xv. 17. Job vi. 4. My soul was filled with shame on account of my innumerable evils, many of which imported the most wretched ingratitude, Psal. xl. 12. Jer. iii. 25. ; and with dreadful fears, lest I should never get pardon, or at least a sense of it, Psal. lxxvii. 8. 9.

SATAN finding me in this case, frequently tempted me to give over all religious duty. He represented the marks of God's displeasure with me, in the worst light he could, Gen. iv. 13. 14. He tempted me to look on my sin as greater than could be forgiven ; and that there was no succour, no forgiveness, no more mercy in God for me ; and that as my former unsuccessful endeavours manifested this, it was to no purpose to wait on the Lord any longer, 2 Kings vi. 33. But

But by secretly hinting, that perhaps he would be gracious, 2 Sam. xii. 22. ; by reminding me of his former kindness, and discoveries of the sovereignty of his grace, Psal. lxxvii. 10. ; by shewing me the certainly desperate issue of the course to which I was tempted, 2 Kings vii. 4. Job xiii. 15. ; and by shewing me the extensive declarations of the gospel, which represent Christ as come to save the very *chief of sinners*, and his blood as *cleansing from all sin*, 1 Tim. i. 15. 1 John i. 7. ; the Lord broke the force of that temptation ; and, especially by the last, relieved my soul.

I THEREFORE resolved to seek the Lord in the means of his own appointment ; by meditation, prayer, reading, hearing. But sometimes, when I essayed to confess my sins, the Lord closed my lips, that I could say nothing, Psal. li. 15. Sometimes I got leave to run the round of duties, but obtained no fellowship with Christ, Song iii. 1. Sometimes faithful ministers, by setting home my sin more closely, made my wounds deeper, Song v. 7. Sometimes, being outwearied, I spoke a kind of peace to myself, Ezek. xiii. 10. Jer. viii. 11. But this left me as dead in sin as before. I easily returned to folly, Psal. lxxxv. 8. ; and God, in different forms, testified his displeasure against me, and covered me with shame and confusion, 1 Thess. v. 3.

WHEN the Lord shewed me my mistake, and stirred me up again to enquire after, and made me go the *little further*, I found him ; and was relieved in the same manner as before narrated.

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(1.) The

(1.) The Lord set my sin, in all its aggravations, before mine eyes, especially as it struck against himself, Psal. li. 4. (2.) He discovered to me the dreadful fountain of my original sin, Psal. li. 5. John iv. 29. (3.) He laid me under an afflicting sense of the iniquities of my fathers, whom I never knew, Lev. xxvi. 40. (4.) He cut off all the excuses I could devise in favour of my sins, Ezra ix. 7. Rom. iii. 19. (5.) He shewed what dreadful punishment he might justly inflict upon me, for my sin, Lam. iii. 22. Psal. li. 4. (6.) He made me, amidst much dread and fear, to acknowledge, that he would be righteous, let him punish me as fearfully as he would, Exod. xxxiii. 5. Dan. ix. 7. (7.) He discovered to me the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, Jesus' blood of atonement, which cleanseth from all sin in the sight of God, Zech. xiii. 1. 1 John i. 7. and ii. 2. (8.) Hereon he drew my soul with trembling to apply it, and trust in it, Psal. lxxv. 3. (9.) Having, by this look of mercy, drawn my eyes to look at him, my heart was broken and melted, and made to mourn over my sinfulness in the most bitter and kindly manner, Zech. xii. 10. Is. lii. 15. Luke xxii. 62. (10.) While I seemed shy of believing his kind declarations, he, by his word, created peace in my soul, and shed abroad his love in my heart, Job ix. 16. Is. lvii. 19. Rom. v. 5. (11.) Hereon I, with grief and shame, remembered all my former ways, and lothed myself on account of them, Ezek. xvi. 62. 63. Jer. xxxi. 19. (12.) Hereby my spirit was made tender, and I resolved to walk mournfully before him, in the bitterness of my soul,

soul, *Is.* xxxviii. 15. (13.) Under the influence of this discovered forgiveness and peace, I was made watchful against returning to folly, *Psal.* lxxxv. 8 and li. 13. (14.) I was quickened to religious duty, *Psal.* li. 13. (15.) I was disposed to a kindly mourning over the sins of others, *Psal.* cxix. 136. (16.) My conscience being purged, I recovered a filial boldness of entering into the presence of God, by the blood of Jesus Christ, *Heb.* x. 19. 22. (17.) My heart was much weaned from all things else, and the Lord endeared to it, *Is.* xxxviii. 15. 16. 19.

IN this exercise, I observed, (1.) That the Lord sometimes carried on his work gradually, and sometimes effected a great change in a moment, *2 Sam.* xii. 7. 13. (2.) That the discoveries of sin or forgiveness were sometimes very different in degree, and the faith and repentance attending them as different in respect of liveness of exercise, *Judg.* xxii. *Is.* xxviii. 27. (3.) The continuance of God's gracious discoveries and influences was also very different at different times, *Psal.* cvi. 7. (4.) For my correction, God sometimes let me long seek peace before I obtained it: and at other times, to manifest the sovereignty of his grace, he surprized me with it, immediately after I had sinned, and gave me such a look, as filled me with the deepest self loathing and detestation; and the highest wonder at the riches, freedom, and astonishing sovereignty of his grace, *Luke* xxii. 62. (5.) Not the most alarming sins, but these which are less discern-

able, lurking under the mask of duties, have especially weakened my soul.

By such exercises, the Lord taught me, (1.) To walk with him, and let me know that I was not able to go, Hof. xi. 3. 4. (2.) The necessity and reality of a very extensive remedy for sin, Psal. xxxii. 5. (3.) To understand better, and speak more feelingly of these truths, to the edification and comfort of others, 2 Cor. i. 4. 1 John i. 1. 2. (4.) The nature, exercise, and effects of faith, repentance, &c. (5.) Hereby he beat down self very much, Deut. ix. (6.) He made me see the bitterness and exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the hellish ingratitude of my heart. (7.) He taught me the necessity of coming daily to his throne of grace, for forgiveness and help in time of need. (8.) That a view of forgiveness alienates the heart more from sin, than twenty sights or tastes of hell could do, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. 31.

I HAD no small exercise of mind, with respect to the guilt of my daily infirmities; such as, deadness or wandering of heart in duty. (1.) The Lord's remarkable manifestation of himself, gave my inward lusts such a confounding stroke, that presumptuous sins kept themselves hid for a time; but sins of daily infirmity soon manifested, that sin still continued to dwell in me. (2.) Through ignorance of the true condition of saints in this world, and of the gracious provision made for it, in a daily application to Jesus' blood of atonement, and fountain opened, I was mightily discouraged,
Jam.

Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 8. Psal. cxxx. 4. (3.) My foolish expectation of freedom from sin being disappointed, Psal. xxx. 6. I knew not what to do. My pride made me unwilling to be continually craving new favours from God, who had been so kind to me, Is. vii. 13. Jer. ii. 31. (4.) The Lord daily discovering more and more multitudes of my sins to my conscience, I, for a time, tried to humble myself, and beg pardon for them, one after another. But finding that my whole life would not be sufficient for this, I was obliged to go with them all on me at once, and plunge my whole self, and all my thoughts, words, and deeds, into the fountain of Jesus' atoning blood, which cleanseth from all sin, Psal. xix. 12. 13. Ezek. xiii. 1. 1 John i. 7. (5.) The divine light, in which that *plenteous redemption* with God was discovered, continued always, though in far different degrees, with me. I was *light in the Lord*, even while I walked in darkness, Eph. v. 8. with Is. l. 10. (6.) The ordinary view of this forgiveness with God, led me to such daily applications of the blood of Jesus Christ in prayer, as helped to keep my conscience quiet, with respect to daily infirmities; and this, with the Lord's keeping me back from presumptuous sins, marked my uprightness, and my acceptance through the Beloved, in following the duties of my station, Rom. iii. 25. Psal. xix. 12. 13. Thus, though my outgates were not so discernable; yet I was kept from sinking discouragements, and had some measure of comfort through Christ.

On the whole, I found, (1.) That nothing less
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than the infinite power of God can speak peace to a conscience thoroughly awakened, and really exercised, If. lvii. 19. Job xxxiv. 19. (2.) That, considering the pride and unbelief of our hearts, and the greatness of our guilt, it is not easy for a thoroughly convinced sinner to believe, that the forgiveness, which is with God, can answer all his need; and to be willing to be daily beholden to such grace and mercy; and the more we deal with it, to prize it the more. (3.) Spiritual joy can only be retained, while we walk tenderly and circumspectly in the way of the Lord, Acts ix. 31. 2 Cor. i. 12. (4.) That thankfulness to the Lord for mercies we have received, even for preservation from hell, is of great use to regain a sense of his love and comforts, Lam. iii. 21. 22. Psal. lxxvii. 5. 6. (5.) That the faith which cleaves to the Lord's word, even when it doth not find his sensible and refreshing presence in it, is stronger than that which cleaves to it, under the influence of sensible power and refreshment, Job xiii. 15. And so our state ought not to be judged of by our frames.

THE above-mentioned discoveries of God in Christ, also broke Satan's temptations to Atheism; and thoroughly established my belief of the *existence of God*. Almost as soon as I began to have any close concern about religion, I was tempted to doubt of this great and fundamental truth, on which the whole of religion depends. I soon found, that I had not any evidence sufficiently clear, strong, and convincing, with respect to a point of so much importance, Exod. v. 2. My
heart

heart being estranged from God, and my head intent upon abstract subtleties, and vain speculations; Satan, in conjunction with my atheistical heart, urged home upon me, the objections against the being of a God; and, triumphing over my weakness, challenged me to answer them, Psal. xlii. 3. 10. Judg. xix. 38. The natural impressions of God on my conscience, and the notions I had learned in my education, rivetted and quickened by the common operations of the Spirit of God, restrained me from yielding, Eph. vi. 16. Rom. i. 19. 20. But, notwithstanding all my refusals to give the objections a hearing, Rom. ix. 20. Psal. xiv. 1.; my resentment of them as horrid and abominable, Judg. vi. 31.; my reasonings to the contrary, Rev. xii. 9.; my wishing for supernatural discoveries of God, Job xxiii. 2.; my praying against the temptations, or flying from it to diversion; and Satan sometimes leaving me for a season, I got no real deliverance. Nay, he improved my reasonings, and my unanswered wishes against me, and urged me with the unreasonableness of praying, till I was once sure there was a God to hear me.

WHILE this trial was lengthened out, the Lord gave many merciful checks to Satan. (1.) By clearly shewing me the horrible tendency of such temptations; to destroy the foundations of all human happiness; make the best of men miserable; and represent proud fools as the only wise men, and haters of God as the only happy men, Psal. xi. 3. and lxxiii. 15. Mal. iii. 15. (2.) By shewing me, what comfortable deliverances

ces others had got, who had been so tempted, Psal. xxii. 4. 5. (3.) Making me discern his glory in the works of creation and providence, Psal. xix. 1. (4.) By some discoveries of his glory in his word, as in the answer of the three children to Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iii. 16. 17. (5.) By making me discern that the devil was my tempter, who would not fight against a mere fancy, 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. (6.) By sharp convictions, which made me feel the arrows of God sticking fast in me, and the poison of them drinking up my spirit, Job vi. 4.

At last, the Lord granted me the above-mentioned satisfying discovery of his existence and glory, in the face of Jesus Christ, by his word and Spirit, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Had he appeared to me in the manner I wished, he must have appeared as an enemy, which could only have cast me into new trouble, Exod. xxxiii. 20. Jam. ii. 19. But, by his gospel-manifestation of himself in Christ, in his own light, I had such manifold and satisfying evidences *of his existence*, as neither Satan, nor my atheistical heart, could withstand, 1 John ii. 8. (1.) I, by faith, saw the glory of God shining in his word so clearly and efficaciously, that I could not but be convinced, that it was TRUE and REAL, and infinitely more so than any thing else. This sight gave me more consistent, and God-becoming apprehensions of his nature and attributes, than ever I had before, and so shook the foundation of many of my former scruples about them. (2.) My soul heard his peculiar voice speaking terror, peace, light, life, and comfort
unto

unto my heart, as he pleased, Heb. xii. 19. Mark iv. 39. Psal. xxix. 4. and xix. 7. 8. (3.) I felt his almighty power casting me down, and raising me up, and commanding strength in my soul, Psal. cii. 10. and lxviii. 28. If. xxxv. 4. 1 Cor. ii. 5. (4.) I was made to taste and see that God is good; and that the soul that trusts in him is blessed. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruits were sweet to my taste, Psal. xxxiv. 8. Song ii. 3. (5.) I was made to relish a sweet fragrance in his word, works, and ways, Song i. 3. By these means all my objections were dissolved and disappeared, Heb. xi. 1. Psal. xviii. 12. and xlvi. 4. 5. 6. I could now tell where my God is, If. xxv. 9. I had such clear views of the incomprehensibility of his nature, as silenced all objections against the consistency of his perfections, Exod. xxxiii. 23. Job xi. 7. I had such views of his sovereignty, and infinite wisdom, and equity, as silenced all objections against his providential dispensations, Job xxxiii. 13. Psal. lxxvii. 19. and xcvi. 2. And now I saw the rational answers to such objections, in the supernatural light of God's word and Spirit, Psal. lxxiii. 17. and xxxvii. 13. Judg. v. 13. This light daily increasing, I was more and more confirmed by new discoveries of God from his word, and enabled clearly to discern the print of his hands on every creature around me.

My temptations to doubt of the divine authority of the scriptures, were also fully repelled, by the above-mentioned discoveries. Sometimes my mind
only

only hung in suspense, and hovered in uncertainty, for want of evidence proportioned to the importance of this truth. At other times I was strangely harassed by violent temptations, multiplied and subtle objections, which I read in books, heard from Infidels, or had suggested by Satan. This exercise was more perplexing than the former; and the mistake was no less ruining to all satisfying religion; the objections were more numerous and plausible, and entertained by persons of a better character; and the evidence of the truth lay further from the reach of an unenlightened mind.

By prayer and attendance on God's ordinances, by reading of books, particularly the *Fulfilling of the Scriptures*, which brought me nearest the proper evidence, on which faith should fix, and by pleading for the Divinity of the Scriptures against their opposers; these temptations were sometimes mercifully checked. But none of them laid a foundation for a divine faith, nor enlightened my darkened mind, to see the evidence of God in his word; nor could rectify my heart, or convey into it a satisfying taste and savour of the word of God. But, when the Lord gave the before-mentioned outgate by his word, conveying a sense of his authority in it, by a light and power that repelled temptations, revived, composed, comforted, and strongly bore up my soul, which had been fearfully depressed; this made me not only give an assent, but, with much pleasure, acquiesce in his word, as indeed the word of
God,

God, and the word of life and joy to my heart,
Jer. xv. 16.

UNDER the influence of his Spirit, the scriptures many ways manifested their divine original.

(1.) By them I was convinced of sins which God only could know ; and in so quick, powerful, and authoritative a manner, as God only could effect, 1 Cor. xiv. 25. Eph. v. 13. Jer. xvii. 10. Psal. xc. 8. Heb. iv. 12. Matth. vii. 29. John iv. 29.

(2.) By them the wrath of God was revealed from Heaven, and so dropped into, and fixed in my soul, as nothing less than almighty power could bring about, Rom. i. 18. Psal. xxxviii. 2. Job vi. 4. Psal. xlv. 5. and cx. 2.

(3.) By them was conveyed into my soul, the most clear, sweet, and satisfying discoveries of his nature, perfections, purposes, and will, relative to my salvation by Jesus Christ, Rom. x. 8. 9. 2 Tim. i. 10. Tit. iii. 4. Exod. xxxiv. 5. 6. 7.

(4.) By them were conveyed into my soul all those converting, quickening, supporting, reviving, composing, and transforming influences above mentioned, Psal. xix. 7.—10. and cxix. 50. 93. and xx. 2. Acts xx. 32. If. lvii. 15. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

(5.) By them God let in glorious discoveries of all the truths of religion, Psal. cxix. 18. Prov. xxii. 20.

(6.) By them he also discovered the craft, power, designs, and actings of mine enemies ; his own secret designs in my trials, and other providential dispensations ; at which I had stumbled.

(7.) All these things were, by the word, conveyed into my conscience and heart, with such infinite authority, as nothing could withstand. Whatever it said with

with respect to God, myself, or others, my conscience could not but stand to it. And all excuses, objections, or opposition, were silenced and subdued by a mere word.

HENCE, (1.) I found an infinite difference between the word of God, and all pretended revelations, Jer. xxiii. 28. 29. (2.) I found his authority often manifested in those very passages of scripture, at which I had particularly stumbled, and was thus reprov'd for my ignorance and unbelief, in quarrelling with them; and made cautious with respect to other passages; and to hope, and pray, that the Lord would clear them in due time, John xii. 16. with xvi. 18. 29. and ii. 22. and xiii. 7. (3.) He often opened to me the scriptures, which before I understood not, so as to make my heart burn within me, Luke xxiv. 32. (4.) He satisfied me that I was not yet able to bear many things, which he would shew me in their proper season, Mark iv. 33. John xvi. 12. 13. (5.) He shewed me his wisdom and goodness, in holding me still dependent on him for, and pressing after, new discoveries of divine truths, Psal. cxix. 18. Job xxxiv. 32. John xvi. 12. 13. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Psal. i. 2. and xxv. 9. 10. 12. 14. (6.) Even when I read the scriptures, without experience of that remarkably powerful, warming, quickening, and sparkling light; I found an habitual light implanted in my soul, by which I was enabled to discern the glory of the Lord in them; to discern how agreeable all that I read was to the nature of God; and to perceive in them discoveries of the actings of sin and grace, and a
penetration

penetration and exactness beyond the reach of any, besides the omniscient and only wise God. By all which, my conscience was secretly overawed, and made to regard them as God's word, 1 Cor. ii. 15. John x. 4. 5. 1 John ii. 27.

SATAN, finding that the Lord powerfully repelled his temptations of me to pride, laboured to drive me to a bastard humility; and to persuade me, that it was to no purpose for me, who was so weak, to seek satisfaction relative to the *being of God, divine authority of the scriptures*, or the like, when so many learned men could never attain it, but were obliged to give up with them. But the Lord, by the forementioned discovery of himself, and afterwards, shewed me, (1.) That his great design, in the method of salvation through Christ, was to stain the pride of all human glory, 1 Cor. i. 26. 29. 31. (2.) That a vain ambition to be wise above what God allowed was the spring, and a principal part of man's apostacy from God, Gen. iii. 5. 6. Job. xv. 12. 1 Cor. i. 22. (3.) That therefore it was necessary to God's design, and our salvation, that man's ambition in this matter should be effectually checked, Is. xxix 14. (4.) That for this end, God, for many ages, suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, to let them try what they could advantage themselves by their own wisdom, Acts xiv. 16. 1 Cor. i. 21. Rom. i. 21.—32. (5.) That when the Lord intended to enlighten the world with true knowledge, he neither exhibited the Saviour in the form which learned men expected, Is. liii. 3. John vii. 47. nor made use of such means, or

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instruments,

instruments, for revealing and publishing his mind, as they relished, 1 Cor. i. 17.—25 nor chose such persons for his favourites, as men would have thought stood fairest for mercy, 1 Cor. i. 26.—29. (6.) That therefore it could not fail, but much diversified opposition should be made to the gospel, especially by learned men; while weak persons, taught of God, have satisfying discoveries of its truth, Matth. xi. 25. (7.) That learned mens unsuccessful inquiries into, and opposition to the truths of the gospel, was a strong confirmation of them.

I HAD occasional temptations with respect to the Pelagian, Arminian, and Socinian pretence, that those doctrines of the gospel, which they oppose, are *contrary to reason*. But the Lord shewed me, (1.) That, even in philosophical matters, unanswerable objections may be started against the most evident truths, and that it was reasonable to expect still more inextricable difficulties about truths supernaturally revealed: and that therefore, such difficulties ought to make me suspect my own ignorance, rather than the truths of God. (2.) By the above-mentioned discovery of himself, he fixed me in the faith of his incomprehensibleness; and that his ways are not as our ways. (3.) By this I was brought to rest quietly in the determination of God himself in his word, Is. viii. 20.; and the multiplied testimonies of God's word, more than balanced all the evasions that men could invent. (4.) When I found that critical interpreters of particular texts rather darkened than explained them, I found my
soul

soul much satisfied by a recourse to the scope and plain meaning, as it offered itself to my mind, while I was humbly depending on the Lord for light. (5.) When, through the subtle perversion of scripture testimonies, by the adversaries of truth, I could not for the present find the use of them, I fixed my mind on the analogy of faith which had been discovered to me; representing the nature of God as revealed in Christ, and his great design in the whole revelation which he hath made of himself, and the harmonious concurrence of all the doctrines of the gospel to promote that design. By this I perceived, that his end and the means were so linked together, that one of these truths could not be overtuned without overturning the rest. (6.) I found the Pelagian notions contrary to my own experience, and to that of the fearers of God with whom I conversed, as well as contrary to scripture. (7.) I plainly observed the scandalous disingenuity of Arminians and Socinians, in misrepresenting the opinions they opposed. (8.) When I seriously considered the difficulties which they urged against the truth, I often found their own notions plainly loaded with still more inextricable and important difficulties. (9.) When I was perplexed about the meaning of particular texts, God gave me a view of their meaning in his own light; and then temptations spake not again.

I HAVE been much exercised with temptations, which entangled me in slavish fears of death. But by the above mentioned discovery of himself to my soul, and otherwise, the Lord hath much delivered

livered me from them. (1.) The manifestation of his mercy in Christ freed me from the spirit of bondage, and endowed me with some measure of that liberty which attends the spirit of adoption. (2.) By that discovery, he much removed the grounds of my fear of death; *viz.* my want of evidence of the reality of eternal things, and my sin's being the sting of death. (3.) The remaining power and prevalence of sin within me made life undesirable; and more satisfying discoveries of the Lord made death appear desirable. (4.) I was much relieved by the Lord's promise, not to suffer his people to be tempted above what they are able to bear, and to provide a way of escape from temptation. (5.) My experience of the Lord's carrying me honourably and safely through other difficult trials, encouraged me to trust him with respect to future ones. (6.) I saw that it was not meet that God should give us grace for bearing trials, before they come; but should keep us constantly dependent on him for new supplies, and submissive with respect to the measure and time of granting them. (7.) I was made to see, that God is a *God of judgment*, and that they are all blessed who wait on him, in the faith of his promises, *Is. xxx. 18.* (8.) I often had sweet discoveries of the beauty of God's disposal, in giving us promises to live on till the trials come; and then giving us accomplishments to live on. (9.) The experiences of the Lord's faithfulness, in fulfilling his promises, whether in my own

case,

case, or in that of others, often helped to strengthen my faith.

C H A P. II.

Of his ministerial work, marriage, and death.

DURING the fearful anguish of my soul, above-related, I had laid aside all thoughts of the ministry. *It was like hell to me, to think of preaching that to others which I did not believe myself.* But the Lord, having discovered himself to my soul, led me on to it. (1.) My mother had solemnly devoted me to it, from my childhood. (2.) The course of my education had pointed towards it. (3.) My distressful exercise of soul had frustrated my design of following the study of philosophy, and rendered it comparatively distasteful to me. (4.) By the merciful issue of my dark exercises, he had removed the principal stumbling blocks out of my way. (5.) By the discovery of his glory in the face of Christ, he deeply engaged my heart to the knowledge of Christ, and him crucified. (6.) He laid me under a deep sense of my obligation to serve him, in any work he should call me to. (7.) Meanwhile he stirred up the presbytery of Kirkcaldy, and Mess. Forrester and Shiels, to urge and encourage me to undergo *trials for licence.* (8.) While I continued to oppose their solicitations, he began to raise a storm against me; and shewed me, that I behoved to change my station. (9.) The Lord made my first appearances in preaching of the gospel useful, towards the awakening of some and comforting

of others, which did not a little confirm and encourage me.

BEFORE my ordination at Ceres, May 1700, I, on several occasions, solemnly searched and tried my ways, bewailed my sinfulness, accepted of Jesus Christ, as *made of God to me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*; and devoted myself to him as a Christian and minister, depending on his grace and strength to bear me through all my work. I examined myself concerning my soundness in the faith, and the sincerity of my purposes, in undertaking the office and work of the holy ministry.

BEING entered into the ministry, I prepared my sermons *with much serious secret prayer* for the Lord's assistance and direction, and for a blessing on the word to myself and my hearers. After my public work, I *reviewed the frame of my own heart in it*, and essayed thanksgiving or humiliation before the Lord, as I found cause. *The watching for souls as one that must give an account*, lying heavy on my spirit, I laboured by visitation of families, by catching, and by personal converse before administration of the Lord's supper, to acquaint myself with the spiritual state of my flock; that I might deal with their consciences, and rightly divide unto them the word of truth. Of three or four hundred persons, I found not above forty whose consciences had not been, one time or other, awakened by the word of God, and not one of them by the ministry of the curates.

rates. I saw, that it was very hard to judge of the competency of persons knowledge, in order to admission to the sacraments; and that knowing people, estranged from the power of religion, are in the most deplorable and hopeless condition. My heart was filled with heaviness and perplexity, on account of the abounding errors and profaneness of the times; and saw, that we are therefore called to mourning, to serious endeavours to be thoroughly established in the truths of religion, and to a shining gospel walk, as a testimony against the horrid profaneness which abounds. One reason, why the gospel is so unsuccessful at this day, is because the *simplicity* of preaching is neglected. A due application of scripture is the best preaching. Though God make use of the words of men for leading into the meaning of his own, yet it is the *very words of scripture* by which he conveys his influences into the heart.

With respect to some particular cases, I found, that fears of falling in a time of trial, are a part of that thoughtfulness for the future which Christ forbids, Matth. vi. 34. They suppose trials which may never happen; and that men should have strength for trials before they come; and that the promises of God are not to be depended on; they contradict the plain declarations of God, in 2 Cor. xii. 9. 1 Cor. x. 13. (2.) I found my doubts of eternity solved, by seeing that eternity is implied in every truth of religion; and that men would be *made in vain*, if they were not made for eternity, Psal. lxxxix. 47. (3.) I found, that, in difficult steps of the ministerial

ministerial work, it is very dangerous to depend much on the advice or apprehensions of the best saints, as to sin or duty, in matters which belong not to their station. It is safer to desire the help of their prayers, that God, according to his promise, would direct us, than to encourage them to step out of their stations to give us advice. In consulting with others, we ought to regard them according to their different talents and circumstances. Ministers are often most shaken about the truths of religion, and private Christians most shaken about their own spiritual state. (4.) To find duty in doubtful cases, we must cry to God to remove every bias from our mind, take the way which appears best, beg that God would stop us if we be wrong, and take his direction to another course, if we can perceive it. We must seek light soberly, use it tenderly, and be cautious in the application of it.

IN 1702, I was revived from a long deadness by converse with lively Christians, Prov. xxvii. 17.; by heavy chastisements, Psal. xciv. 12.; by alarming providences respecting the public, Jonah i. 6.; by reading the experiences of some noted Christians, in which I saw my own sins, and my sad shortcomings, Psal. xxxii. 6.; by discoveries of the vanity of my present enjoyments, Hos. ii. 7.; by preaching on subjects chosen for others.

IN 1708, I framed the following questions for trying myself. (1.) Are daily sins of infirmity
searched

searched out, considered, and mourned over? (2.) Is care taken, to exercise faith distinctly, in order to the pardon of them? (3.) Is peace taken, when not powerfully spoken by the Lord? (4.) Doth the impression of the necessity and excellency of Christ's blood decay? (5.) Are the experiences of its efficacy as distinct as ever? (6.) Am I formal in God's worship, secret, private, or public? (7.) Do I take due care to educate my family? (8.) Are afflictions observed and duly improved? (9.) Am I duly concerned for my flock, and single and diligent in prayer for them, visiting the sick? &c. (10.) Have I a due sympathy with afflicted saints and churches? (11.) Do I mourn over the sins of the time? (12.) Do I hear the voice of God's rod, calling me to a deadness to the world, to my dearest relations, and even to life itself, and to preparation for death, and spirituality in duties?

As to my ministerial work, I had many heavy challenges, especially with respect to *servent and frequent wrestling* in secret, for the success of the gospel among my people; yet it was refreshing to me, that I durst appeal to God, that I was concerned to know the truth; that I durst vent none of my own conceits, nor keep back what I thought might be profitable to their souls; and that I preached that, upon which I resolved to venture my own eternal salvation, and desired to preach home to their consciences.

WHEN I found the propriety of my entering into a marriage-state, I cried to, and waited on the

the Lord for direction, with much freedom and preparation of heart. And having set apart some time for solemn prayer, before I proposed it, and another day before it was solemnized, on both occasions I largely examined myself, with regard to my spiritual state and exercise. I found, (1.) That the Lord had given me an extensive view of my actual sins, in their various circumstances; of my spiritual plagues, selfishness, pride, unbelief, and aversion from God; of the sin of my nature as the root of all, together with their guilt and hatefulnes; and had made me lothe and abhor myself on account of them; and that he had discovered to me the vanity of all those legal and selfish methods, that I could devise to free myself from the guilt and power of sin. (2.) I found, that my soul was fully persuaded of the infinite value of God's favour, Psal. xxx. 5. and lxiii. 3.; and that it could only be obtained in Jesus Christ, whom, out of mere love, he had been pleased to send into the world, as the MEDIATOR and SAVIOUR of sinful men. (3.) I found, that my soul was persuaded, that Jesus Christ is such a Saviour, as is infinitely well suited to the grace, mercy, love, wisdom, holiness, righteousness, and power of God, and to the needs and desires of sinful men, Heb. vii. 25.; and of my need of him in all his offices; and that my heart did desire, receive, and rest on him alone, for all my salvation in time and eternity. (4.) I found, that notwithstanding all my frequent breaches of it, I highly esteemed the law of God, as altogether *holy, just, and good*; and that I desired universal conformity to it in heart and life, as it is delight-
fully

fully exemplified in Jesus Christ ; and desired to hate *every false way*, and to be free from every sin.

I WAS much concerned in early devoting of my children to God, even before they were born ; and had a most earnest and pleasant exercise, in wrestling with God for the eternal salvation of two of them, who died. When I was called to be professor of divinity in St. Andrews, I was much concerned to know the mind of the Lord in this matter. And he, by many concurring, circumstances, cleared my way with respect to that point.

HE had scarce continued two years and five months in that station, when it pleased the Lord to remove him, by a lingering and painful death. Part of his dying words were as follow : “ My evidences are much clouded indeed. I have been thinking on all the terrible things of God, and all that is difficult to a saint. All my enemies have been round about me. I have had a great conflict, and faith like to fail. O that I may be kept now, in this last trial, from being an offence to the people of God ! O what a terrible conflict I had yesterday ! But now I have fought the good fight. I have kept the faith. In the mount, the Lord was seen. Praise, praise, is comely for the upright. Shortly, shall I get another fight of God than ever I had, and be more meet to praise him than ever. O the thoughts of an incarnate God are sweet and ravishing ! He came to me in the third watch of the night, walking
upon

upon the waters, and said to me, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; I was dead, and am alive, and behold I live for evermore; and have the keys of hell and of death.* He stilled the tempest. O there is a sweet calm in my soul! I will get my rest ere it be long. I have no more to do with my time, than to spend it thriftily for the glory of God. I will see my Redeemer stand on the earth at the last day; but I hope to see him, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, before that. O beautiful company! the spirits of just men made perfect, and *Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant.* O for grace, grace, to be patient to the end! I get sleep, food, and drink, from him. I will get himself. My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. Truly light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to behold the Sun of righteousness! O brave light, where the Lamb is the light of that temple. The little acquaintance I have had with God, within these two days, hath been better than ten thousand times all the pains I have, all my life, been at about religion.

St ANDREWS hath sinned against as clear gospel-light as ever shone in Britain. When I was at the college, how much of God was in the preached gospel? I had my part in the misimprovement of it; but I have found the sweetness of it since. It has fallen on me like showers on the mown grass. Verily there is a reality in religion. What had I been, if the grace of God had not been revealed in the gospel? He hath brought life and immortality to light. O sober, sober religion

ligion is necessary ! I was often stealing from the Lord : but, blessed be his name, he made me lay it down again with shame, and cry, *Not I, but the grace of God that was with me.* I was alway afraid in public, on that account. Rutherford's Letters I recommend to you all. There is more practical religion in that letter, (79. to John Mein), than in a book of large volumes.

I AM lying waiting for the salvation of God. The cause of Christ, which is down, will rise again ; I will venture my soul on it. Say to Zion, Thy God reigneth. Kings, and civil rulers, who build their state on the ruins of Zion, shall, together with their buildings, be ruined and perish, and their memorial with them. I fear a general overflowing-consumption will run over this, and all the reformed churches. The Lord help me to honour him. I desire no more but to honour him, here and hereafter. O that I had the tongues of men and angels to praise him ! I hope, in a little, to get will to answer duty, and skill and ability to answer my will. Whereon should a man spend his last breath, but in commending the Lord Jesus Christ, God in our nature, dying for our sins. The work of the ministry was my deliberate choice ; and were my days to be lengthened, and ever so troublesome, I would rather be a condemned minister, than the greatest prince on earth. I preached the gospel of Christ with pleasure, and I loved it ; for my own soul's salvation was upon it : and since I lay down (on this death-bed) I have not changed my thoughts about it. Though, in

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all things, I own myself to have sinned exceedingly; yet I have peace, that I aimed, with concern, at leading my hearers to the Lord Jesus, the only foundation. I die, rejoicing in the faith and profession of what I often preached to them, under a low state of body. That gospel, which I recommended, if it be not received, will be a witness against them.

IT is rare to die as a Christian. Most men think there is no more ado, but to lay down their heads and die. This is even as one would cover his face, and leap over a rock into the sea. I may cry, *Shame on me, and woe to me, that I began not sooner, and ran not faster.* The Lord's way is as *silver tried*. We should never, in matters of eternal moment, choose a way that we will repent of. Follow the example of Jesus Christ, and be conversant with his word, and cry for his Spirit to quicken it; and then you will be with it, as a child that cannot live without the breasts. The scriptures are contemned by men; but they are able to make you wise unto salvation. All the books of the world could not have been of such use to me, as they have been since yesterday. I have weakly endeavoured to join with them that are on God's side. Now it is come to a push, and I have peace. I always wished to have God for my God, and the heritage of his chosen.

I PERCEIVE the growing weakness of mine eyes; I hope soon to get them washed, and made like doves eyes; and then farewell sin, farewell, sorrow.

forrow. If he shut these eyes, he will open eyes no more to behold vanity : but I shall behold him in righteousness ; and, when I awake, I shall be satisfied with his likeness. I desire of the Lord, that he would be tender to one that loves his appearance ; and, that, as he hath dealt wonderfully and condescendingly with me, he may deal tenderly to the end, in loosing the pins of my tabernacle ; and that I may be helped to honour him, by a composed resignation into his hand. O religion, and the glory of it, in this degenerate age, have been much on my heart ! I was willing, through his grace, to have borne reproach : and he hath said, *Item that honour me, I will honour.* I know not how it happens, that, one who hath met with so much of God should be so unthankful, as in the least to doubt him about the rest. O what an evil heart of unbelief, cursed unbelief, and cursed self, have I ! O how hath God honoured me. Ah, that I should yet have such an enemy to him in my bosom, as an evil heart !

AFTER causing the first, fourth, and fifth chapters of the *first epistle to the Thessalonians* to be read, he said, I have no need of rest, but to put me in case to finish my course with joy. Lo ! what the power of Christ's death, and the efficacy of his resurrection, are ! I find them explained in their effects. I find the advantage of *One at the right hand of God, who is able to save to the uttermost.* O it is a great matter to believe ! We have strong grounds of faith ; but we have *evil hearts of unbelief.* To have my soul entirely submissive

to God is my sincere desire. I will get that shortly. Then I will never more have a reluctant or estranged thought from God. *Now it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is.* That is the light I long for. He will but shut mine eyes, and open them in glory. I am not faint. I am refreshed with spiced wine. O there is a sweet calm in my soul! my desires are towards him, and the remembrance of his name. Why should not I remember him, who remembered me in my low estate? He passed by, and said unto me, LIVE. He commands, he giveth rest.

AFTER reading of 2 Cor. v. 1.—10. He said, Now, there it is all. God *bath delivered me*, and filled me with peace, when I was under that heavy damp; and I hope that he *will deliver* from that which I feared in death, and that the God of peace will bruise Satan under my feet shortly; and I will get victory over the cunning world, and the deceitful heart. O many a weary day I have had with my unbelief! If I had had faith answerable to the convictions I had on my soul, that my happiness lay not in things seen and temporal, but in things unseen and eternal; if I had had faith's abiding impressions, realizing these things, I would not have known how to abide out of heaven a moment. I desire to die preaching the gospel. I will be a witness against the professors that come about me, if they follow not the Lord. The people I am going to, sleep not day nor night; but cry, *Holy, Holy is the Lord God of hosts.* They
that

that wait on the Lord, shall mount up as with eagles wings. Ah poor blacked I, that think shame to come in among that fair company ! Blessings to his name for composure. I cannot get my heart into a right tune, as I would have ; but within a little I will get it so. I have slept none. I had much work, but pleasant. I am longing for the salvation of God, and hastening to it. Here is a body going to clay, and a soul going to heaven. Should I lie here altogether useless ? Should not I spend the last bit of my strength to shew forth his glory ? Behold a lame man leaping and rejoicing. His word is a good word. And, O he hath been condescending ; astonishingly condescending ! why are his chariot's wheels so long a-coming ? When shall I be admitted to behold the glory of the higher house ; and, instead of that cloudy light of a created sun, to see that clear and perfect glory, and the Lamb in the midst of the throne ?

I AM upon a piece of trying work. I have been taking farewell of wife and children. I have been giving them up to God, from whom I received them. I am upon the wing to eternity. But glory to God, I know in whom I have believed. O I love to hear the gospel ! I love to preach it. It is a joyful sound. The gospel preached, being Christ's ordinance, is the ministration of the Spirit. What shall we say of Christ ? He is altogether lovely ! Religion is a mystery. I was looking through the promises this night ; and was astonished, when I saw the sweet accomplishment of them. I am now almost out of the hands of my spiritual enemies : but I am afraid to speak,

lest that cursed enemy self lie at the door to catch ; for when I have had the greatest advantages against them, I felt corruption stirring, and strongly inclining me to rob my Lord of his glory. I am loosed from my enjoyments, my dearest wife and children : I have given up with them, and put them in the Lord's hand. O when wilt thou come, Lord Jesus !

THESE fourteen or fifteen years I have been studying the promises : but I have seen more of the book of God this last night, than in all that time. I know, a great deal, from a dying man, will go for canting and raving. But I bless God, I have been capable to reflect with composure on his dealing with me. I am sober and composed, if ever I was sober. The operations and influences of the Spirit of God, in religion, are now maligned : but if we take them away, I know not what is left in religion. Am not I a man wonderfully upheld by God, under affliction and death ! The death of the saints is made a diversion in our day : but if they laugh at me, I can laugh at them ; and I have far better reason. I will rejoice in my God, and joy in the God of my salvation, though the fig-tree should not blossom, and there should be no fruit in the vine, and the labour of the olive should fail. I am provided. God is a good portion. I want death to complete my happiness. Being laid here, I must speak : it is the last service which the Lord Jesus calls for at my hand. And I owe him so much, that I cannot but commend him. I must proclaim him the best Master that ever I saw. I cannot be-
flow

flow my strength better. I am like to be overwhelmed, when I think on what I am to be, and what I am to see ! When shall the day break and the shadows flee away ? *Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethel. I am longing to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.*

It was the delight of my soul to preach the gospel, and to contribute to the saving of a soul. I desired to decrease that the Bridegroom might increase ; and to be nothing, that he might be ALL. I have got no length ; I would fain have gone much further. *Much study, much prayer, temptations, and cutgates from them,* are useful helps. I was fond enough of books ; but *what the Lord let me see of my evil heart, and what was necessary against it,* was more useful to me, in the course of my ministry, than all my books. But this is the best pulpit that I ever was in. I am now laid on this bed, that I may commend my Lord. He commended himself first to me. I am hastening to the coming of the day of God, waiting for the salvation of God. I have reason to desire the help of all to praise him. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, magnify his holy name. I have pain with this flux, but I have no complaint. I will soon get my wine fresh and new in his kingdom of glory. I dare scarcely allow my thoughts to run directly upon it, lest I should be overwhelmed. *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.* It is but a little, and I will get God himself. I have found his love shed abroad in my soul. Who is like him ? O what he hath allowed me this night !

night ! I know now the meaning of, *Ask what ye will in my name, and ye shall receive it.* Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples ; for I am sick of love. I am come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant. What shall I render to the Lord ? he hath done wonderful things for me ! I long to launch out in his praise. It is an ocean.

I AM dying, old, and satisfied with days. The child is dying an hundred years old. I am fully ripe, I have ripened fast : but O I have been under a bright Sun of righteousness shining on me ! and I have had brave showers. I can say no more to commend the Lord ; not for want of matter, but for want of words wherewith to express it. Many a time a vain heart hath run away, and carried me down the stream ; yet the habitual determinate desires of my soul, since that day in which God first revealed his Son in me, have run out after him, and the remembrance of his name : and now, I find, he meets them that rejoice and work righteousness. O what of God I see. The beginning and the end of religion are wonderfully sweet. His dealing with me hath been very uncommon. He maketh the weak strong. Glory to him for borrowed perfection. O the sweetness of a Creator to a creature ! Here am I now, a weak man, wrestling with the *king of terrors*, rejoicing in the hopes of the glory which shall be revealed, by the death and resurrection of a despised Christ.

COME, Lord Jesus ; sweet Lord Jesus ; I have
waited

waited for thy salvation more than they that watch for the morning. He is trying my patience. I am like to faint with delays. Alas ! I am like to be shipwrecked into health again. I desire to be patient under his hand : but he must open my heart to glorify him. I am glad to be gone, not that I am wearied. He hath not allowed a fretting thought to vex me. My great desire, for many years, has been to suffer for the truth of our religion : and now God hath given me the greatest honour, to be a living witness to it, and a monument of it. I will be in heaven shortly, by the word of my testimony, and by the blood of the Lamb. All is of grace. He hath chosen me, called me, justified me, and sanctified me by his grace. He gives grace and glory. O what am I, that he hath brought me hitherto ! I bless his name I am much composed, and have solid clear manifestations of God, and the things of God. My body complains of pain, but I complain of none. I was never more myself, all my life, than in this sickness. I was never more indebted to grace. O cursed self ! I would have been over-easily away, without all this scouring of my flux ; and yet I am scouring away to heaven, the Lord will have me purged from all my dross, and as gold purified seven times, before I go hence. I will get clean garments, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb : yet not unto us, not unto us be the glory. Here is the mark of a true Christian, to strike at the bearing down of self, in all its most subtle actings. I am full of sores, but all my bones shall praise him. In heaven we shall have a more glorious
and

and abiding sight of Christ than on the mount of transfiguration. We shall behold his glory, we shall be made like him; for we shall see him as he is. Lo this is our God, and we have waited for him! I am full of matter; I know not where to begin or end. The Spirit of the Lord hath been mighty with me. O the book of God is a strange book. It is written *within and without*. I never studied it half enough. But now God hath given me much of it together. Never was I more uneasy in my life, and yet never more easy! All my bones are like to break; they flick through my skin, my hand is a burden, my mouth is a burden, &c. and yet all easy. Not unto us, not unto us be the glory. O who would not lie in this afflicted condition till they be all washed away! I have no sores. He hath bound up all my wounds. I am more than a conqueror. Not I, but the grace of God in me, *By the grace of God, I am what I am*. The God of peace hath bruised Satan under my feet. I could not have believed, that I could have borne, cheerfully borne, this rod so long. This is a miracle, pain without pain. And yet, all this that I enjoy would not make me stand, without new supply from God. That which I rejoice in is, that God is altogether full: and that, in the Mediator Christ Jesus, there is all the fulness of the Godhead; and it will never run out.

SHALL I forget Zion? Nay, let my right hand forget her cunning, if I prefer not Jerusalem to my chiefest joy. O to have God returning to this church, and his work going on in the world.

IF

If every drop of my blood, every bit of my body, every hair of my head, were all men, they should all go to the fire to promote this. This is an evil time. This evil time hath helped on all this affliction. The dark prospect hath oppressed my spirit. But, perhaps, I took more care than I should have done. We trust God too little. I see a generation, which hath lost any thing of the power of religion, which they once seemed to have, hastening fast to an utter rejection of the purity of gospel-ordinances, and strongly inclined to substitute, in their room, a dead carcase of forms, ceremonies, and superstitions. When people want the power and spirituality of religion, they must have something to please their carnal heart, which is likely to issue in the loss of all religion. I dread, mightily, that a mere rational sort of religion is coming in among us; a religion that consists in a bare attendance on outward duties and ordinances, without the power of godliness: and thence people shall fall into a way of serving God which is *mere Deism*, having no relation to Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of God. I have had much tossing about the poor church of Scotland. O what will come of it, and of the town of St Andrews? I am very apprehensive, God is about to winnow all the reformed churches, and give them a terrible shake.

I HAVE a heart burning with love to God; and I have a carnal heart too: but I long to be away, to get a deliverance. The Lord help me to wait for that consolation that is in Christ, that will fill me with admiration to all eternity! I have
already

already the pleasant, peaceable fruits of righteousness, and sweet composure. I had what was worse than a thousand deaths; and he held me by the hand. I rejoice in this, that God hath honoured a sinful worm to be such a demonstration of his grace; and that there is a reality in religion. I am *nothing, less than nothing*, a vile sinner; but mercy doth all: and I am lying his debtor, and not able to pay a mite of it. In the violence of my trouble, he kept me from daring to entertain a hard thought of him. I see now what corruption is, even while under the ~~×~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ of God and his goodness. I have been kept under a continual fear of my evil heart; the worst enemies I have, self, with its fair shews and secret insinuations, and unbelief, struggling hard against me. It is a mercy he gives me leave, when I am able to speak, to preach and commend Christ. I am going to the land where there is a calm. Within a little, I will be in Jesus' bosom; and I am sure of goodness and mercy, in great store, to follow me. O he is good to a poor worm, the chief of sinners! How sweet hath even this bed been, though sin remain, and my trouble be great. My bones are rending my skin, and yet all my bones are praising him. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? There is no curse of a broken law here. I am posting to eternity, to heaven. I am dying in a way, which may confirm that *God is good*. I am near heaven. Glory to God in the highest, that there is peace on earth, and good-will towards men. Life and immortality are brought to light. Help me to put a crown on the Mediator's head, on Grace's head.

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sequence

head. It will be our glory to eternity, to run deeper and deeper in his debt. Glory to God, that such a vile worm, the *chief of sinners*, is singled out to be a monument of his grace, and trumpeter of his praise! Who is a God like unto thee, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin! If there be such glory in his conduct about me now, what will be in that, to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne; to see the Lamb that was slain, in the midst of the throne? This is no raving of a sick man. I bless God, I never had my judgment more distinct all my days;—an evidence of the reality of religion. Every messenger of death is pleasant to me. I am only detained here, that I may trumpet forth his praise a little longer. It will not be all my fore bones that will make me weary of preaching his gospel. Strange, I cannot say that there is the least decay of judgment or memory! O such vigorous actings of my spirit toward God, and things which are not seen! *Not I, but the grace of God in me.* I am near the crown I have been wrestling for so long. Free grace! free grace! Not unto me, not unto me be the glory!

AMIDST these, and many other like expressions, he intermingled the most earnest and affectionate exhortations and encouragements,—to his wife, to trust in the Lord her God, and to bring up their children for God;—to his children, to know, fear, and follow the God of their fathers;—to physicians and friends, to study the inward reality and liveliness of revealed religion;—to the students of divinity, to study an experimental knowledge of the

mystery of God, and of Christ, and that the word of Christ might dwell in them richly; to beware of curiosities and novelties in religion, and of an assuming boldness in the matters of God; to choose Christ, cleave to him, serve him, and live in communion with him:—and to his brethren in the ministry, to be serious, diligent, faithful, and harmonious, in the work of the Lord;—in order that he might be glorified, and precious souls saved through him. When he could speak no more, he clapped his hands;—and died triumphing in Christ.

The CHRISTIAN, the STUDENT,
and PASTOR,

E X E M P L I F I E D;

In the LIVES of
Several Eminent DIVINES.



FOURTHLY, Memoirs of the Reverend Mr
OWEN STOCKTON, late Minister of
the Gospel at Colchester.

BEING born of godly parents, in the county
of Suffex, 1630, the Lord early qualified
him with academical knowledge, and experimental
acquaintance with the power of religion. He
especially addicted himself to the study of the
holy scriptures. His conversation was in heaven,
his communion with God, his delight in the
saints, his business religion, his zeal for holiness,
his principal aim the glorifying of God, and the
salvation of his own and others souls. Part of
his own account of himself is as follows:

HAVING been foiled by the lusts of my own
heart several times, I considered how to get rid
of them. The Lord directed me to three several
U 2 means.

means. (1.) To be more frequent in meditating on, and applying the promises; as, by the *precious promises given to us, we escape the corruption that is in the world through lust*, 2 Pet. i. 4. (2.) To be daily applying the Lord Jesus Christ to my soul, as an help against chambering and wantonness, strife and envying, Rom. xiii. 13. 14. (3.) To *walk in the Spirit*, that I might not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, Gal. v. 16. I therefore chose out some promises to be thought on, applied, and pled by me every day. For supply of all the wants of the day, Phil. 4. 19;—for growth in grace, Hos. xiv. 5.;—for subduing my sins, Mic. vii. 19. Rom. vi. 14.;—for success in my undertakings, Psal. i. 3.;—for turning all *the* events of the day for good to me, Rom. viii. 28.;—for the conversion and sanctification of my children, Is. xlv. 3. 4. 5.;—for my wife, servants, and others in my family, that they may be profited by me, turn to God, and grow in grace, Hos. xiv. 7.;—for sanctifying of my afflictions, Is. xxvii. 9. Zech. xiii. 9.;—for hearing of my prayers, Mic. vii. 7. John xiv. 13. 14.;—for grace and strength, to manage all the works of the day to the glory of God, Zech. x. 12.;—for protection from dangers, Gen. xv. 1.;—for giving me eternal life, in case death should befall me to day, Luke xii. 32. John iii. 16.;—for counsel and direction in all unexpected and difficult cases, Is. lviii. 11. Psal. xxxii. 8.; or when I am composing sermons, Deut. xxviii. 8.; or when I go to preach, Matth. xxviii. 19. 20.; or for success in my preaching, Is. lvi. 8. and lxx. 23. (2.) Whenever I felt my inward corruptious stirring, I essayed by faith to look to

Jesus,

Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith; who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross, and is now set down at the right hand of God, Heb. xii. 1. 2.; and whom God hath sent to bless us, in turning us every one from his iniquities; i. e. the roots, and habits of sin, Acts iii. 26. (3.) In order to walk in the Spirit, I resolved to reduce all my act-ings to some word of God, and to have mine eye up-on it in entering on them; as, on Matth. xxv. 36. or Jam. i. 27. when I go to visit the afflicted;—on Gal. vi. 10. Heb. xiii. 16. Is. lviii. 10. Eccl. xi. 1. or Prov. xix. 17.;—when an object of charity is presented to me;—on Deut. xv. 7. 8. 10. when a poor man comes to borrow from me;—on Gal. v. 13. Phil. ii. 4. when I am to write letters, or do any thing for others;—on 1 Pet. iii. 8. when to visit, or do any thing else out of courtesy;—on Deut. vi. 7. Gen. xviii. 19. John xxi. 15. Prov. xxii. 6. when I am to instruct my family, or catechise youth;—on Is. xxxii. 20. when to ex-ercise abroad, among poor or rich;—on Lev. xix. 17. when to administer a reproof;—on Mal. iii. 17. when to confer about spiritual things.

BEING under the Lord's afflicting hand, I set apart a day, to humble my soul with fasting and prayer. As I was meditating how I should im-prove these corrections, I saw, that one principal end of them was, that God might make me a *par-taker of his holiness*, Heb. xii. 10. Is. xxvii. 9.—by which I saw he would be glorified, Is. lx. 21. And since *holiness* lieth in conformity to God, Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10. I resolved to endeavour to imitate him in mercifulness, Luke vi. 36.; in

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forgiving

forgiving injuries, Eph. iv. 32. ;—in doing good, Psal. cxix. 68. ;—in justice, Deut. xxxii. 4. ;—in love, 1 John iv. 16. ;—in humility, Psal. cxiii. 5. 6. ;—in long suffering, Exod. xxxiv. 6. ;—in not retaining anger, Psal. xxx. 5. ;—in uprightness, Is. xxvi. 7. ;—in kindness, Luke vi. 35. ;—and in helping the fatherless, widow, and stranger, Psal. x. 14. and cxlvi. 9. And in order to render me thus like him *in holiness*, I resolved often to meditate on his glorious attributes, as revealed in the gospel, 2 Cor. iii. 18. ;—to apply his promises, 2 Pet. i. 4. ;—and to walk with him, Acts iv. 13. with Prov. xxii. 24. 25. And as holiness lies in a conformity of life to the will of God, revealed in his word, I resolved to set several scriptures habitually before me, *as my rule* ; that I might through grace *walk after* them, though I could not *walk up* to them : As, for regulating my thoughts, Jer. iv. 14. Is. lv. 7. Mal. iii. 16. Psal. civ. 34. Phil. iv. 8. Prov. xxiii. 26. Deut. xv. 9. Eccl. x. 26. Prov. xxiv. 9. Matth. ix. 4. Zech. viii. 17. ;—for regulating my affections, Col. iii. 2. 5. Gal. v. 24. Particularly, my delight, Psal. i. 2. and xxxvii. 5. ; my joy, Phil. iv. 4. Psal. xliii. 4. ; my desire, Is. xxvi. 8. 9. ; my sorrow, Ezek. vii. 16. ; my love, Matth. xxii. 37. 39. Psal. cxix. 97. ; my hatred, Psal. xcvii. 10. ; my fear, Luke xii. 4. 5. ; my hope, Psal. xxxix. 7. ; my trust, Psal. lxii. 8. Is. xxvi. 4. ;—for regulating my speech, Eph. iv. 29. Col. iv. 6. Deut. vi. 6. 7. Psal. cxix. 46. and lxxi. 8. 24. Prov. xxxi. 26. ;—and for regulating my works, Tit. iii. 8. 14. and ii. 7. 14. 2 Tim. ii. 12. 1 Tim. v. 10. and vi. 13. Rev. iii.

2. Rom. xiii. 12. Acts xxvi. 20. Matth v. 47. and v. 16. with Eph. v. 8. 9. and ii. 10. Rom. iii. 28.

HAVING for some time preached freely, in some country villages near Cambridge, which wanted ministers, I found the Lord encouraging me, to give up my self to the *ministry of the word*. My own soul was refreshed in composing my sermons; my heart was made to disrelish all other studies, but that of divine things; and my labours appeared to be blessed of God. Having been chosen *Catechist* in the university of Cambridge, in 1654, my soul was exceedingly affected by a sermon of Dr Tuckney, our professor of divinity; in which he did, in the name of God, earnestly beseech every one of us, to endeavour the increase of the church of God, by adding ourselves to it, and labouring to add others to it. This encouraged me to comply with the request of a parish in Cambridge, to give them one sermon on the Lord's day forenoon. Finding that the Lord had blessed my labours, both to the students and people of the city, I gave up myself to the work of the ministry, and was solemnly set apart to it by fasting and prayer, and laying on of the hands of the presbytery; to which God seemed to set his seal, by very gracious influences of his Spirit on my heart.

NOT long after, I set apart a day for fasting and prayer, to ask counsel of the Lord, whether I should also preach in the afternoon at St Andrew's church. And, by powerfully impressing on my conscience these scriptures, 2 Tim. iv.

1. 2. *I charge thee before God, be instant in season and out of season.* 1 Pet. v. 2. *As much as in you lieth, feed the flock.* 1 Cor. ix. 16. 17. *Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.* Though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of. If I do this willingly, I have a reward. Eccl. xi. 6. *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withdraw not thine hand: for thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that.* 1 Cor. xv. 58. *Always abounding in the work of the Lord.* Gal. vi. 10. *As we have opportunity, let us do good.* And I was encouraged, from Is. xli. 10. *Fear thou not; I am with thee. I will strengthen, yea I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.* Matth. xxviii. 19. 20. *Go teach: and lo, I am with you, to help and assist you, to bless your labours, and make your work prosperous.*—I soon found my labour blessed. About ten months after, April 1657, I set apart another day for fasting and prayer, that the Lord would direct me, whether to preach a week-day's sermon or not, once every fortnight, and desired the prayers of others for me in this particular. The Lord impressed on my mind these texts, Acts vi. 4. *We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.* Rom. i. 1. 14. 15. *Separated unto the gospel of the grace of God; I am a debtor, so much as in me is, to preach the gospel.* Is. xl. 9. *O thou that bringest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountains; lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up; be not afraid: with Is. lii. 7. Rom. x. 15.*

Acts

Acts xviii. 5. *Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified.*

THE following considerations were also powerfully set home on my soul. (1.) I find God much enlarging my meditations on a subject. What can be his meaning, in watering me so much, but that I should water others? (2.) I have found God wonderfully gracious to me, in the afternoon-sermons, which I have preached, in consequence of a like call. (3.) I have solemnly given up myself to the work of preaching the gospel; wo must therefore be unto me, if I preach it not, 1 Cor. ix. 16. (4.) God hath made my service here accepted of the saints; and therefore, it is good to strike where and when the iron is hot. (5.) I have but a short time to live; and so ought to learn of Christ, to do my work as fast as I can, John ix. 4. Eccl. ix. 10. (6.) In these evil times, I may be soon cut short of such opportunities, Eph. v. 15. 16. Gal. vi. 10. (7.) One soul gained, by the preaching of the gospel, is more worth than the whole world, Matth. xvi. 26. (8.) Christ, thrice-over, chargeth Peter to *feed his sheep and lambs*, as an evidence of his love to him. Now I have wonderful cause to love Christ, and good reason to demonstrate my love, in whatever way he would have me, John xxi. 15. 16. 17. (9.) God is glorified, when we bear much fruit, and for the edification of others, John xv. 8. Eph. iv. 11. 12. (10.) God requires every man to observe and improve his proper gifts in his proper work, Rom. xii. 6. 7. 8. 11. (11.) I have naturally a slothful spirit; and

and one way to master it, is to take up much employment. (12.) God would have us *abound* in his work, and *our labour shall not be in vain*, 1 Cor. xv. 58. (13.) No excuse should hinder us now from doing good, but what will serve us at the day of judgment.

I WAS greatly encouraged, that God would be with me in my undertaking, from the following scriptures, Matth. xxviii. 19. 20. *Go teach:—lo, I am with you alway.* 1 Chron. xxviii. 10. 20. *The Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong and do it. Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed, for the Lord God will be with thee; he will not fail thee nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord.* Josh. i. 9. *Have not I commanded thee! The Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest.* Is. xlii. 6. *I the Lord have called thee; I will hold thine hand.* Judg. vi. 12. 14. *The Lord is with thee. Go in thy might, and thou shalt save Israel. Have not I sent thee?*

OBJECTION I. MEN will impute my preaching of the week-day's sermons to forwardness, pride, or imprudence; and will perhaps laugh at me. ANSWER. (1.) I must not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ, no not in *an adulterous generation*, Rom. i. 16. Mark viii. 38. If I CANNOT suffer shame for him, how shall I suffer greater persecutions? (2.) God can, and hath promised to hide me from the *strife of tongues*, if I trust in him, Psal. xxxi. 19. 20, Prov. xvi. 7. I commit my way and cause

unto the Lord ; and if I be reproached, he will one day clear me, Pſal. xxxvii. 5. 6. (3.) If I meet with ſhame and reproach, for my diligence in preaching the goſpel, it is no more than Chriſt and his apoſtles ſuffered, Heb. xii. 3. 1 Cor. iv. 9. 10. 13. (4.) If I ſerve Chriſt, he will honour me ; and that is infinitely better than the honour of the world, John xii. 26. (5.) It will be my happineſs, if I be reproached for Chriſt's ſake, 1 Pet. iv. 13. 14. (6.) That glory which I expect, ſhould make me deſpiſe the ſhame, which I meet with here, in the ſervice of God, 1 Pet. v. 4. Heb. xii. 2.

OBJECT. II. PERHAPS the people will contemn the word ; I ſhall have but few hearers. *Anſ.* (1.) The hearts of all men are in God's hand. I will leave that to the Lord, whether he will incline many or few to attend upon his word. (2.) The angels did not diſdain to preach Chriſt to a few ſhepherds, Luke ii. 8.—11. and Chriſt preached the goſpel to one harlot, John iv. (3.) God's preſence is not tied to a multitude, Matth. xviii. 20. If he but bleſs his word for the converſion of one ſoul, it is worth all our labour and pains, Mark viii. 37. Jam. v. 19. 20. (4.) I ſhall eſſay to do my work to God, and not to men ; becauſe God commands it, though men ſhould ſlight it. Though the more I love and labour for them, the leſs I be loved, I ſhould gladly ſpend myſelf, and be ſpent for them, If. xlix. 5. 2 Cor. xii. 15.

BEING ejected from my charge at Colcheſter,
by

by the *Act of uniformity*, 1662, and thereafter denied liberty to preach to the people there, while the pestilence raged, and the established clergy had fled from their charge, I, as directed by God, from *Is. xxvi. 20. Gen. xxviii. 15.* removed to Chatisham in Suffolk; where he favoured me with frequent opportunities of preaching the gospel, and gave me some desirable success, according to his word impressed on my soul, at my first coming there, *Ezek. xxxvii. 3. 9. 10.* And, notwithstanding the repeated attempts of our persecutors to apprehend me, the Lord, according to his gracious words applied to my heart, *Psal. xci. 11. 12. 13. Dan. vi. 23. Psal. cxlvi. 9. Is. lv. 12. Luke vi. 11. 12. Deut. xxxiii. 12. Psal. cix. 31.*—from time to time mercifully delivered me; and led me out to praise and thanksgiving, and resolution to exert myself to the utmost in his service, on this account, *1 Chron. xx. 30. Psal. xxx. 1. 1 Chron. xxii. 17. 18. 19.*

WITH respect to the private exercise of my soul, many texts of scripture have been powerfully applied by the Holy Ghost, for my conviction, encouragment, and direction. My losing of my comforts, often proceeded from my letting go the promises. By darkening of my heart, and keeping me under unbelief and trouble of spirit, Satan hath often kept me under doubts and fears, when I had no scriptural grounds for them. Being under conviction of the emptiness and barrenness of my soul, and despondency on that account, I was encouraged by *Is. xliv. 3. I will pour waters on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground.*

ground. My soul was lifted up towards God, to wait for, and expect the shedding abroad of his Spirit on me. Being dejected on account of the Lord's delaying to give me the sensible influence of his Spirit, to carry on the work of faith and sanctification in me with power, I was revived by Is. xl. 27. 28. 29. 31. *Why sayest thou, O Jacob, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgement is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, That the everlasting God fainteth not, neither is weary? He giveth power to the faint, &c.* Lord what an accursed hard heart have I! that sin, which grieves thee, and thy Son and Spirit, Gen. vi. 6. Mark iii. 5. Eph. iv. 30. should not grieve me! that sin, which wearie thee, Is. xliii. 24. should not be a burden to me,—that I should not be troubled for want of thy presence, which made my Saviour cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* that judgment and eternity should make no impression upon me! that I can hear and speak of thy word, thy wrath, and yet not fear thee, nor tremble at thy word, or at this my condition!—Having perceived a desperate hardness in my heart, that no means, no mercies melted it, and almost despairing of ever having it softened, I was made to see, from Acts ii. 37. that it was possible for the most stubborn sinner to get a broken heart. And now, O my soul, *why art thou cast down?* Is not the Lord greater than thy heart? Can Satan be more malicious to destroy thee, than the Lord is merciful to save thee?

UPON examination of myself, I have sometimes felt myself altogether void of any love or

fear of God ; and that I could no more work up my heart to it, than remove a mountain into the midst of the sea by my commands. Such wonderful deadness hath seized upon my soul, and I have been so enslaved and captivated by Satan, that I could not truly desire the Spirit of God.—Alas ! not only to be cut off from communion with God, but to be contented with that condition !—Be instructed, O my soul, to ascribe every good motion to God. If thou feelest any hungerings after Jesus Christ, or any sorrow for want of God's presence, or the like, own it as his work, and bless him for it.—I have found myself exceedingly polluted, lying close to the fountain, which God hath opened for sin and for uncleanness, and yet not able to step in, that I might be healed.—My soul wait thou on him. Who can tell, but Jesus' bowels may yearn towards thee, and he may heal thee as he did the impotent man ?—Having sometimes found my convictions issuing in some pantings and breathings after God, but nothing come to perfection, I was somewhat relieved by Is lxvi. 9. *Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth?* saith the Lord ; and xlii. 4. *He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, till he have sent forth judgment unto victory.*—So powerful have been the actings of my inward corruptions, that I have not been able to withstand them ; but have been carried captive by them, Rom. vii. 23. 24. Hereby I have felt that truth, that the heart of man is *desperately wicked* : who can know it ? Lord be not far from me : make haste to help me. Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee.—Proclaim

claim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison-door to him that is bound, *Is. lxi. 1.*

I FIND, that though, in my judgment and profession, I acknowledge Christ to be my righteousness and peace, yet I have secretly gone about to establish my own righteousness, and have derived my comfort and peace from my own doings. For, when I have been disquieted by the doings of sin, not God speaking peace through the blood of Christ, but the intermission of temptation, and the cessation of those sins, have restored me to my former peace. When I have been troubled at the evil frame of my heart, not the righteousness of Christ, but my feeling of a better temper, hath been my consolation. When I have been relieved from perplexity, by reading the scripture, or by prayer, I have not then observed true and lively fellowship with God in these duties, or that his Spirit did therein reveal to me my interest in Christ, and so quiet my conscience.—What need have I to take heed whither I flee for relief; and lest those means, which God hath appointed to be the conveyances of himself, his Son, and Spirit, and all spiritual blessings, should prove to me a mean of death and separation from God, by my formal use of them, and resting in them.—I find that, when God at any time works any thing in my soul, I soon lose it: if he quicken me, I soon grow dead-hearted again: if he enliven my affections, they soon grow cold and flat, and my old hardness returns upon me. Hence I see the infinite wisdom and goodness of God, in not putting the stock of grace into our hands, but treasuring

furing it up in Christ; and that *our life is hid with Christ in God*, and so becomes sure, Col. iii. 3. Rom. iv. 16. And I see that I have need of continual recourse to Jesus Christ, for new supplies of grace and strength. I find that I must walk through much spiritual drought, a land of desarts, and shadows of death; and must meet with a flinty heart, and fiery temptations; to humble me, and to prove me, and do me good in my latter end. O my soul, beware of murmuring, unbelief, and tempting of God.

NOTWITHSTANDING my aversion to hear this sermon, the Lord hath by it convinced me of my sinfulness and misery. But how unfaithful was I then, and have I been since, to the convictions of thy Spirit? How soon I have healed up the wound, that was given me; and an hard heart, and secure, careless spirit hath taken possession of me! Lord, if ever thy word be effectual in me, thou must not only *speake* it to my heart, but *write* and *engraft* it there. And whenever I find any secret unwillingness to ordinances and duties, let me stir up myself to wait upon God; expecting that he hath some special mercy for me, which Satan would hinder me of.

THIS day I stood before the Lord, convinced of my unbelief.—Conscience tells me, that I want that living faith which purifies the heart, Acts xv. 9; endears Christ, and brings peace with God, and joy in the Holy Ghost, 1 Pet. ii. 7. and viii. 18. Rom. v. 1. Lord fix this conviction; for my heart hath already hardened itself against thee.

tree.—I feel a careless spirit, that would make light of eternity, and of Jesus Christ. Let me not heal myself, but wait till thou heal me. I feel myself dead in sin, alienated from the life of God.—Spiritual life results from union with Christ : but I feel myself a poor withered branch, cut off from the vine; unacquainted with the actings of spiritual life, as living by faith, serving God in the spirit, mortifying sin by the spirit, loving God above all things, and seeking his glory in all things. I have prayed against, and resolved against sin, striven with sin, and avoided occasions of sin; all which a natural man may do. But how to fetch power from the death of Christ, how to believe in God for the subduing of sin, and how to do it by the Spirit, have been mysteries to me.

By Satan's persuading me, that I would break my covenant and so double my sin, and especially through my loathsomeness to part with *all sin*, I long forbore to make any solemn surrender of myself to God. But at length, in 1654, I was encouraged to it, from, Jer. xxx. 21. 22. But, since my covenanting with God, I have had sad discoveries, that *the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*, Rom. viii. 7. For I find a loathsomeness to walk closely with God; yea, under a profession of religion, my carnal heart hath been at enmity with the power and life of it; and this enmity hath lain hid, under a performance of some duties, which have not been destructive to that evil principle that hath lived in me.—Since my covenanting with God, I have seen more of the treachery and

hypocrisy of my heart.—After a short space of more than ordinary strictness, my covenanting appeared to have no influence upon my heart or life.—I perceived my unsteadfastness in God's covenant, to arise from my want of due uprightness with God in entering into it; that there had not been a duly cordial and full resolution to part with all sin, or to cleave to God as MY ALL and IN ALL, in Christ; and from my neglect to watch against my spiritual enemies, and repeatedly, by faith, engage my heart to walk with God. By meditation on 1 John iii. 23. *This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ*, I perceived, that this believing implied a reliance upon God in Christ; for not only the remission of sin, but also the outpouring of his Spirit, John vii. 38. 39.; to shed abroad his love in our hearts, Rom. v. 5.; seal our assurance of forgiveness of our sins; witness our adoption, and mortify sin; and work all the works of God in us, Rom. viii. 13. 16.; and that the spirit is freely given; and Christ hath received this, and other gifts, for rebellious men, that the Lord might dwell among them, Tit. iii. 4. 5. 6. Psal. lxxviii. 18. And thus I found myself greatly encouraged, to wait upon the Lord for the out-pouring of his Spirit upon me. And having afterwards considered that poor lost sinners, become partakers of *a divine nature*, through faith in the promises of the gospel, wait upon God; and that nothing need discourage me. Wherefore, when I find myself guilty, I will look to Christ, as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world;—as a *fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness*;—as a
washer

washer from uncleanness, who will in no wise cast out any that cometh unto him, John i. 29. Zech. xiii. 1. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. John vi. 37.—through such promises as, Is. i. 18. and xliii. 24. 25. and xlv. 21. 22. When I feel my rebellious lusts prevailing, and leading me captive, I will go to God in Jesus Christ, through such promises as these, Mic. vii. 18. 19. Rom. vi. 14. Matth. xi. 28. Is. xlv. 22. Jer. xxxi. 33. Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Acts iii. 26. and beg of him a *new heart* and a *right spirit*, Psal. li. 10. and that he *would turn me, and I shall be turned*, Jer. xxxi. 18.—When I want grace, I will look to him who is full of grace, John i. 14. 16. and hath promised to give grace, Psal. lxxxiv. 11; even an heart to love him, Deut. xxx. 6. and to put his fear in us, Jer. xxxii. 40.—When I find my heart hard, I will look unto God who quickeneth the dead, Rom. iv. 17. and can raise children to Abraham out of stones, Matth. iii. 9. that, according to his promise, he may take away my heart of stone, and give me an *heart of flesh*, Ezek. xxxvi. 26.—When God withdraws the comfortable influences of his presence, I will search and try my ways, and earnestly ask, and wait for, his return, Lam. iii. 40. Josh. vii. 11. 12. 13. Is. lix. 2. Psal. lxxxix. 46. and lxxx. 3. 19. Hos. v. 15. Psal. cxxx. 5. 6. Is. viii. 17. Lam. iii. 25. 26. And, in waiting, will look to him in such promises, as Psal. ciii. 8. 9. Is. liv. 6. 7. 8. and lvii. 16. 17. 18. Lam. iii. 31. 32. Hos. vi. 1. 2. 3. John xiv. 18.—When I have backsliden from him, I will look to God in Christ to pardon my sin, give me repentance, and restore me, according to his promises,

Acts

Acts v. 31. Hof. xiv. 4. Jer. iii. 1. 12. 13. 14. 22. Thus I resolve, that all my sinfulness and wretchedness shall not drive me from God, but to him, Psal. lxxv. 3. and li. 11. and xxxii. 5. 6. 1 John ii. 1. 2. 1 Kings viii. 33.—53. with ix. 3. Lev. xxvi. 41. Hof. xiv. 1. 2. Jer. iii. 1. Luke xvii. 4. Is. lv. 7. 9.

FROM, Acts vi. 4. 7. I perceived, that I must *pray much* as well as *preach much*, if I wished to convert many souls to Christ; as it was, when the apostles *gave themselves to the ministry of the word and to prayer*, that a *great company of the priests*, who were the chiefest opposers of the gospel, and persecutors and murderers of Christ, were *made obedient to the faith*.—In many other instances, the Lord, by his word, encouraged and directed me under my troubles and difficulties, spiritual and temporal; and, sometimes, gave me remarkably distinct and speedy answers to my prayers.

HAVING been religiously educated, and having had no very remarkable law-work, I was troubled, lest I should never have been truly converted to God. I therefore frequently applied myself to examine, by the word of God, whether I had those graces, dispositions, and operations in my heart, which are there promised, and to which promises of salvation are annexed.

I WAS satisfied, that *I believed in Christ*; because, (1.) I found my soul drawn and *coming to Christ*, and thankfully *receiving him*, as offered in the gospel,
in

in all his offices;—and *trusting* and resting on him for righteousness, grace, and life, John vi. 35. and i. 12. Eph. i. 13. (2.) My faith is founded in the word of God *alone*, John xvii. 20. and v. 24. (3.) It renders Christ and all his concerns *precious* to me, 1 Pet. ii. 7. Phil. i. 20. 21. 29. and iii. 8. Heb. xi. 25. 26.—And I saw, that since I believed, my sins were certainly pardoned, notwithstanding all remaining sinfulness, and challenges of conscience on account of it, Acts x. 43. 1 John i. 9. If. i. 16. 17. 18. 19. Heb. viii. 10. 12. Psal. lxxv. 3. Rom. vii. 23. 24. 25. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. 29. Acts xiii. 38. 39.—And being persuaded that my sins were forgiven, I saw that this should make me, (1.) Thankful to God, Psal. ciii. 1. 2. 3. (2.) To admire God, Mic. vii. 18. 19. (3.) More fearful of offending God, Psal. cxxx. 4. and lxxxv. 8. (4.) To love God much, Luke vii. 42. 43. 47. (5.) To glorify God, and let him have the dominion over my soul, Rev. i. 5. 6. (6.) To be cheerful amidst all the troubles of this present life, Matth. ix. 2. If. xxxiii. 24. (7.) To forgive others readily and heartily, Eph. iv. 32. Col. iii. 13. (8.) To be willing to be employed in any service for God, If. vi. 7. 8.

I FOUND that I was *united to* and *interested in* Jesus Christ, since. (1.) I had, and do truly believe in Christ, John xvii. 20. 21. (2.) I had been effectually called out of darkness into God's marvellous light, 1 Cor. i. 9. 26. 30. (3.) Notwithstanding my remaining corruption, I *walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh*, Rom. viii. 1. 4. (4.) I find, that I have the fruits and language of his

his Spirit dwelling in me, Gal. v. 22. 23. and iv. 6. with 1 John iii. 24. (5.) I am essaying to crucify my corrupt lusts and affections, Gal. v. 24. 19. 20. 21. Rom. vi. 6. (6.) I desire and endeavour to keep Christ's word, 1 John ii. 5.—And being in Christ, I am free from condemnation, Rom. viii. 1. assured of eternal glory, Col. i. 17. 1 John v. 12. interested in Christ's wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30 ; and hence, in all spiritual and heavenly blessings, Eph. i. 3.; being complete in him, however imperfect in myself, Col. ii. 10.

I FIND that *God is my God*; for, (1.) I am in covenant with him by faith, Heb. viii. 10. with If. lv. 3. (2.) My heart is engaged to him, Jer. xxx. 21. 22. (3.) I am one of his servants, If. xli. 9. 10. (4.) His law is in my heart, and I delight to do it, Jer. xxxi. 33. Psal. xl. 8. (5.) I have that fear of him, which manifests itself in eschewing and departing from evil, Job i. 1. Prov. xvi. 6. (6.) I choose the Lord for my God, Psal. xvi. 2, and voluntarily give up myself to him, to obey his voice, and keep his ways, Deut. xxvi. 17. 18. 19. Jer. vii. 23. (7.) I am willing to leave all earthly enjoyments at his call, Heb. xi. 13. 14. 15. 16. And, since God is my God, he will hear my prayers, Mic. vii. 7. be present with me in all conditions, If. xlii. 1. 2. 3. and never cast me off, Jer. li. 5. Supply all my wants, Psal. xxiii. 1. strengthen and assist me in all my services and sufferings, If. xli. 10. pardon all my sins, Mic. vii. 17. 18. 19. and be my God and guide for ever, Psal. xlviii. 14. And I charge myself

to *walk humbly* with him, Mic. vi. 8.; to *seek him early*, Psal. lxiii. 1.; to *praise and exalt* him, Psal. cxviii. 28.; to *love* him above all, with all my heart, Deut. vi. 5.; to *turn* to him, whenever I depart from him, Hos. xiv. 1. and xii. 6.; to *trust* in him continually, Psal. xviii. 2. and xci. 2. and xxxi. 13. 14. and xlii. 11. 1 Sam. xxx. 4. 6.

I FIND that *God loveth me*; for, (1.) He hath drawn me to Christ, Jer. xxxi. 3. John vi. 44. (2.) He hath given me faith, John xvii. 20. 23. (3.) He hath given me an heart to love him, and his Son Jesus Christ, Prov. viii. 17. 1 John iv. 19. John xiv. 21. and xvi. 27. (4.) A principle of spiritual life is infused into my soul, by which I live to God, Ezek. xvi. 6. 8. Eph. ii. 4. 5. (5.) He hath caused me to follow after righteousness, Psal. cxlvi. 8. Prov. xv. 9.—And, my comfort in this is, that it is an everlasting love, Jer. xxxi. 3. John xiii. 1.; and nothing shall separate me from it, Rom. viii. 38. 39. No not my sins, Psal. lxxxix. 30.—34. Is. liv. 8. 9. 10. Let me admire and adore this love, 1 John iii. 1.

I FIND that God accepteth my services; for, (1.) I have joined myself to the Lord Christ in love and service, Is. lvi. 6. 7. (2.) In obedience to Christ's command, I labour to promote righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17. 18. Acts x. 35. (3.) I endeavoured to serve him faithfully, and with love to my neighbour, Gen. iv. 7. Matth. xxv. 23. Jam. ii. 8.

I FIND that *I ſhall inherit eternal life*; for,
 (1.) God hath given me an heart to believe in
 Chriſt, John iii. 16. (2.) Notwithſtanding all
 my imperfections, I am in covenant with God,
 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. If. lv. 3. (3.) My coming to
 Chriſt manifeſts that I was given to him, John
 vi. 37. 44. 65. with John xvii. 2. 9. 10. (4.) I
 have been made to hear Chriſt's voice and follow
 him, in looking to him, coming to him, &c. John
 x. 27. 28. 29. Pſal. xxiii. 2. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 25. (5.) He
 hath given me an heart inclined to walk upright-
 ly, Pſal. lxxxiv. 11. If. lvii. 2.—And as God hath
 given me *good hope, through grace*, of eternal life,
 I reſolve, in his ſtrength, (1.) To bleſs and praiſe
 him for this mercy, 1 Pet. i. 3. 4. Col. i. 12. 13.
 (2.) Daily to mortify uncleannels, inordinate af-
 fections, evil concupiſcence, covetouſneſs, and
 all other ſins, Col. iii. 4. 5. (3.) To behave to-
 wards all men, eſpecially my near relations, as an
 heir of eternal life, 1 Pet. iii. 7. (4.) To walk
 worthy of the Lord, 1 Theſſ. ii. 12. Eph. iv. 1.
 2. 3. Col. i. 10. (5.) To purify my heart, words,
 and works, as God is pure, 1 John iii. 3. Matth.
 v. 8. Eph. iv. 29. Zeph. iii. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 1. 2.
 (6.) To ſerve him in a gracious manner, Heb.
 xii. 28. (7.) Not to fear the want of outward
 things, or them who can only kill the body, Luke
 xii. 4. 31. 32. (8.) To rejoice in hope of eternal
 glory amidſt worldly troubles, Rom. v. 2. 3. 1 Pet.
 i. 3. 6. (9.) To keep the full aſſurance of my
 hope firm unto the end, Heb. vi. 10. 11.

HE died, September 10. 1680, exhorting and
 encouraging thoſe around him to ſerious reli-
 gion,

gion, and suffering for it ; avowing his conscientious nonconformity to prelacy ; blessing God for his invaluable gift of Jesus Christ to sinful men ; blessing God for calling him to the office of the ministry, and enabling him to some measure of faithfulness in it, and encouraging him, with his presence and blessing, under all the difficulties of it ;—and for now lifting him above all the fears of death :—and rejoicing in the testimony of a good conscience, and in hope of the glory of God.

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The CHRISTIAN, the STUDENT,
and PASTOR,

E X E M P L I F I E D;

In the LIVES of
Several Eminent DIVINES.



FIFTHLY, Memoirs of the Reverend Mr
MATTHEW HENRY, late Minister of
the Gospel at Hackney, ^{near} London.

BEING born in 1662, a few weeks after
his father had been driven from his charge
by the Prelatists, he was very carefully trained
up in the ways of God. When but three years
of age, he could have read a chapter of the bible,
and made observations on it. He dates his con-
version from the 10th year of his age, by means
of a sermon on Psal. li. 17. *The sacrifices of God
are a broken heart: a broken and contrite heart, O
God, thou wilt not despise.* In the 11th year of his
age, after hearing a sermon on the marks of true
grace, we find him solemnly examining himself,
whether he had these marks? whether he had
cordially given up himself to God on such parti-
cular occasions? whether he had experienced a
true repentance, and godly sorrow for his sins?
and whether he loved God, and his word, and
people?

people? In 1675, we find him taking a solemn and particular review of the mercies which he had received from God, spiritual and temporal.

IN 1682, he drew up for himself a memorial of God's mercies, in order to solemn and daily thanksgiving; that, (1.) He had a rational, immortal soul, capable of serving God here, and enjoying him hereafter. (2.) Had the exercise of his rational faculties continued in their primitive, nay advanced to greater vigour and activity. (3.) He had all his senses. (4.) Had a body compleat in all its parts. (5.) Had been curiously framed, nourished, and preserved in the womb. (6.) Had been safely brought forth by a living mother, though a midwife could not be had. (7.) That, without his pains or care, he had been provided with food and raiment, even for ornament and delight. (8.) He had enjoyed a great measure of health, even when infectious diseases raged around. (9.) His sickness had been moderate, and soon removed, when his brother and companion died. (10.) He had been protected from many dangers, by night and day; particularly in travelling. (11.) He had had comfortable accommodations, as to lodging, fuel, and had been a stranger to the wants of many thousands in that kind. (12.) He was born to a competent estate in the world, enabling him *to give, rather than receive*. (13.) He had so great comfort in his parents, sisters, and other relations. (14.) Had had a liberal education; and, by the blessing of God, had made some progress in knowledge. (15.) Had been born in a place and

time of gospel light; had the scriptures, and means of understanding them, and a heart which delighted in the study of them. (16.) Had been enabled to behave himself so, as to gain a share in the love and prayers of God's people. (17.) Had been early devoted to God in baptism. (18.) Had enjoyed an early religious education, in the good knowledge of God. (19.) Had been endowed with a considerable gift of prayer. (20.) Had been inclined to devote himself to the work of the ministry, if it should please God to use him. (21.) Had enjoyed so many means of grace, and so much communion with God in them. (22.) Had reason to believe he had been chosen of God from eternity, effectually called, and would be at last glorified. (23.) Had had some sight of the majesty of God, the sweetness of Christ, the evil of sin, the worth of his soul, the vanity of this world, and the reality and importance of invisible things. (24.) Had been guided in doubts, guarded in danger, succoured in temptation, pardoned under guilt, heard and answered in prayer, and had afflictions sanctified; and all by divine grace. (25.) That all these were but the earnest, and pledges, of better and eternal mercies. (26.) For Jesus Christ, the fountain and foundation of all his mercies.

WHEN he was employed in the study of law at *Grays Inn*, it appears, from a letter of his to an intimate companion, that he had laid down for himself a set of scripture truths; the firm practical belief of which mightily influenced the order of his conversation. (1.) That *all things are*
noted

naked and open to him with whom we have to do, Heb. iv. 13. (2.) That *our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, continually, seeking whom he may devour,* 1 Pet. v. 8. (3.) That *the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly,* Tit. ii. 11. 12. (4.) That *Jesus Christ died, to deliver us from this present evil world,* Gal. i. 4. (5.) That *we are not under the law, but under grace,* Rom. vi. 14. (6.) That *the soul is the man; and that is best for us, which is best for our souls,* Matth. xvi. 26. (7.) That *we have here no continuing city,* Heb. xiii. 14. (8.) That *man in his best estate is altogether vanity,* Psal. xxxix. 5. (9.) That *God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil,* Eccl. xii. 14. (10.) That *the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord,* Rom. vi. 23.—And in subordination to these, — particular truths, answerable to the temptations, duties, or meditations of the day. Hereby, says he, a good stock of truths might be treasured up against a time of need; and we might be able to bring forth *things new and old,* for the benefit of others.—Christians, that owe their all to Christ, should be often talking of him; and, surely, those that know the worth of souls, cannot but be concerned for their ignorant careless neighbours;—which concern should make us do all that we can, to help them out of that condition.

In the view of his ordination to the ministry, 1687, he solemnly examined himself upon the six

following questions: (1.) *What am I?*—Have I ever been inwardly convinced of my lost and undone condition by nature?—Have I been deeply humbled before the Lord for my original sin, and actual transgressions?—Have I sincerely closed with the Lord Jesus alone, as my Saviour, by a true and lively faith?—Have I a real hatred of every sin, in myself as well as in others;—having no beloved lusts which I would have spared?—Have I a real love to holiness, and earnestly use holy ordinances, that I may thereby be made more and more holy? (2.) *What have I done?* What precious time have I mispent in folly and vanity?—How many precious opportunities of grace have I lost, and left unimproved, through my carelessness?—How often have I broken my solemn engagements to God, and resolutions against sin?—How unprofitable have I been in my converse with others?—How forgetful have I been of God and his word, and of the great concerns of my soul and eternity? (3.) *From what principles do I act in entering on the ministerial office?*—It is from faith of Christ's appointment of the office of the ministry, and calling me, however weak in myself, to it.—It is from zeal for the glory of God.—It is from real love to precious souls; for the good of which, I would gladly spend and be spent.—I would think it a greater happiness to gain one soul to the Lord Jesus Christ, than to gain mountains of silver and gold to myself. (4.) *What ends do I aim at, in this great undertaking?*—I do not design to take up the ministry as a trade to live or enrich myself by;—or to get myself a name among men;—

or to maintain a party: if my blood could be sufficient balsam, I would gladly part with the last drop of it, for healing the differences that are among true Christians. But I aim at the glory of Jesus Christ, and of God in him, as my chief end, and at the good of precious souls in subordination to it.—*I had rather beg my bread from door to door, than be an unprofitable minister with hundreds a-year.* (5.) *What do I desire from the God of all grace?* It is, that he would fix and establish my heart, in my dedication of myself to the work of the ministry;—that, in the ordinance of dedication, he would fill my heart with such an experimental sense of the excellency of Christ, and the comforts of the Holy Ghost, as may be a token of his presence, and earnest of my success in the work;—that he would qualify me with ministerial gifts and graces; particularly, faith, love, zeal, patience, sincerity, and humility;—and that he would open a door of opportunity, and bless and succeed my endeavours in the ministerial work. (6.) *What do I, by the grace of God, and in the strength of Christ, resolve on for the future?* It is, to have no more to do with the unfruitful works of darkness;—to abound more than ever in all manner of gospel-obedience;—to strive to be more humble, serious, watchful, self-denying, heavenly-minded, lively in prayer, reading, or spiritual discourses;—to consider well, and endeavour to perform, my ordination vows;—and never to let go any truth, whatever it may cost me; ever owning the scripture, as the *only* rule of faith and practice;—and wholly to give up myself to the work of the ministry, and employ

ploy all my talents, in the service of God and souls, with seriousness and diligence ;—preaching and defending the truths of God ;—promoting peace and unity in the church, and thankfully accepting of the admonitions of my brethren.

WHILE in his family, Mr Henry, every evening and morning, read and expounded part of the scripture, sung psalms, and prayed ; and, on the Lord's day, added prayer and singing of psalms at noon ; and the repetition of the two sermons, catechising of children and servants, and calling them to give account of what they had heard ; he was no less diligent in his public ministry. Some of his labours were constant ; as to expound twice, and preach twice, every Lord's day ;—a lecture, and a diet of catechising, every week ; the celebration of the Lord's supper on the first sabbath of every month ; a congregational fast every quarter of a-year ;—together with several forms of religious conferences with the younger, or more aged part of his flock. Some of them were occasional ; as fasts,—and thanksgivings,—visiting the sick,—visiting and preaching to the prisoners, till he was prohibited ;—reformation-sermons,—lectures in places without the bounds of his congregation ;—ordinations, or meetings of ministers ;—yearly journeys to visit the churches, all around him, for about thirty miles, &c ; to which may be added, his composing of his large *commentary on the Bible*, and other works.

EXCEPT when the particular aspect of providence

dence called him off from it, he used to methodize his sermons. After a set of sermons on the *sinfulness and misery of a natural state*, and another upon *true conversion*, and the *evidences* thereof, he, from twenty different texts, laid down directions for the *right ordering of the conversation*. Next followed a course of sermons, on the covenant of grace, from thirty-eight texts, representing *God, Christ, and the Spirit*, in their covenant-characters, and the *blessings* which they bestow.—These were followed with sermons on sanctification, directing what should be *put off*, or *put on*, as contrary to it, from forty texts; representing the *ordinances of God's worship*, and opportunities and manner of it, from about twenty different texts;—and our *duty, to Christ the Mediator*, of worship, and to *our neighbours*, from about twenty other texts;—and representing the *reasonableness of being truly religious*, from seventeen different texts;—and the *causes why so few are truly religious*, from fourteen others.—He next proceeded to a *body of divinity concerning God*;—the *word of God*;—the *works of God*;—the *angels*;—*man*;—*sin and misery*;—*redemption by Jesus Christ*;—who is considered in his *names, natures, offices, and estates*;—the *application of redemption*;—the *divine law*, in its nature, uses, requirements, prohibitions, and reasons;—*faith and repentance*;—*gospel ordinances*;—the *church*;—and the *four last things*, death, judgment, heaven, and hell:—all these, from about three hundred and eighty different texts. In this manner he proceeded, from 1687 to 1710.—In his sacramental sermons, he discoursed upon the *sufferings of Christ*,
the

the *ends* thereof, and our *proper improvement* of them, from about thirty or forty different texts;—upon the *marks of hypocrisy*, and contrary *marks of sincerity*,—together with *cautions*, and *comforts*, respecting our spiritual estate, from thirty-five others;—upon *penitent reflections*, and *pious resolutions*, set the one over against the other, from twenty-four texts;—and upon the *promises*, from forty-four texts.—His weekly lectures were on Heb. xi. Hof. xiv.; and then, for twenty years, from 1692, to 1712, on *scripture-questions*.

His great value of time, his prayerfulness, his observation of providences, and his frequent solemn dedication of himself to God, mightily promoted his uncommon diligence and zeal in the service of Christ. From his childhood, he despised and disliked the common diversions of youth. As he grew in years, his esteem for precious time increased.—He was often in his study by four or five o'clock in the morning.—Notwithstanding the pleasure he took in the company of his friends, he often complains, that *friends are the thieves of our time*; and severely reflects on himself, for suffering himself to be unnecessarily diverted from his delightful studies.—After very agreeable conversation with some friends, he says, *I would not for any thing live such a life for a few days together. I am alway best when alone; no place like my own study; no company like good books, and especially the book of God.* Often he repeated David's wish, *O that I had wings like a dove! for then I would fly away and be at rest.* After a mixed conversation, for a whole day, to little.

little advantage, he writes, *I look on this as a lost day. Lord forgive my trifling: I would rather preach twice every day in the week, than spend another day so unprofitably.*

HE had both the gifts, and the grace of prayer, in a very uncommon measure; and this duty was the delight of his soul.—He not only abounded in supplications for his family and friends, but had recourse to God, with great freedom, about all his concerns; no journey undertaken, without a particular address to God about it; no subject, or course of sermons entered upon, but God was sought to for counsel, assistance, and success; no book sent to the press, but first recommended to God in prayer. Thus, beside many particular occasions set apart for more solemn supplications, he daily conversed with God, as a child with his father; and had very remarkable returns of prayer, which made his work easy, and strengthened him with strength in his soul.

HE was a most careful observer of the providences of God, with respect to himself, in soul or body, labours or circumstances; and with respect to his family, his friends, or nation, or the church of God. And, answerably thereto, exercised himself in lamentation, thanksgiving, and supplication to God. For several years, he observed the anniversary day of any remarkable afflictive providence, relating to himself or family, in solemn humiliation;—and of signal mercies, in thankful praise, and in serious prayer, that the sanctifying fruits of it might still remain,

and increase. On his birth-day, he used solemnly to review his preceding life, with proper and humble reflections. *On October 18. 1691. he says,* " This day I am 29 years old; so long deprived from the grave, so long living altogether upon God, but little to him; so many years mercy, and so many years sin put upon the score. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ, whose blood is that, and that only, which balanceth the account. *In 1692, I am this day 30 years, and am now reflecting upon a life of great mercy, and of great provocations.—So many years not lived, but lost.*" *In 1696,* " This day completes the 34th year of my age. I have endeavoured, this morning, to get my heart affected with the sin in which I was born, and with the sins of my life hitherto; and with the mercy of my birth, and the mercies of my life.—The Lord enable me to live a life of repentance, and a life of thankfulness." *In 1697,* " I was affected this morning, when alone, in thinking, What I was born? A rational creature; an helpless creature; a sinful creature. Where I was born? In the church of God; in a land of light; in a house of prayer. What I was born for? To glorify God, and prepare for heaven." *In 1698,—*" I have now weathered about 36 years; so long have I cumbered the ground, and yet I am still spared.—I admire the patience of God, and wonder at my own folly; that, being upon the brink of an awful eternal state, I am so little affected with it. Lord teach me with a strong hand." *In 1701,—*" I have finished the 39th year of my pilgrimage; and, having help of God, I continue hitherto,

hitherto, knowing whom I have trusted, and trusting whom I know. The greatest comfort of my life has been, that God hath been pleased to use me for his service; and my greatest grief, that I have been so little serviceable to him.”—*In 1702*, “This day has finished the 40th year of my life; nay, rather of my sloth and folly, but of the mercy, kindness, and long-suffering of God towards me. I acknowledge myself debtor to Jesus Christ, for all the supports, helps, and comforts of my life. And I trust in him alone, for the remission of all my sins, grace to help in time of need, and preservation to eternal life.” *In 1703*,—“How many days have run over, empty and useless on my side, and of which I ought to be ashamed; but all full of the mercy and kindness of God.”—*In another year*,—“I breathe by the favour of God; I hope in his mercy; I pant for his glory.”—“I have found God very gracious;—ready to hear prayer: I have found the world exceeding vain, and altogether unfit to be my happiness. My heart I have found to be deceitful, and prone to sin. Let me, therefore, always have my God in the highest esteem, the world in the greatest contempt, and my heart under watch and guard.”

He also assigned the last day of December, for a solemn review of the past year; and, for lamentation, thanksgiving, and prayer, as he found cause. *In 1691, he observes*, “I am come to the close of another year, but my works have not been filled up, many empty spaces in my time, and in my duties; much amiss, little done, little

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gained

gained for my soul; much mercy received, but many talents not traded with aright. It is the blood of Christ that must set all straight between me and my God: there I rest my precious soul." *As, in 1699*, God had removed many of his friends and relations by death. We find him severely afflicting his soul, and pleading for mercy and grace to himself, that while he preached to others, he himself might not be a cast-away;—for direction, strength, and success, in his ministerial work;—for the staying of God's controversies with him and his family;—for the sanctification of the breaches which had been made;—for the beheaded families, their widows, and fatherless, &c. In his fast 1701, we find him bewailing the strength of his corruptions, and weakness of his graces;—and that he was still full of vain thoughts, and empty of good ones;—his great loss of precious time; his manifold defects in his ministerial work; his coldness in prayer; obscurity and unconcern, in speaking of the things of God;—the little success of his ministry that year; the low condition of the church of God;—and praying for the pardon of his sins,—victory over his corruptions and temptations, and for the increase of his ministerial gifts, and success of his labours.

Not only did he renew his solemn acceptance of God's covenant, at the Lord's table, on the first Sabbath of every month, and on other remarkable occasions; but, as he ended the year with solemn humiliation and thanksgiving, he began the next with a deliberate and solemn resignation of himself,

self, and all his concerns, to God, through Christ; a few instances of which shall be selected. *In* 1703, "I have made a fresh surrender of all I am, all I have, and all I can do, to God, Father; Son, and Holy Ghost;—all my affections to be ruled by the divine grace, and all my affairs overruled by the divine providence.—If this year should be a year of continued health and comfort, I commit myself to the grace of God, to be preserved from carnal security; and to be enabled, in a day of prosperity, to serve God with joy.—If my opportunities, as a minister, should be this year continued, I commit my studies and labours to the blessing of God;—desiring mercy of the Lord to be faithful and successful.—If I should be this year tried with doubts, concerning my duty, I commit myself to the divine direction;—resolving, by his grace, to follow it in the integrity of my heart.—If I should this year be afflicted in my body, family, name, or estate, I commit my ALL to the divine disposal;—only begging, that the grace of God may go along with all my afflictions, to enable me to bear them well, and use them well.—If I should be disturbed, or molested, in the exercise of my ministry, or otherwise suffer for well-doing, I commit the keeping of my soul to God, as a faithful Creator; that he may direct, preserve, support, and comfort me under my sufferings, and bring glory to himself out of them.—If this year should be my dying year, I commit my spirit into the hands of my Redeemer, to be washed with his blood, and presented in his arms with exceeding joy: and my wife and children I commit to him, to be

owned, blessed, and preserved by him, when I am gone." *In 1704*,—"Acknowledging my continued dependence upon God; as my Creator, preserver, and chief good, and my continued obligations to him in duty, as my Lord and ruler, and in interest, as my benefactor and preserver;—relying upon the mediation and everlasting righteousness of my dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who loved me, and gave himself for me;—and submitting my soul to the operation and influences of the blessed Spirit of grace, without which I am nothing, and can do nothing;—thankfully owning God's goodness to me the last year, —and lamenting my own foolishness and shortcomings;—I, in the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ, on which alone I depend to work all my work, in me and for me, covenant,—to walk closely with God in all holy conversation;—to keep my heart with all diligence; and to thee, O my God, I commit the keeping of it;—to take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; and do thou, Lord, set a watch before the door of my lips;—to redeem my time; and to thee, O God, I consecrate this year, and all the hours of it. The Lord enable me to fill it up with good, according as the duty of every day requires. I bind myself to follow the Spirit of God, in all my affections, and the providence of God in all my affairs."—*In 1711*,—"Finding my God still gracious, but my heart still treacherous, I devote myself afresh unto the Lord.—What work I have to do for thee this year, O my God, I depend on thy grace, throughly to furnish me for it, and to work all my works in me;—particularly,

ly, to assist me in the great work of my *Expositions*.

—What troubles and afflictions may befall me this year, I depend on the grace of God to sanctify them to me; and to enable me to bear them like a Christian, and to honour God under them.

—Whatever my temptations may be, I depend on the grace of God to discover them to me,—to arm me against them, and to save me from being overcome by them.—And, if this be my dying year, I depend on the grace of God, to make me ready for another world, and to receive me to glory.”

HE died of an apoplectic fit, June 22. 1714. One of his last sayings was, *A life spent in the service of God, and communion with him, is the most comfortable and pleasant life that any one can live in this world.* Another was, *I have been often wearied with my work, but never weary of it.*

The CHRISTIAN, the STUDENT;
and PASTOR,

E X E M P L E R I E D.

In the LIVES of
Several Eminent DIVINES.

SIXTHLY, Memoirs of the Reverend Mr
PHILIP DODDRIDGE, late minister
of the Gospel at Northampton.

BEING born in London, 1702, he had the
advantage of a most religious education, and
appears to have been very early converted to
Christ. Notwithstanding the death of his pa-
rents, and several other discouragements, the
Lord opened a door for his education for the mi-
nistry. While he earnestly pursued his studies,
he spent much time in secret devotion; exami-
ning the state and workings of his own heart, and
keeping alive an habitual sense of God, religion,
and eternity in it; and solemnly devoting himself
to God. He laid down for himself, the follow-
ing rules. (1.) To rise early, and begin the day
with devout and thankful thoughts; and then
proceed to more solemn thanksgiving, self-dedi-
cation, and prayer for God's assistance, in the
work of the day. (2.) In acts of devotion, to
study

study the utmost attention to his work, and to speak directly to God. (3.) Every morning to read the scriptures, endeavouring to impress his heart with a sense of divine truth; and then use the help of commentaries: and much the same in the evening. (4.) Never to trifle with a book, with which he had no present concern; but look up to God for assistance in perusal of books; and to endeavour to make all his studies subservient to practical religion, and ministerial usefulness. (5.) Never to lose one minute of time, or incur any unnecessary expences, that he might have the more to spend for God. (6.) When called to be abroad, to be always desirous of doing, or receiving good;—having in readiness some subject of contemplation, to afford him good thoughts by the way;—and, in company, rendering himself agreeable and useful to all; avoiding all trifling and impertinent stories. (7.) To use great moderation at meals, and be sincere and earnest in prayers and thanksgivings at them. (8.) Never to delay any thing, unless he could prove that another time would be more fit than the present, or that some more important duty required his attendance. (9.) To be often lifting up his heart to God, in the intervals of secret worship, repeating his most important petitions, and surrendering himself to his service. (10.) Never to enter into long schemes about future events, but refer himself to God's care. (11.) To study habitual gratitude to Jesus Christ, and God in him;—and practise self-denial; never indulging any thing that may tempt to youthful lusts;—and guard against pride, and vain-glory, remembering

ing that he had all from God ; and that, in himself, he deserved the severest punishment. (12.) In all his studies, to remember, that mens souls are immortal ; and that Christ died to redeem them. (13.) To consecrate his sleep, and all his recreations, to God ; and to seek them for his sake. (14.) Frequently to ask himself, What duty or temptation was now before him ? (15.) To view himself, as, through the mercy of God in Christ, within a few days of heaven. (16.) To keep these rules in view ; and frequently examine his behaviour by them.

BEING, in the 20th year of his age, settled in a small congregation at Kibworth, a country-village, one of his friends lamented to him, that he was buried alive. No, replied he, “ Here I stick close to those delightful studies, which a favourable providence hath made the business of my life.—I live *like a prince* ; not indeed in the *pomp of greatness*, but in the *pride of liberty* : master of my books, master of my time ; and, I hope I may add, master of myself ;—retired from applause and reproach, from envy and contempt, and the destructive baits of avarice and ambition.—It is my happiness, that I am confined to an obscure village ; seeing it gives me so many valuable advantages to the most important purposes, of devotion, philosophy, and usefulness.—Here he composed his public discourses, with the utmost care and exactness ; and thus contracted an habit of preaching judiciously. And being obliged, through penury of his own, to borrow from his hearers the practical books which they had,

had, he was, by reading of these, led into a serious, experimental, and useful way of preaching.—In his devotional exercises at this time, he says, “ I fear my discourse to-day was too abstruse for my hearers. I resolve to labour after great plainness and seriousness; and to bring down my preaching to the understandings of the weakest.”

To the rules he had formerly prescribed for his conduct, he now added, (1.) To spend some extraordinary time in devotion, every morning or evening of the Lord's day; and endeavour to preach over to his own soul, that doctrine which he preached to others. (2.) To spend another half hour more every week, in like exercise, on such other subjects as should appear most suitable. (3.) To call himself to account, at the end of every week and month, how he had improved his time; and to try whether he had gained or lost ground, in practical religion. (4.) When he had any more than ordinary affairs before him, or met with any peculiar mercy or affliction, to set apart some time to consider it, and seek God upon it. (5.) To set apart some time, every *Friday evening*, to pray for such as had recommended themselves to his prayers; and with respect to public concerns.

His preaching of his sermons over to himself, was after this manner: July 23. 1727, “ I this day preached concerning *Christ as the Physician* of souls, from Jer. viii. 22.; and having addressed such Christians, as through neglect of the go-
spel-

-spel-remedy, are in a bad state of spiritual health, I find, upon a serious review, that I am of that number.—God knows, that my remaining distempers are the great afflictions of my life: such an affliction, that methinks, if I were free from it, any worldly circumstances would be more tolerable, and even more delightful, than that full flow of prosperity, by which I am so often ensnared and injured. I know Christ is able to help me, and restore me to more perfect health than I have ever yet attained: and my experience of his power and grace, is a shameful aggravation of my negligence. Therefore, with shame and sorrow for my former indifference and folly, I would now seriously attempt a reformation. (1.) By carefully examining the constitution, and particular distempers of my soul. (2.) By applying to Christ as my physician, to heal my distempers, and restore me to greater vigour in his service. (3.) By praying for the influences of his healing Spirit, to produce in me greater devotion, humility, diligence, gravity, purity, and steadiness of resolution. (4.) By earnest waiting on him in prayer, study of the scriptures, the Lord's supper, and other appointed means of healing souls.—And as a minister, though I have endeavoured to speak the most important truths, with all possible plainness and seriousness,—I fear, (1.) I have not followed them, sufficiently, with domestic and personal exhortations. (2.) I have not been sufficiently careful, to pray for the success of my ministerial labours. (3.) I have lived so, as to forfeit those influences of thy Spirit, by which they might have been rendered

dered more effectual.—I therefore resolve, to be more close in applying to them in their own houses;—to pray for them more frequently;—and take care to avoid every thing which may provoke thy Spirit to withdraw himself from my ministrations. Such caution may I always maintain: and O may the health of my people be recovered!

NOVEMBER 12. 1727. I preached this day from these words: *I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.* I endeavoured to fix upon unconverted sinners the charge of *not loving God*; and described at large, the character of the Christian, in the several expressions of that affection. My own heart condemned me of being deficient in many of them. I humbled myself deeply before God; and, in his strength, resolved, (1.) To endeavour to think of God more frequently than I had done, and to make the thoughts of him familiar to my mind. (2.) To labour after communion with him, in every act of devotion; and, in order to this, to recollect my thoughts before I begin, watch over my heart in the duty, and consider afterwards how I have succeeded. (3.) To pray for conformity to God, and endeavour to imitate him. (4.) To rejoice in his government of the world; and regard his interposition in all my personal concerns. (5.) To pray for zeal in my master's interests; and to make the advancement of his glory, the great end of every action. (6.) To cultivate a peculiar affection to *Christians, as such.* (7.) To study God's will, and endeavour to practise every duty. (8.) To watch
diligently

diligently against every thing which may provoke God's displeasure against me.

HE was remarkably careful to redeem his time: and with this view, notwithstanding his frail constitution, rose generally at five o'clock; and to this he ascribed the progress he had made in learning; observing, that two hours redeemed every morning were worth ten years in forty, for study and devotion. It was an heavy burden to his mind, when he made any unnecessary visits, or had not introduced profitable discourse as he might.—To prevent waste of time, he, at the beginning of the year, laid down a plan of books to be read, and business to be pursued;—of discourses to be composed, and of methods to be taken to promote religion in his congregation. In the end of every month, he reviewed the execution of his plan, and set himself to rectify what defects he found; and made such alterations in his plan, as circumstances required. On his *birth-day*, and *new-year's day*, he solemnly reviewed his whole conduct of the preceeding year, with humiliation and thanksgiving, as he had failed or succeeded; and with solemn dedication of himself to God. Before he went to visit his friends, or set off on a journey, he spent some time in considering what opportunities he might have of doing good, that he might be prepared to improve them: and to what temptations he might be exposed, that he might be armed against them. And, on his return, he examined his behaviour.—He also observed the annual re-
turn

turn of his *ordination-day*, with peculiar solemnity, in secret devotion.

He was exceedingly careful to know the spiritual state of his people, that he might address them in a proper manner, in public or private. Preaching of Christ was the delight of his soul; and he was remarkable for an holy fervour in it. "While, *saith he*, I have any reverence for scripture, or any knowledge of human nature, I shall never affect to speak of the glories of Christ, and of the eternal interests of men, as coldly as if I were reading a lecture of mathematics, or relating an experiment in natural philosophy." Notwithstanding his labours in teaching an academy, from 1729 and afterwards, he constantly preached twice every Lord's day, if his health permitted; and, when he had occasional assistance, he preached in the evening. After he came to Northampton that year, he had also a religious exercise every *Friday evening*. He had an extraordinary gift in prayer, cultivated with great diligence; and, upon particular, as well as common occasions, expressed himself with ease, freedom, variety, and solid judgment. He was careful to separate from the church those that were a reproach to their Christian profession; and used to keep a congregational fast on such occasions. It affected him much, when few, or none of his hearers, appeared to be under serious impressions, or there was a visible coldness and remissness among them. And *days of prayer* were set apart by the congregation, to wrestle with God for a reviving effusion of his spirit among them.

them. He had a deep concern, and affectionate regard, for the *rising generation*. This he manifested, in his frequent discourses and addresses to them;—in his diligent catechising of them;—and in his forming them into societies for prayer and religious conference; and in establishing a *charity-school*, for the instruction of the poor. Besides his own pastoral visitation of his people, from house to house, he caused his ruling elders visit and pray with the sick, and converse with, admonish, and exhort others; particularly the candidates for admission to the Lord's table. His affection to his people was exceeding fervent. His great concern was, to do *as much service* for them, and be as *little burdensome* to them, as possible. In the greater part of them he had much comfort, and rejoiced over them in the Lord. Some of them proved trials to him; but God so blessed these, for rendering him more humble, more watchful, and mortified to the world; and so balanced them with delightful effusions of his love, that he considered them as singular mercies to him.

IN the management of his academy, his principal aim was, to lead his pupils into a practical knowledge of Christ. Being of a most affectionate disposition, he reckoned the enjoyment of his friends as a delightful foretaste of the heavenly happiness; and his experience of the snares and afflictions which arose even from friendship, increased his desire of that perfect state. Mens being of a different party from him, or holding some principles contrary to his own, or their being blemished with several faults and imprudencies, did

did not hinder his estimation of, or regard to them, according to what real excellencies he thought they possessed. He was bent on contriving, or helping forward, every scheme he could think calculated for promoting the salvation of souls. His peaceableness, benevolence, affability, public spirit, and liberality,—his humility, and dependence on God's assistance,—his patience, serenity, and cheerfulness, under afflictions,—his calmness under no small persecution of tongues, even when promoted by some of his own pupils, were remarkable.

HE was much given to secret prayer; and formed, for his assistance herein, a plan of things to be particularly concerned about, on the several days of the week;—and for managing devotions,—business,—recreations,—merciful providences,—afflictive events,—temptations,—grace,—thoughts,—discourse,—evangelical views,—and things to be avoided,—or examined,—relations,—friends;—persons in the congregations unconverted, awakened, alienated, excommunicated,—afflicted, to be prayed for.—And, by his extraordinary devotions on his *birth* and *new year's days*, and other occasions, in which he bewailed his own transgressions, thanked God for his mercies, and solemnly dedicated himself to his service, his soul was much kept in a lively frame.—Of these days spent in the solemn service of God, he publicly testifies, “The experience of many years of my life, hath established me in the persuasion, that love to God,—constant activity in his service,—and pleasurable views of what

lies beyond the grave, are a felicity, infinitely beyond any thing which can offer itself to our affections and pursuits. And I would not, for ten thousand worlds, resign my share in them, or consent even to the suspension of the delights which they afford, during the remainder of my abode here.”—He carried this devout temper into his dealings with men.—In his daily converse,—in his lectures of philosophy, history, anatomy, &c.; and in his friendly visits, and in his epistolary correspondence, he carried a savour of religion along with him.

THE grand principle that animated him to all these exercises, labours, and services, was love to Christ, love to God, and love to mankind. In letters to friends, saith he, “I feel more and more the power of his love in my heart; and I long for the conversion of souls more sensibly, than for any thing besides. Methinks I could not only labour, but die for it, with pleasure. The love of Christ constrains me. I feel the love of God in Christ shed abroad in my heart.—I want, above all things in the world, to be brought to a greater nearness to God, and to walk more constantly and closely with him. Oh, could I spend more of my time in *catechising children*,—in *exhorting heads of families*, and *addressing young people*; and more in meditating upon the things of God in my retirement,—under a deeper, and more affecting sense of God, and receiving vital communications of grace and strength immediately from him!”

AFTER

AFTER he had contracted that cold, which issued in his death, physicians and friends advised him to lay aside his public work for a while, and apply himself entirely to the use of proper medicines and exercise, for the removal of his complaint. But to be useless, was worse than death to him. While he thought there was no *immediate* danger, he could not be prevailed upon to decline, or lessen his delightful work.—Meanwhile, his affections appeared more strongly than ever set on heaven.—In letters to his friends, he thus expresseth himself: “ I bless God, earth is less and less to me; and I shall be very glad to have done with it once for all, as soon as it shall please my master to give me leave. Yet, for him, I would live and labour; and, I hope, if such were his will, suffer too.—I indeed feel my affection to this vanishing world dying and vanishing every day. I have, long since, weighed it in balances, and found it wanting. My heart and hopes are above. Fain would I attain more lively views of glory. Fain would I feel more powerful attractions towards that world, where you and I, through grace, shall soon be.—I am now intent upon having something done among the Dissenters, in a more public manner, for propagating the gospel abroad.—I wish to live to see this design brought into execution.—But to depart, and to be with Christ, is *far, far, infinitely better*.—I bless God, I have the powerful supports of Christianity.—I see indeed no hope of my recovery, yet my heart rejoiceth in my God my Saviour; and I call him, under this failure of every thing else, *its strength and ever-*

lasting portion."—Before he set out for his health to Lisbon, where he died, he thus writes, " My soul is *vigorous and healthy.*—The most distressing nights to this frail body, have been as the *beginning of heaven* to my soul. God hath, as it were, let heaven down upon me, in those nights of weakness and waking. I am not suffered once to lose my hope. My confidence is, not that I have lived such or such a life, or served God in this or the other manner; I know of no prayer I ever offered, no service I ever performed, in which there has not been such a mixture of wrong, that, instead of recommending me to the favour of God, I needed his pardon, through Christ, for the same. Yet he hath helped me in sincerity, to serve him. Popular applause was not the thing I sought. If I might be honoured to do good, and my heavenly Father might see his poor child *attempting*, though feebly and imperfectly, to serve him; and meet with his approving eye, and commending sentence, *Well done, good and faithful servant*:—this my soul regarded, and was most solicitous for. I have no hope in what I have been or done; yet I am full of confidence: and this is my confidence, there is a hope set before me. I have fled, I still flee, for refuge to that hope. In him I trust: in him I have strong consolation; and shall assuredly be *accepted in this beloved of my soul.* The spirit of adoption is given me, enabling me to cry *Abba Father.* I have no doubt of my being a child of God; and that life and death, and all my present exercises, are directed in mercy, by my heavenly Father."

—In his voyage, the captain's cabin was to him

him a *Bethel, the house of God, and the gate of heaven*. He, several times, with ravishing joy in his countenance, said to his wife, "I cannot express to you what a morning I have had. Such delightful and transporting views of the heavenly world, is my Father now indulging me with, as no words can express."

The

The CHRISTIAN, the STUDENT,
and PASTOR,

E X E M P L I F I E D;

In the LIVES of
Three AMERICAN DIVINES.

I. *Notes from the life of Mr THOMAS SHEPHERD.*

“ I NEVER preached the sermon which did not cost me prayers, and strong cries with tears, in the composing of it. I never preached the sermon, of which I had not first got good to my own soul. I never went up to the pulpit, but as if going up to give account to God of my conduct.

I PERCEIVE four *bad evils* which attend me in my ministrations. (1.) The devil treads me down, by discouragement and shame, on account of the meanness of that which I have prepared. — But I see, that the glory of every thing sanctified to do good, is not in itself, but in the Lord’s sanctifying it. (2.) Beside my natural dulness, my former enlargement and respect among people makes me careless. (3.) Want of such light, life, and power, in delivering the truths of Christ, as to affect others in a due manner. (4.) Want of success, when I have done my best.

WHEN

WHEN I saw God angry with me, I was apt to attempt to pacify him, by abstaining from sin for the time to come. But I saw, that this was resting on my own righteousness, which could not satisfy God. I saw, that a righteousness was already prepared, and finished in Christ for me.— I saw, that God's afflicting me was not intended, that I should satisfy for my sin, but that I might be humbled for it, and separated from it;—being reconciled, and made righteous only in Christ.— I was made to see, (1.) That, in myself, I am a condemned wretch; but by Christ reconciled and alive. (2.) That in myself, and all creatures, there is an absolute insufficiency; and that there is no rest but in God all-sufficient; and in him there is enough for me. (3.) That I am unable to do any thing in myself; but in Christ, am able to do all things, (4.) That though I enjoy all these good things *imperfectly* in this world, I shall soon have them all *perfectly* in heaven; where God will manifest himself, *perfectly reconciled, sufficient, and efficient*; and will abolish all sin, and live perfectly in me.

I SAW, that as pride was my sin, so shame would be my punishment.—I was much afraid that I would meet with Eli's punishment, because I had not rebuked sins which I knew of, and that *sharply*. — When I observed the excellencies of others, in their ministrations, I began to affect excellency in mine; but the Lord shewed me, that that was devilish pride, humbled me for it, and made me watch against it.

On examining my own conduct before the Lord, I saw that the whole country had fared the worse for my sins, which was very humbling to me;—particularly, for my living at such a distance from the Lord, notwithstanding what he had done to awaken me, by a storm at sea;—by the death of my wife, and my first born child; and by the threatened blindness of another;—and notwithstanding my solemn resolutions to serve him, in all manner of holiness, in our land of liberty. (2.) That I had not preached to, nor prayed for, nor visited, nor loved my people, as I ought to have done. (3.) That I had not laboured to instruct and edify my people, as I ought to have done. (4.) That I had not discerned the glory of, nor had believed, nor been duly affected with, that gospel which I preached unto others. (5.) That I did not duly seek to Christ for supply; and though I did his work, I did not regard his command, his presence, or his glory, in doing it; nor endeavour to grow somewhat in holiness every day. (6.) That I did not lament the falls of professors, and condition of settlers in this country.”

HE was one of the most practical, searching, and successful preachers, ever known in America.

II. *Notes from the life of Mr COTTON MATHER.*

HE was most careful to redeem his time;—and, notwithstanding his amazing diligence, looked on his years as mispent, forfeited, and
spent

spent in sinning against his Redeemer;—trifled away in sin and sloth.

“ APPREHENSIONS of pride, the sin of young ministers, working in my heart, *saith he*, filled me with inexpressible bitterness and confusion before the Lord.—I found, that when I met with enlargement in prayer or preaching, or answered a question readily and suitably, I was apt to applaud myself in my own mind.—I affected prebeminence, above what belonged to my age or worth.—I therefore endeavoured to take a view of my pride, as the *very image of the devil*, contrary to the grace and image of Christ;—as an offending of God, and grieving of his Spirit;—as the most unreasonable folly and madness, for one who had done so little, and who had such an *accursed nature*, and was only fit for the *dunghill*;—as infinitely dangerous, and ready to provoke God to deprive me of my capacities and opportunities.—I therefore resolved, to carry my distempered heart to Jesus Christ, that all-sufficient Physician, that he might cure it;—and to watch against my pride,—and study much the nature and aggravations of it,—and the excellency of the contrary grace.

I PRESCRIBED rules for my conduct; such as, —to exercise myself unto godliness;—patiently to bear injuries and abuses;—highly to regard the tender Christians in my congregation;—to have a deep sense of the unspeakable worth of all the souls under my charge;—to pray for the Lord’s direction in the choice of my texts and subjects;—to

—to consider the case of my people, as a mean of directing me to my subjects;—to have much of *Jesus Christ* in my sermons;—to keep a list of the members of my congregation; and go over it, by parcels at a time, in my secret prayers;—frequently to visit the families under my charge, for their spiritual edification.

ONE of my first thoughts, *every morning*, was, What good may I do to day?—On the *Lord's day*, it was, What shall I do, as a pastor, for the good of my flock?—On *Monday*, What shall I do as an husband, father, and master, for the good of my family?—On *Tuesday*, What may I do for my relations, or my enemies?—On *Wednesday*, What shall I do for the church of Christ in general?—On *Thursday*, What shall I do for the societies with which I am connected?—On *Friday*, What shall I do for the afflicted?—On *Saturday*, What shall I do for the interest of God, in my own heart and life.

ON a fast day, I humbled myself before the Lord, for all the filthiness of my heart;—and submitted to the sovereignty and righteousness of God; and I was made to behold, and rest on the surety righteousness of Jesus Christ, as the complete payment of all my debt.—The thoughts of Christ are become exceeding frequent with me.—I meditate on his person as God man; and behold the infinite God coming to me, through him. I am impatient, if many minutes pass without some recourse to him.—I am grieved, if, even on the street, I walk a few steps

steps without thoughts of him.—And O the wonderful light, life, peace, and strength, for service or suffering, that come along with him! —All the riches of the world appear to me contemptible, while I have the unsearchable riches of Christ. I care not though I were stript of all things, if Christ dwell in me; and make me perpetually to feed, and live on him.—When I find any thing amiable, or comfortable, in creatures, I commonly, as it were, flee away from them to MY CHRIST; and think, *How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty.*—As for the delights of this world, I know of none, comparable to those which I take in communion with my Saviour.—As for the riches of this world, I labour not for them;—as, in the enjoyment of Christ, I have the supply of all my wants.—I do nothing to gain worldly honour for myself.—To be employed in the Lord's work, in the advancement of Christ's kingdom, is all the honour I wish.

IN the view of death, I laid my case before the Lord.—My mind was satisfied, that the delights of heaven were preferable to any on earth.—I can freely leave all *to be with Christ.*—I saw, that God would take care of my children when I was gone, and provide for them.”

He died in the full assurance of faith, and comforts of the Holy Ghost, 1728.

III. *Brief hints of the life of Mr JONATHAN EDWARDS.*

FROM my childhood, I had a variety of concerns and exercises, about the salvation of my soul.—When I was a boy, I had a remarkable awakening; the affecting impression of which, continued with me for many months. I prayed five times a-day, and talked much on spiritual things with my fellows. My affections were so lively, and easily moved, that I was, as it were, in my element, when engaged in religious duties. But all these convictions and affections wore off, and I frequently neglected secret prayer.—The last year I was at the college, a pleurisy brought me near to the grave, and shook me over hell. I had not long recovered, when I returned to my sinful courses. But repeated convictions obliged me to seek salvation, in a manner I had never done before. My concern had not now such affection and delight attending it, as formerly, but wrought by inward conflicts, and self-reflections.

AT length, by reading that text, 1 Tim. i. 17. *Now, unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen*; my mind was delightfully overwhelmed with the views of the glory of God, and inflamed with desire to enjoy him as my ALL IN ALL. From that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehension concerning Jesus Christ, and the way of salvation through him; and my soul was led away in pleasant contemplations of them.

them. My mind was greatly inclined to spend all my time in reading ; and thinking on Christ, in the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. O how sweet Christ's representation of himself, as the *rose of Sharon*, and *lily of the valley*, and the whole book of the Song of Solomon, was to my soul.—My mind was delightfully carried away from all the concerns of this world, and fixed in converse with Christ, and wrapt and swallowed up in God. The sense that I had of divine things, often, of a sudden, kindled a sweet burning in my heart, which I cannot express. I beheld his wisdom, purity, love, and other excellencies, shining forth in every natural thing. Thunder, which had formerly been so terrible to me, now ravished my heart with joy ; and led me into the most pleasant contemplations of my great and glorious God.—My longing after God and Christ, and more holiness, was so vehement, that my natural constitution was like to be unhinged by it, Psal. cxix. 28.—O how I mourned and lamented, that I had not turned to the Lord sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace !—From year to year, I spent the most of my time in thinking on divine things ; and where-ever I was, I was almost constantly employed in ejaculatory prayer. Prayer was natural to me, as the breath by which the inward burning of my heart had vent.

AFTER I was licensed to preach the gospel, my desires after God and holiness increased more

and more. My heart burnt with vehement longing, to be perfectly conformed to the image of Christ.—I panted, I cried, for more and more holiness. I laboured to contrive and practise every thing that I could think of, for the increasing of my holiness in heart and life.—All the heaven I desired, was to be with God, and to spend my eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Jesus Christ. My heart was ravished with the hopes, that, in heaven, I would get my love vented to him and his Father.—I thought, that all my happiness consisted in love,—in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

I RESOLVED, in the strength of Christ, never to do or suffer any thing, but what tended to the glory of God ;—to live with all my might while I lived, without losing one moment of time, but to improve it as profitably as I could ;—to live as I will wish I had done, when I come to die ;—to be strictly, and firmly faithful to my trust ;—to examine my conduct at the end of every day, —month,—and year ; never to speak any thing but what is serious, on the Lord's day ;—to strive every week, to attain a higher pitch of holiness than I had attained the week before ;—to endeavour to be of a sweet, benevolent, quiet, peaceable, contented, compassionate, generous, humble, meek, modest, submissive, obliging, diligent, industrious, charitable, patient, moderate, forgiving, sincere, temper,—and act accordingly ;—to be constantly looking into the state of my soul, with the utmost diligence ;—after afflictions,

fiCTIONS, carefully to examine what good I had got, or might have gotten, by them.

HAVING had many years experience of divine things, I found the doctrines of the gospel like *green pastures* to my soul.—I looked on it as the richest treasure, and earnestly desired that it might *dwell richly* in me.—The way of salvation through Christ, appeared to me so excellent, pleasant, and beautiful, that I thought it would, in some measure, spoil heaven itself, to receive it in any other way.—O it appeared sweet to me, TO BE united to Christ, and have him, and God in him, to be my ALL IN ALL! O how often these texts, Psal. cxv. 1. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake*; and, Luke x. 21. *Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight*;—have ravished my soul!—nor did I enjoy my most ravishing delight, in the views of my own happy state,—but in direct viewing of the glorious things of the gospel.

My heart hath been much set upon the advancement of the kingdom of Christ in the world. I was delighted, when, in my reading, I met with any thing on that head;—particularly promises and prophecies.—I have, sometimes, had views of the glory and fulness of Christ, in his person, offices, relations, and righteousness; and of his Father and Spirit in him, that have delightfully laid me in the very dust before him; and have

have so drawn out my heart toward him, and conformity to him in holiness, as have almost overwhelmed and dissolved my mortal frame.—O how ardently I desired to be emptied of all other things, and filled with Christ alone; and continually wrapt up in him, and in God in him.

I HAVE had often very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness, that have made me weep loud for a considerable time at once. My sense of my own wickedness, and of the badness of my heart, hath been vastly greater since my conversion than ever it was before.—I have often thought, that, if God should mark iniquity against me, I would appear the worst of all mankind, from the beginning of the world till this time,—and would have by far the lowest place in hell.—When I have heard others in soul-trouble say, that they looked on themselves as bad as the devil himself, I thought their expression was by far too faint to represent their wickedness, if it bore any proportion to mine.—My wickedness, as I am in myself, hath long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, infinitely swallowing up all thoughts and imaginations, like an infinite deluge, or infinite mountains over my head.—I know not how to express what my sins appear to me, but by heaping *infinite* upon *infinite*, and multiplying *infinite* by *infinite*.—When I look into my heart, and take a view of its wickedness, it looks like a bottomless pit, infinitely deeper than hell.—I see that, were it not for the free grace, *exalted* and *raised* to *all the fulness and glory* of the great JEHOVAH, and for the arm of his power and
grace,

grace, stretched forth in *all its majesty, and glory of sovereignty*, I would sink down, in my sins, infinitely below hell itself.—Yet I do not think that my conviction of sin is deeper than that of other Christians; but that my sinfulness is so much greater than theirs.—I am amazed, that I have so little sense of such unparalleled wickedness as mine is.—I have greatly longed for a broken heart, and to lie low before God.—I see, that it would be a vile self-exaltation in me, not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind.—If others ought to be humbled *to the very dust*, I ought to be humbled *below hell itself*. That expression, *I ought to ly infinitely low before God*, hath long been natural to me.

HE was a man of uncommonly close application,—and careful improver of time. He generally spent *thirteen* hours every day in his study; and, even in his recreations, his mind was usefully employed. He had a vehement thirst after knowledge;—to gain which, he spared neither cost nor pains. He read much, but thought more;—and, above all, the Bible was his favourite study. He died 1758.

T H E E N D.

E R R A T A

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