

Monergism

Sermons
on the Sixth Chapter of
ROMANS



THOMAS MANTON

Monergism

Sermons
on the Sixth Chapter of
ROMANS



THOMAS MANTON

Exposition of Romans 6

by Thomas Manton

Table of Contents

[Sermon I. "What shall we say then?" vers. 1, 2](#)

[Sermon II. "Know ye not, that as many," ver. 3](#)

[Sermon III. "Therefore we are buried with him," ver. 4](#)

[Sermon IV. "For if we have been planted together," ver. 5](#)

[Sermon V. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified," ver. 6](#)

[Sermon VI. "For he that is dead is freed from sin," ver. 7](#)

[Sermon VII. "Now, if we be dead with Christ," ver. 8](#)

[Sermon VIII. "Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more," vers. 9, 10](#)

[Sermon IX. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead," ver. 11](#)

[Sermon X. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body," ver. 12](#)

[Sermon XI. "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness," ver. 13](#)

[Sermon XII. "For sin shall not have dominion over you," ver. 14](#)

[Sermon XIII. "For sin shall not have," ver. 14](#)

Sermon XIV. "For sin shall not have," ver. 14.

Sermon XV. "For sin shall not have," ver. 14.

Sermon XVI. "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law," ver. 15

Sermon XVII. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves," ver. 16

Sermon XVIII. "But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sin," ver. 17

Sermon XIX. "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness," vers. 18, 19

Sermon XX. "For when ye were the servants of sin," ver. 20

Sermon XXI. "What fruit had ye then in those things?" ver. 21

Sermon XXII. "But being made free from sin," ver. 22

Sermon XXIII. "And the end everlasting life," ver. 22

Sermon XXIV. "For the wages of sin is death," ver. 23

SERMON I

What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?—ROM. 6:1, 2.

THE drift of the apostle in this chapter is to show that free justification by faith in Christ greatly tendeth to promote holiness; which he first proveth from the tenor of christianity, and then exhorteth the justified to get, increase, and exercise this holiness in all their actions.

In these words there are three things—

1. An objection supposed.
2. A rejection of it with abhorrence and indignation.
3. A confutation of it.

1. The objection is a preposterous inference from what the apostle had said, chap. 5:20, 'That where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.' The apostle propoundeth it by way of interrogation, 'What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?' The words may be conceived as a slander raised by Jewish prejudice to make the doctrine of the gospel odious, as if it did foster people in sin—an unjust calumny; or as a temptation incident to loose, carnal, and careless christians, who are apt to abuse grace, and have such wretched reasonings in their own hearts, that they might take the more liberty to sin, that the grace of God might thereby appear more illustrious and abundant. You may therefore look upon it as produced either as a check to an objection already made, or as a prevention of an abuse that might afterwards be made.

2. He rejecteth this inference as absurd and blasphemous, by a form of speech familiar to him, Gal. 2:17, Rom. 3:6, 31, *μὴ γένοιτο*; let this thought be far from us, or, this is a thing that all christian hearts should abominate.

3. Paul's reason against it, or confutation of it, represented in an emphatical interrogation, 'How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?' Where observe—

[1.] That to continue in sin, and live longer in sin, are equivalent expressions; for in the objection the expression is, 'Shall we continue in sin?' But in the apostle's answer and argument to the contrary, it is, 'Can we live any longer therein?'

[2.] Observe that before grace we lived in sin; for when he saith, 'any longer,' he implieth that we were given to sin, enslaved by sin before; but shall we continue this course? Far be it from us to think so, or say so, much more to do so.

[3.] Observe the argument lieth here, 'We that are dead,' &c. All that have given their names to Christ are, or should be, dead to sin. Now, to be dead to sin and live in sin are ἀσύστατα, things incompatible; the dead are no longer alive.

Because this is the strength of his argument, it will be good to inquire what it is to be dead in sin. In the strict and rigorous notion, he is said to be dead who is utterly deprived of all sense and motion, that they are altogether without all feeling and motion of sin; but this strict sense will not stand here; therefore I must tell you the word relateth to the baptismal engagement, as the following verses abundantly do declare:—ver. 3, 'Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?' Baptism referreth to Christ's death, and we are baptized into the likeness and power of his death; the meaning of that ordinance is to signify our dying to sin and rising to newness of life; this is that which every christian knoweth, if he be but a little instructed in the principles of his religion. Well, then, every good christian is dead to sin by vow and obligation, therefore cannot, should not, live any longer therein. There is a double undertaking in baptism—one on God's part, the other on ours; the undertaking on God's part is to give us the sanctifying Spirit of grace, to quell the reign of sin; the undertaking on our part is by the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body. Now some make conscience of this solemn vow and promise, others do not; the apostle considereth not what is done, but what ought to be done; he speaketh de jure, of the vow and obligation—we

are all bound; not de facto, of the event, not what always cometh to pass. All christians are bound to be dead to sin, and every good christian is actually dead to sin, which, though it hath some life and being left, yet it retaineth not its sovereignty and dominion over him. Some conceive this latter sort intended; οἵτινες ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, as many of us as have died to sin: but rather he considereth the right than the fact. Christianity doth oblige all at their first entrance into the profession of it to renounce the reign and dominion of sin, and break the power of it yet more and more, so that it dieth, though a lingering death, as Christ did upon the cross.

Doct. That to take occasion to live in sin from free grace, or God's mercy to sinners in Christ, is an inference most unjust, absurd, and blasphemous, and that which all christians' hearts should abominate.

Here in the text such an inference is mentioned with a denial joined with a detestation of the thing denied; the very thought and first mention of it ought to be entertained with abhorrency.

1. I will prove that the corrupt heart of man is apt to draw such a consequence.

2. I will prove the three charges—

[1.] That it is very unjust and ill grounded.

[2.] Absurd and contradictory to christianity.

[3.] Wicked and blasphemous.

First, That the corrupt heart of man is apt to draw such inferences from the doctrine of grace. In the general, carnal men are ill skilled at reasoning about spiritual matters. Solomon telleth us, Prov. 26:9, 'That a parable in a fool's mouth is like a thorn in the hand of a drunkard.' As a drunkard with a sharp thorn grievously hurts himself and others, neither his mind nor hand can do their office when the man is distempered with drink; so it is with men intoxicated by sin;

witness those contrary and different conclusions, which the carnal and spiritual will draw from the same principles. From the stated course of nature the scoffer said, 2 Peter 3:4, 'Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.' David reasoneth the quite contrary way: Ps. 119:89–91, 'For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth. They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants.' So 1 Cor. 15:32, 'If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die;' with 1 Cor. 7:29, 30, 'But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remains that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not.' So 2 Sam. 7:2, 'The king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains;' with Haggai 1:2, 'This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.' So 2 Kings 6:33, 'Behold this evil is of the Lord, what should I wait for the Lord any longer?' with 1 Sam. 3:18, 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.' So Mary Magdalene, upon Christ's pardoning her sin, was more abundant in duty and mourning for sin: Luke 7:47, 'Her sins, which were many, are forgiven; for she loved much;' and in the text, the directly contrary conclusion is drawn; 'sin, because grace doth abound;' make work for pardoning mercy. But particularly, it is very natural to us to abuse the gospel, and plead God's grace to quiet and strengthen ourselves in security and sin; the thoughts of men do easily incline them to such conclusions. That which hath been may be; that this hath been appeareth by the writings of the apostles, who everywhere seek to obviate this abuse; and also by evident reason.

1. We all affect liberty to a degree of licentiousness. This is natural to us, as appeareth by our distaste of Christ's strict laws: Ps. 2:3, 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us;' and

our ready hearkening to seducers, 'who promise liberty, though they bring us into bondage to sin,' 2 Peter 2:19, and we be the more enslaved to baseness and filthiness.

2. The flesh taketh all occasions to indulge itself, and that it may be done in a plausible cleanly manner, and with less remorse from conscience, it catcheth at every pretence to countenance it. Sometimes it makes use of bodily austerities as a compensation for their sins; and so hypocrisy, superstition, and profaneness grow on the same root. The sensual nature of men is such that it is loath to be crossed, which produceth profaneness; for therefore do men indulge themselves in all manner of sensuality, because they are loath to deny their natural appetites and desires, and row against the stream of flesh and blood; but if nature must be crossed, or else they cannot palliate their carnal indulgences, then they will not mortify the lust, but afflict the body for a while, and in some slight manner, which produceth hypocrisy, and we excuse the partiality of our obedience by some outward shows of strictness; as Isa. 58:5, 'They afflict the soul for a day, or bow down the head like a bulrush;' and so in the external actions of other duties. That this deceit may be more strong, they exceed in outward observances, and that produceth superstition, or some byelaws of our own, by which we hope to expiate our sins; as to whip and gash ourselves: Micah 6:6, 7, 'Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' On the other side, if men's temper, education, and strain of religion carry them to another way, and they are all for the grace of the gospel, without the rudiments of men, the devil knows how to charm and lull souls asleep in sin by that way of profession also; and so many take liberty to sin under the pretence that God may have more occasion to exercise his mercy; and our proneness to please the flesh is countenanced by presumptions of grace, and the supposition of unreasonable indulgences of God to the faulty creature: Ps. 50:21,

'These things hast thou done, and I kept silent; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself.' God will not be so severe as is commonly imagined; and so lessening God's holiness, they abate their reverence of him: Ps. 68:19–21, 'Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation, Selah. He that is our God is the God of salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death. But God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.' He seeketh to obviate their conceit, how great soever the riches of his bounty and grace offered in Christ be, yet he is irreconcilable to those that cease not to follow a course of sin.

3. This conceit is strengthened in us, because many that profess christianity live licentiously. All sins propagate their kind, and among others, abuse of grace. We see others have great hopes and confidence in Christ, notwithstanding their carnal and worldly course of living, and self-love prompteth us that we may hope to fare as well as they; and so we leaven one another with a dead, loose, carnal sort of christianity, instead of 'provoking each other to love and good works,' Heb. 10:24. Self-love is very partial, and loath to think evil of our condition. Now this cannot be justified by the laws of christianity, yet it is often justified by the lives of christians: after this rule they live in the world, and we think we may do as others do.

4. There is another cause, that is, Satan, who abuseth the weakness of some teachers, and the ignorance of some hearers, to misapply the grace of the gospel and the comforts of justification, to countenance their sins. The devil knoweth we will not receive his doctrine in his own name, and therefore doth what he can to usurp the name of Christ, and to obtrude his commands upon us in the name of Christ, and so conveyeth poison to you by the perfume of the gospel; and if he can set Christ against Christ, his merits and mercy against his government and Spirit, his promises against his laws, justification against sanctification, he knoweth that he obtaineth his end and purpose, that the gospel, which was set up to destroy the works of the devil, will be a means to cherish his kingdom in the world. And on

the hearers' part, he abuseth them also; carnal hearts turn all into fuel for their lusts, and with the more pretence if they can allege a dispensation from God himself to serve and please the flesh, and no harm shall come of it. A little trusting in Christ shall serve the turn, though they live never so impure lives. I ascribe all this to Satan, because all error is from him, who is the father of lies, who often obtrudeth upon the simple credulity of christians his own gospel instead of Christ's, and by a partial representation of Christ's gospel destroyeth the whole.

Secondly, I come now to make good the charge.

First, That this inference is very unjust and ill-grounded. The pretence here are those words of the apostle in the two last verses of the former chapter: 'Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.' These words yield no such consequence. To evince which—(1.) I shall state the meaning of those words; (2.) Show the unjustness of this illation from them.

1. For the meaning, the apostle showeth the law was given to the Israelites by Moses, not that they might be justified thereby, but that sin and punishment, to which we are liable by reason of sin, might the better be known; and so the grace of God in Christ, which justifieth us, notwithstanding the grievousness of sin, might be the more esteemed, and we might the more earnestly fly to it for sanctuary and refuge, and the curse might drive us to the promise. For there are two things which the law discovereth—

[1.] The multitude and heinous nature of our offences: 'It entered that sin might abound;' not in our practice, but in our sense and feeling, as being more apparent, and awakening more lively stings in our consciences. If a rugged and obstinate people sin the more, that is not the fault of the law, but of our corrupt nature, which always

tendeth to that which is forbidden: 'It only took occasion from the commandment,' Rom. 7:8. The proper effect of the law was to give us more convincing and clear knowledge of duty and sin, or to be a means to aggravate sin, to render it more exceedingly heinous, as being against an express law of God's own giving, with great majesty and terror.

[2.] The other use of the law is to give us an awakening sense of the punishment due to sin, as it exposes us to temporal and eternal death, ver. 21; and so our deliverance and life by Christ might be more thankfully accepted, who by his mercy hath taken away the condemning and reigning power of sin, by granting pardon of it, and power over it; so that as a great and mortal disease maketh a physician famous if he cureth it, so sin maketh the grace of Christ more conspicuous and glorious.

2. The injustice of the illation.

[1.] There is a difference between *causa per se*, and *causa per accidens*, a cause and an occasion. Though the abounding of sin helpeth to advance grace, it is not of itself, but by accident, by God's overruling grace; therefore it is a desperate adventure to try conclusions, to drink rank poison to experiment the goodness of an antidote, or to wound ourselves mortally to try the virtue of a plaster. God made advantage of the sins of the world for the honouring of his grace in Christ; but they that presume to sin greatly, that God may pardon greatly, run a desperate adventure, whether God will pardon them or no.

[2.] There is a difference between the remission of sins past, and allowance of sin future. Our fixed purpose must be not to sin, but if we sin, we have the use of God's remedy: 1 John 2:1, 'My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' If God made advantage of sins past to honour his grace, we also by sins past may make an advantage for a renewed use of

faith in our Redeemer, and renewed desires and expectations of pardon by his intercession; but it is a wrong conclusion to think we may heap up new sins for time to come, and still make more work for pardoning mercy, and be content to offend God again, that he may still be pardoning, and we never forsake sin. In short, we must not sin that grace may abound; but when we have sinned, we must make use of abounding grace. Faith and repentance may draw good out of sin itself, to make the remembrance of it a means of our hatred and mortification of sin, and of more gratitude to our Redeemer; but not to take liberty to indulge sin, antedating our pardon before the fact.

[3.] It is contrary to all ingenuity, and love to God or Christ. This is the difference between faith and presumption, or a sound and a blind confidence of pardon by Christ, namely, that faith maketh us hate sin, and presumption maketh us secure and bold in sinning, and slightly to pass it over with little remorse and reluctancy when we are guilty of it. He who presumeth doth the work of an age in a breath. God is merciful, Christ died for sinners, and all our confidence must be in Christ. But the true believer is more affected with sin; as 'she wept much and loved much to whom much was forgiven,' Luke 7:47; and Ezek. 16:63, 'That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou hast done.' They express their gratitude for remission of sin by a careful keeping from it. Pardoning mercy maketh God amiable to us, and his laws acceptable, our duty sweeter, and sin more grievous.

Secondly, It is absurd and contrary to the doctrine of grace: true christianity is of a far different make from this conceit.

1. It is not consistent with the grace that goeth along with pardon, for God sanctifieth all those whom he justifieth: we receive, together with the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost: 1 Cor. 1:30, 'Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;' 1 Cor. 6:11, 'But ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified in the name

of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' These are inseparable, the application of the merit of Christ and the gift of his Spirit, which reneweth us to the image of God, and mortifieth the life of sin in us; the heart broken with compunction seeketh this double benefit: 1 John 1:9, 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness;' as a malefactor that hath a leprosy on him needs not only a pardon, but a medicine; and in a broken leg not only ease of the pain is desirable, but that the bone be set right. Therefore we are both justified and sanctified; continuing in sin cannot consist with the truth of regeneration.

2. It is contrary to the order of God's grace in the new covenant, who requireth of us faith and repentance if we would be partakers of Christ. Now, to continue in sin is to be under the bondage of it, without restraint, or any change of heart and life.

[1.] It is against faith. Take it for assent, it is a belief that he will save all those that submit to be sanctified and ruled by him in order to their salvation: Heb. 5:9, 'Being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.' If you hope to be saved by him, and will not be ruled by him, you do not believe Christ, but the devil; for if you believe Christ, you must believe that you cannot be saved unless you be converted: Mat. 18:3, 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Take faith for acceptance of Christ, it is a hearty consent both of subjection to him and dependence upon him as the saviour and redeemer of the world. The mediator's blessing is 'to turn every one of you away from your iniquities,' Acts 3:26; he is a saviour 'to save his people from their sins,' Mat. 1:21; to say nothing of 'receiving Christ the Lord,' which the scripture presseth. Col. 2:6.

[2.] It is against repentance, which implieth a sorrow for sin, with a serious purpose to forsake it.

(1.) There is in it godly sorrow, 2 Cor. 7:10. This is requisite to check the sensual inclination, or love of pleasure, which is the heart, root, and life of all sin: it dies when our affection to it dies. In repentance with bitterness of soul we bemoan ourselves for offending God; now if we lick up our vomit again, and go round in a track of confessing sin and committing sin, our hearts are not sound with God; we undo that which is done, and so 'build again the things we have destroyed, if while we seek to be justified by Christ, we are still found sinners,' Gal. 2:17, 18. A man that truly seeks after pardon, seeks with it the ruin and destruction of sin. Sin was his greatest trouble, the burden that lay upon his conscience, the grievance from which he sought ease, the wound which pained him at heart, the disease that his soul was sick of. Is all this real? What will you say if this man should delight in his former trouble, and take up his burden that he groaned under, and prefer it before liberty, to tear open the wounds which were in a fair way of healing, willingly relapse into the sickness out of which he is recovered with so much ado? if he should desire the bonds and chains again, of which he was freed by infinite mercy? Surely then you may question the reality of all that he hath done. In the anguish of our souls we groaned under sin as the heaviest and most intolerable burden we could ever feel. Now, should we stoop to it, and take it on again, after it was lifted from our backs, who would pity us?

(2.) There is a renouncing and forsaking of sin: it is called 'Repentance from dead works,' Heb. 6:1; not only repentance for but from them. The heart is so turned from sin, that it is turned against it: we do not repent of the sins we still live in. Now, if grace be dispensed in this order, what more contrary to the tenor of the gospel covenant?

(3.) This faith and repentance are solemnly professed in baptism, which is the initiating ordinance, wherein we profess to be baptized into the death of Christ, that is to say, to express the virtue, to be conformed to the likeness of it, and die unto sin. When we first gave our names to Christ, our baptism strictly obligeth us to continue no

longer in sin; it is a vowed death to sin; therefore, if we continue in it, we renounce or forget our baptism, 2 Peter 1:9; if we wallow again in the mire after we are once washed, all that is done in baptism is but a nullity or empty formality. That is the apostle's argument here, 'How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?' There you solemnly renounced sin, that you might have no more commerce with it than the dead have with the living; therefore, for us to continue in sin, and indulge sin, is to break our solemn covenant with God. You have promised to give neither mind, nor heart, nor sense, nor any faculty or member of soul or body to accomplish it, but so carry yourselves as if you were dead. And besides, you deprive yourselves of the grace of the covenant which you might have. If you did not ponere obicem, you might be delivered from the reigning power of indwelling sin; therefore you must carefully see that it have not the upper hand in your souls, that the flesh be made subject to the spirit, that the reign and dominion of sin be indeed broken, that you run into no wilful sin, and walk with all holy strictness and watchfulness.

(4.) It is contrary to God's design to call us out of our sinful estate to sincere reformation. This was God's end, that we that fly from him as a condemning God might return to his love and service as a pardoning God: Ps. 130:4, 'There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mightest be feared.' He pardoneth what is past upon condition of future obedience; he calleth us to repentance: Acts 17:30, 'Now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent;' not to encourage them to continue, or go on a minute longer in a course of sin, or flatter them with hope of impunity if they do so: Ezek. 18:30, 'Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin;' Isa. 55:7, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.'

Thirdly, It is wicked and blasphemous.

1. Because, as much as in you lieth, you make Christ a minister of sin, or an encourager of sin: Gal. 2:7, 'If while we seek to be justified by Christ, we are found sinners, is Christ a minister of sin? God forbid.'

2. They prevent the highest institution in the world for the recovery of men to God: Jude 4, μετατίθεντες, 'turning the grace of God into wantonness.' The gospel is the only way of taking away sin; you make it the only way to countenance sin. Grace is there taken for objective grace, viz., grace held forth to us in the doctrine of the gospel. The doctrine of the gospel doth not tend to make men sinners, nor encourage them to lay aside all care of holiness or good works.

Use 1. Caution against this abuse.

1. Be not prejudiced against the doctrine of grace, as if it yielded these conclusions. It is a misunderstood and misapplied gospel; the world hath not a right understanding in this mystery. Christ came into the world to save sinners, but not to reconcile God to our sins, to make him less holy, or his law less strict, or sin less odious; and his free pardon is not to encourage us to go on in our sins; but a wicked heart, like a spider, will suck poison from those flowers from whence a bee sucketh honey.

2. Let us not give occasion to others to think so, either—(1.) By entertaining opinions that may countenance this abuse, as the setting up a naked dependence on Christ without a care of holiness, or Christ's merit against his Spirit; relying on his reconciling, and neglecting his renewing grace; that we are justified before we repent or believe; that all sins past, present, or to come are pardoned at once; that we need not trouble ourselves with scruples about offending God; that the greatest confidence of our own good estate is the strongest and best faith. (2.) Nor by practices. Christians must be most averse from sin, and all enormous practices, else you dishonour Christ in the world; but let the blame and shame lie on us, and not on the gospel.

3. Let us not harbour this mistake in our own bosoms. We are marvellous apt to do so; but hereby we forfeit the comfort and privilege of christians, and it concerneth God to avenge the quarrel of his grace against us. Now harbour it we do, if we grow more careless and negligent in duties, less circumspect in our conversations, less humble for sins, and venture upon them with greater boldness and security. If you think you need to be less troubled for sin, less earnest and watchful against it, as if since Christ died for the expiation of it, it were a smaller matter than before to sin against God, you are guilty of this abuse.

Use 2. To exhort you to three things.

1. To carry yourselves as those that are dead to sin; be sure that its dominion and reign be broken, and its strength and power every day more weakened; you subdue it thoroughly root and branch, and let your minds be more intent on this, that you may not sin: 1 John 3:9, 'Whoso is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' See how this is fulfilled in you, and what conscience you make of your baptismal vow every day.

2. Honour grace. You should not only esteem it, and advance it in your minds, but set forth the glory of it in word and deed: Eph. 1:5, 12, 'Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,—that we should be to the praise of his glory.' The whole strain of your life and conversation should be to the praise of grace, that our actions might speak for it, though we be silent. To this end consider, God hath trusted you with the honour of his grace, therefore you should be eminently much better than other men: Mat. 5:16, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven,' 1 Peter 3:9, and set forth the genuine and kindly workings of it.

3. Fortify your minds against this abuse, which is so natural to us.

[1.] God's principal will is that we should obey his laws rather than need his pardon. The precept is before the sanction, before sin came into the world; he pardoneth, that we may return to our duty, Heb. 9:14; Luke 1:74; Rev. 5:9, 10; therefore to make wounds for Christ to cure is not the part of a good christian.

[2.] Remember what was Christ's main design: 1 John 3:5, 'To take away sin,' not to take away obedience. Many think, though they sin never so much, their pardon will be ready and easy. Oh no! not so lightly, when you wilfully and presumptuously run into sin.

[3.] Loose, carnal, and careless christians, that wallow in all filthiness, and hope to be saved, are rather of the faction of christians than of the religion of christians: 2 Tim. 2:19, 'Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity;' 1 Peter 1:17, 18, 'Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear, forasmuch as you are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversations, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.'

SERMON II

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?—ROM. 6:3.

In the former verse the apostle confuteth the preposterous inference, which some drew, or might draw, from free justification, or God's mercy to sinners in Christ, by this argument—It cannot be so, that men should continue in sin because grace aboundeth, for all christians are dead to sin; at their first entrance upon the profession of christianity they take upon themselves a vow or solemn obligation to die unto sin. Now what he had asserted there, he proveth it in this verse, that such is the tenor of the baptismal engagement: 'Know ye

not that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?'

In the words there is—

1. A truth supposed, that those who are baptized are baptized into Christ.
2. A truth inferred, that they that are baptized into Christ are baptized into his death.
3. The notoriety of both these truths, 'Know ye not?'

[1.] For the first, the phrase of being baptized into Christ is again repeated, Gal. 3:27, 'As many of you as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ;' it noteth our union with him, or ingrafting into his mystical body. We are not only baptized in his name, but baptized into him, made members of that mystical body whereof he is the head.

[2.] For the second, are 'baptized into his death;' the meaning is, baptism principally referreth to his death, that we may have communion with it, expect the benefit of it, express the likeness of it.

[3.] For the third, 'Know ye not?' It is that which every christian knoweth, if he be but a little instructed in the principles of his religion; those bred in the church neither are nor can be ignorant of this truth: therefore the doctrine of grace opens no way to licentiousness.

Doct. Sacraments are a solemn means of our communion with the death of Christ. Where is to be shown—

1. What is communion with Christ's death.
2. That sacraments are a solemn means thereof.

First, What is communion with Christ's death. It signifieth two things—

1. Something by way of privilege, a participation of the benefits and efficacy of Christ's death.
2. Something by way of duty and obligation, namely, a spiritual conformity and likeness thereunto, by a mortification of our lusts and passions.

1. We are partakers of the benefits of his death when we receive pardon and life, begun by the Spirit, and perfected in heaven. Pardon: Eph. 1:7, 'In whom we have redemption by his blood, even the remission of sins.' The same death of Christ which is the meritorious cause of our justification is the cause of our sanctification also, Titus 3:5, 6; Eph. 5:26; as it took away the impediment which hindered God from communicating his grace to us, and opened a way for the Spirit of grace to come at us, and seal our adoption: Gal. 3:13, 14, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith;' Gal. 4:5, 6, 'To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.'

2. Christ's death bindeth us to renounce sin, and by submitting to baptism we profess to take the obligation upon us to die unto sin and unto the world more and more, to show ourselves to be true disciples of the crucified Saviour, as we are when we express the likeness of his death, ver. 5; and elsewhere the apostle telleth us, Gal. 2:20, 'I am crucified with Christ.' He is a christian indeed that not only believeth that Christ is crucified, but is crucified with him; that is, doth feel the virtue, and bear the likeness of his death; for Christ's death is the pattern of our duty. This likeness is seen in two things:—

[1.] In weakening and subduing sin; so it is said, Gal. 5:24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts;' they have in their baptism renounced these things, and they fulfil their vow sincerely and faithfully: there we bind ourselves to die unto sin, and Christ bindeth himself to communicate the virtue of his death unto us, that we may fulfil our vow, and 'by his Spirit mortify the deeds of the body,' Rom. 8:13.

[2.] In suffering for righteousness' sake, and obeying God at the dearest rate, as Christ's undergoing the death of the cross was the highest act of his obedience to God. This is also called 'conformity to his death;' and 'the fellowship of his suffering,' Phil. 3:10. This is participation of or communion with his death. Christ intended to wean his people from the interests of the animal life; therefore, as soon as they enter into his family, or are listed in his warfare, they must resolve to renounce all that is dear to them in the world, rather than be unfaithful to him. Christ puts this question to the two brothers that would fain have an honourable place in his kingdom: Mat. 20:22, 'Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?' They thought of dignities, of being nearer to Christ than others in honour, and Christ puts them in mind of sufferings that should befall them, wherein they might rejoice that they were partakers with him. But mark, here is a plain allusion to the two sacraments, which are signs and tokens of grace on God's side, and we on ours bind ourselves to imitate Christ in his patient and self-denying obedience. This is communion with his death.

Secondly, That the sacraments are a solemn means of this communion. Here are three things:—

1. That union with Christ is the ground of our communion with him.
2. This union and communion is signified and sealed by the sacraments.

3. That both the sacraments do chiefly refer to Christ's death.

1. That union with Christ is the ground of communion with him. This is evident everywhere; for it is said, 1 Cor. 1:30, 'But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.' We are first ingrafted into Christ, and then partake of his influence, and he conveyeth to us all manner of grace; and is the cause both of our justification and sanctification and final deliverance. So 1 John 5:12, 'He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.' Christ is the first gift; first God giveth Christ to us, and 'with him all things,' Rom. 8:32. Christ himself is the first saving gift; and therefore, before we can have spiritual life, we must have Christ himself, who is offered to us in the promises of the gospel, principally and immediately to be received by us, and with him all his benefits, as the members receive sense and life and motion from the head, and the branches sap from the root. We have not what he hath purchased unless we have him first; as we are not possessors of Adam's guilt till we are united to his person by carnal generation, so not of the grace of the Redeemer, till united to him by effectual calling. In short, Christ hath purchased, and the Father hath given, all things into Christ's own hands; the gifts and graces of the Spirit are not intrusted with ourselves, but him; we have so foully miscarried already, that God will no more trust his honour in our hands; we have nothing but what we have in and from the Son. The Spirit dwelleth in Christ, and there it can never be lost; he dwelleth in Christ by way of radication, in us by way of influence and operation. We have many disputes about the inhabitation of the Spirit, The Spirit is not given to any believer immediately, but to Christ, and to us derivatively from Christ. Therefore the Spirit is called 'the Spirit of Christ,' Rom. 8:9, and 'the Spirit of his Son,' Gal. 4:6, and 'it is Christ liveth in us,' Gal. 2:20, and 'as head of the church he filleth all in all,' Eph. 1:22, 23. From this great cistern the waters of life come to us, and not immediately from the Godhead; and it is our head which doth communicate and send to all his members from himself that

Spirit which must operate in them as they have need: this grace our mediator distributeth to all his members.

2. That this union and communion is signified and sealed by the sacraments, and so they are special means to preserve and uphold the communion between Christ and us. Baptism is spoken of in the text, and that is called 'a being baptized into Christ,' and is elsewhere said to be 'a putting on Christ;' and here, ver. 5, σὺμφυτοι, 'a being planted together in the likeness of his death;' and 1 Cor. 12:13, 'By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, and are all made to drink into one Spirit.' The union is begun by the Spirit, but sealed in baptism, then carried on by the same Spirit, and further sealed in the Lord's supper. Our first implantation is represented by baptism, which is a solemnisation of the new covenant, whereby the party is solemnly entered a visible member of Christ and his church. It is carried on by the same Spirit. The Lord's supper is a seal of that communion: οὐχὶ κοινωνία; 1 Cor. 10:16, 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?' There is not only a solemn commemoration of the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, but a participation of his benefits; it is the communion of his body and blood. There is a difference between a historical representation of Christ's death, and a spiritual communion of his blood and body. Now the Lord's supper is a holy rite instituted εἰς ἀνάμνησιν, 'in remembrance of him,' and also to convey to us the benefits of Christ's death. Well, then, you see this union and communion is signified and sealed by the sacraments. Baptism is our first implantation, and the Lord's supper concerneth our growth and nourishment. The external and visible incorporation is by baptism, or profession of the christian faith, which all visible christians have: John 15:2, 'Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.' The real and saving union belongeth to the regenerate, who really believe in Christ, in their hearts Christ dwelleth: Eph. 3:17, 'That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;' and, love is requisite: 1 John 4:16, 'God is love, and

he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him;' and new obedience: 1 John 3:24, 'He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him and he in him; and hereby know we that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us.' This is the sum then: Christ maketh his first entrance into us by his Spirit, who regenerateth us; this is figured in baptism; continueth his presence by faith, love, and new obedience, which are exercised and quickened by the Lord's supper.

3. The sacraments do chiefly relate to our communion with Christ's death, as appeareth—

[1.] By the interpretation of both in scripture. Baptism is explained in the text; the chief thing represented is his death; and by what is said, 1 Cor. 1:13, 'Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?' Whence I gather, that for any to have been crucified (made a curse and a sacrifice to God) for us, would draw an obligation upon us to be baptized into his name. And that one peculiar reason of our being baptized into the name of Christ was his having been so crucified for us. The Lord's supper is explained, 1 Cor. 11:26, 'As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.' The use of the Lord's supper is a solemn commemoration and annunciation of the Lord's death. We annunciate and show it forth with respect to ourselves, that we may anew believe and exercise our faith; with respect to others, that we may solemnly profess this faith in the crucified Saviour with a kind of glorying and rejoicing; with respect to God, that we may plead the merits of the sacrifice of his own Son with affiance, expecting the benefits thereof, which are pardon and the sanctifying Spirit. Thus you see Christ hath instituted two sacraments which represent him dead, not one to represent him glorified. This signification may be confirmed by the types of the old law. The sin-offering was not to be eaten by the people at all, and the sacrifice of thanksgiving was not to be eaten the third day after it was offered, Lev. 7:16–18; the eating of the peace-offerings, wherein they rejoiced before the Lord, and gave him thanks, was a solemn feast like the Lord's supper; now they

might eat it the same day in which it was offered with acceptation, but not on the third day, then it was unlawful. The eating it the same day taught them to hasten, and not delay, but with speed, while it is called to-day, to be made partakers of Christ, to eat his flesh in faith, and to be thankful for his grace. The longest time was the second day; the third it could not be eaten, not only upon a natural reason, that the flesh might be eaten while it was pure and sweet, for by the third day it might easily putrify in those hot countries; but upon a mystical reason, to foreshadow the time of Christ's resurrection, whose rising from the dead was on the third day: 'And the third day I shall be perfected,' Luke 13:32. So our feast on the flesh and blood of Christ representeth his death rather than his resurrection. Well, then, Christ hath appointed two sacraments which represent him dead, but none that represent him glorified; for sacraments were instituted in favour of man, and for the benefit of man, more directly and immediately than for the honour of Christ exalted. Therefore in these ordinances he representeth himself rather as he procured the glory of others than as possessed of his own glory, and would have us consider rather his death past than his present glory. His death is wholly for us, but his glory for himself and us too. For understanding this, we must distinguish between what is primarily represented in the sacraments, and what is secondarily and consequentially. It is true the consideration of his humiliation excludeth not that of his exaltation, but leadeth us to it. Primarily and properly Christ's death is represented in the sacraments, and consequentially his resurrection and exaltation, as those other acts receive their value from his death as to our comfort and benefit, as his resurrection and intercession. We remember his death as the meritorious cause of our justification and sanctification, but his resurrection as the public evidence of the value of his merit; according to that of the apostle: Rom. 4:25, 'He died for our offences, and rose again for our justification;' therefore primarily and directly 'we are baptized into his death,' and in the Lord's supper 'we show forth his death,' by which he satisfied divine justice for us; but secondarily and consequentially we remember his resurrection, which showeth that his satisfaction is perfect, and God, who is the judge and avenger of

sin, could require no more of Christ for the atonement of the world. While the punishment remaineth in the guilty person or his surety, the debt is not fully paid; but the taking our surety from prison and judgment showeth that provoked justice is contented. So in baptism, the immersion or plunging in water signified his death, and the coming out of the water his resurrection; and in the Lord's supper we annunciate his death; but because we keep up this ordinance till he come, we imply his resurrection and life of glory, therefore we do but consequentially remember it. So it is for Christ's intercession; it is but a representation of the merit of his sacrifice, and receiveth its value from his death: Heb. 9:12, 'By his own blood he entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.' Our high priest now appearing before God, and representing the value of his sacrifice for all penitent believers, the foundation was in his death. As this is true of the cause, so it is true of the benefits procured by that cause; the great benefit which we have by Christ is salvation, which consists in the destruction of sin, and a fruition of those things which by God's appointment are consequent upon the destruction of sin, namely, eternal life and happiness. Now as these things are consequent upon the destruction of sin, so baptism and the Lord's supper signifieth and sealeth them; but consequentially its primary use is to signify the destruction and abolition of sin by the death of Christ; as for instance, 'We are baptized for the remission of sins,' Acts 2:38, and Acts 22:16, 'Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins;' and in the Lord's supper, Mat. 26:28, 'This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.' So that you see these benefits are more expressly signified in baptism and the Lord's supper, the resurrection of the body and eternal life more remotely and consequentially. The death of Christ first purchased for us justification and sanctification, therefore they are first represented directly and primarily, baptism and the Lord's supper represent these especially; so now you see why the apostle saith, 'Ye are baptized into his death.'

[2.] By the rites used in both these ordinances. Baptism signifieth the death and burial of Christ; for immersion under the water is a kind of

figure of death and burial, as our apostle explaineth it, ver. 4, 'Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death;' and the trine immersion, the threefold dipping used by the ancients, is expounded by them, not only with reference to the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in whose names they were baptized, Mat. 28:19, but the three several days, wherein Christ lay buried in the grave, as Athanasius expoundeth it, and many others interpret it as a similitude of Christ's death for three days. So for the Lord's supper: Luke 22:19, 20, 'He took bread, and brake it, and gave it to them, saying, This is my body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.' His body is represented as dead and broken, and so proper food for our souls, his blood as poured out and shed for us. Well, then, here we remember Christ as dying on the cross rather than as glorified in heaven.

[3.] By reason it must needs be so.

(1.) With respect to the state of man, with whom the new covenant is made. It is made with man fallen and a sinner; therefore baptism and the Lord's supper imply our communion with Christ as a redeemer and saviour, who cometh 'to save us from our sins,' Mat. 1:21, and nothing can save us from our sins but a crucified saviour. Therefore these ordinances imply a communion with his death: Heb. 9:15, 'For this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by the means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.' So here the intervention of his death was the way and means to expiate former sins, and that penitent believers might have eternal blessedness instated upon them by way of inheritance; therefore the most obvious thing represented in these seals of the new covenant must be the death of Christ.

(2.) With respect to the great benefit we stand in need of, which is the destruction of sin, which hath a double malignity in it; for sin is

considerable under a double respect—as it damneth or as it defileth; as it rendereth us obnoxious to God's justice, or as it tainteth and staineth and defileth our faculties. Christ considereth sin under this double respect, and maketh none partakers of the benefit which cometh by him whom he freeth not from sin, both as to the guilt and power; by his death our sins are expiated before God, and so pardoned; and also the Spirit, or a new and holy nature is put into us, whereby the reigning power of sin is broken and taken away; not only the guilt of sin, which is opposed to blessedness, but the reign of sin, which is opposed to holiness. We can never be completely happy till we get freed from the punishment which sin hath made our due, and also get that sin destroyed which would involve us in new guilt. God, who is a just and wise disposer of his grace, will not give impunity where sin remaineth in its full strength. Now this being the nature of our recovery, we ought to seek communion with Christ's death, that we may obtain both pardon and the gift of the Spirit, and be justified and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God; or (which tendeth to the same effect) that we might feel the virtue of Christ's death, and express the likeness of it.

(3.) With respect to the value of Christ's death, which is often recommended to us under these two considerations—(1.) As a wonderful act of love; (2.) As a price and ransom paid for our souls, and the blessings we stand in need of.

(1st.) As a wonderful act of condescending love: Gal. 2:20, 'He loved me, and gave himself for me;' Eph. 5:2, 'Who hath loved us, and given himself for us an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour;' Rev. 1:5, 'Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.' Christ's death is the greatest instance of his love, and sacraments are a memorial of his love to us, and therefore must needs principally relate to his death, for so they are most apt to work upon our souls.

(2d.) They are the price paid for the blessings we stand in need of, and so breed confidence in us. The great benefit is the destruction of

sin, as I said before; for the great occasion of this mystery of grace was our fallen estate, which brought sin and misery upon us. But the Son of God came 'to take away sin,' 1 John 3:5, by dying an accursed death to propitiate God to us, and make way for the more liberal effusion of his mercy. Well, then, if poor creatures have any awakening sense of their deep misery, what should they look after, or bless God for, when they solemnly come to accept the covenant, but the death of Christ?

(4.) The mutual respect that is between both sacraments; for Christ's death, and the immediate benefits which result thence, are represented both in baptism and the Lord's supper in a way proper to each. Baptism signifieth our first entrance into the evangelical state, and the Lord's supper our growth and progress therein. Both are necessary.

(1st.) Baptism, that our consent to depend upon God for the benefits of the new covenant, and perform the duties thereof, may be more solemn and explicit; for all the sincerity of our after-obedience doth very much depend upon the seriousness of our first consent; therefore it is meet that we should be strengthened with such a bond, that we should be baptized into the death of Christ; that act is an act of love, it may bind us to love him to the death, who hath loved us first, and in all temptations cleave to him, performing our covenant resolution and consent with all fidelity all the days of our lives. And as it is the ground of our confidence and the price of our blessings, we may comfortably depend upon God for the gift of the sanctifying Spirit, and that he will afford all necessary help to us in the use of those means which he hath appointed, that we may receive the grace and Spirit of God by virtue of this help.

(2d.) The Lord's supper is necessary to confirm and strengthen both our resolutions and dependence; for nothing is more fickle and uncertain than the heart of man. Men are of several sorts and sizes; three I shall mention. Good christians, who have a clear and undoubted right to the privileges of the new covenant; yet they stand

in need of the Lord's supper, that they may give Christ a new and hearty welcome in their souls by the solemn remembrance of his love, and also have their right solemnly confirmed and ratified, that their confidence and joy in the Lord may be quickened and increased, Acts 8:39. Or else lapsed believers; these come by the solemn remembrance of Christ's death to be set in joint again, and restored to God's favour, whilst both they and God renew the promise of the destruction of sin, 1 John 2:1. Another sort are weak, wavering, doubtful christians, James 1:8, who come because of their imperfect estate, that they may be confirmed and strengthened, that the comfort of their christianity may be more explicit, and their resolutions against sin fortified, that they may more glory in the death and cross of Christ, feeling the effects of it in their own souls, Gal. 6:14, and look upon Christ, not simply propounded as dead, but as dead for them, and themselves dead with him.

Use. Here is direction to us about the improvement of our communion with Christ, to look more to the effect and fruit of sacraments; have we the communion of his death?

1. Of your baptism. Do you live as one that is washed from his sins, that is baptized into the death of Christ? What virtue have you to quell sin? What likeness do you express? Baptism is the best preparation for the Lord's supper; if you have the fruit of that, you may more comfortably come to the other: John 13:8, 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.' We are utterly unqualified and unprepared for the Lord's supper if we be not washed. Now though no man can say his heart is clean, yet every good christian maketh conscience of his baptismal vow; he purifieth himself as Christ is pure; the work is a-doing. If this conscience be not in us, the whole action is lost to us, yea, will bring a judgment upon us. What do we come about but the destruction of sin? Is it really your burden? Have you not only a wish but a will to get rid of it? If so you have been labouring in it, you desire solemnly to remember Christ's death, to strengthen your resolutions, and increase your dependence, that in

these means you may meet with more encouragement; then come and see what Christ will do for you.

2. As to the Lord's supper, your great business here is to commemorate Christ's death, who is evidently set forth, and as it were crucified before your eyes. Now you do not commemorate his death as a tragical story, but as a mystery of godliness, and therefore you are to look to the end of it, which is the destruction of sin. This is what man needeth, this is that which God offereth.

[1.] This is needed by man; we are undone for ever if sin be not destroyed. We may take up the church's words: Lam. 5:11, 'The crown is fallen from our head; woe unto us, that we have sinned!' If we had a broken-hearted sense of what we have brought upon ourselves by sin, we would more prize our remedy: we come to be saved from sin, and so by consequence from wrath and hell. And shall we be cold in such addresses to God, while we have so much sin in us?

[2.] This is offered by God. His great intention of sending Christ into the world was to be 'a propitiation for our sins;' 1 John 4:10, 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins;' and therefore he set him forth in the gospel: Rom. 3:24, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.' How is it offered?

(1.) It is dearly purchased, by the death of Christ; that was the price paid for our ransom, which both commendeth his love—Rom. 5:8, 'But God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us'—and assureth our confidence: Rom. 8:32, 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?'

(2.) It is freely offered: Isa. 55:1, 'Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price;' Rev.

22:17, 'And the Spirit and the bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come, and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' These blessings come freely to you, though they cost Christ dear.

(3.) It is surely sealed and conveyed to every penitent believer; for God by deed and instrument reacheth out to every believer the body and blood of our crucified Saviour, or the benefits of Christ's death. To others it is a nullity; the whole duty is lost to them who regard iniquity in their hearts. Therefore resolve without any reservation to devote yourselves to God, always to watch and strive against sin.

SERMON III

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.—ROM. 6:4.

THE words are a proof that we are baptized into Christ's death. The apostle proveth it by explaining the rites of baptism. The ancient manner of baptism was to dip the parties baptized, and as it were to bury them under water for a while; and if baptism hath the figure of a burial, but with a hope to rise again, then it signifieth two things—Christ's death and resurrection, the one directly and formally, the other by consequence; and our communion with him in both: 'Therefore we are buried with him in baptism,' &c.

In the words the apostle speaketh—

1. Of something directly and primarily signified in baptism, 'We are buried with him,' &c.
2. Of something by just consequence and inference thence, 'That like as,' &c.

1. That which is primarily and directly signified in baptism, 'We are buried with him in baptism into his death.' The like expression you have, Col. 2:12, 'Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.' The putting the baptized person into the water denoteth and proclaimeth the burial of Christ, and we by submitting to it are baptized with him, or profess to be dead to sin; for none but the dead are buried. So that it signifieth Christ's death for sin, and our dying unto sin. You will say, If the rite hath this signification and use, why is it not retained? I answer—Christianity lieth not in ceremonies; the principal thing in baptism is the washing away of sin: Acts 22:16, 'Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins;' that may be done by pouring on of water as well as dipping. Other things were used about baptism then, as the stripping themselves of their clothes, even to stark nakedness; whence came the notions of putting off and putting on so frequently used: Eph. 4:22, 24, 'That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man;' and Col. 3:9, 10, 'Seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man,' &c. Gal. 3:27, 'As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.' Now none rigorously urge the continuance of these ceremonies; as long as the substance is retained, we may not quarrel about the manner.

2. That which was signified with just consequence and inference is 'our conforming to Christ's resurrection.' Baptism referreth to this also as a significant emblem, for the going out of the water is a kind of resurrection, so it signifieth Christ's resurrection and ours. Now, our resurrection is double—to the life of grace spoken of here, and called the first resurrection, or to the life of glory; baptism relateth to that also, 1 Cor. 15:29, 'Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead?' Baptism is a putting in and taking out of the water, or a being buried with a hope to rise. The former is intended here, our rising to the life of grace. All this abundantly proveth that those which are dead to sin cannot live any longer therein.

In the latter clause the pattern of Christ's resurrection is first propounded, then applied, the protasis, the apodosis.

1. The protasis, or the proposal of the pattern, 'Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father.'

2. The conformity, or similitude on our part, 'Even so we should walk in the newness of life.'

First, In the pattern propounded you may observe two things:—

1. Christ's state after his burial, 'He was raised up from the dead.'

2. The efficient cause, 'By the glory of the Father;' that is, by his glorious power, as it is explained, 2 Cor. 13:4, 'He was crucified through weakness, but he liveth by the power of God;' and elsewhere by 'the glory of God,' is meant 'his power.' So John 11:40, 'If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God,' that is, his power in raising Lazarus to life. The agreement to this purpose is observable of Eph. 3:16, 'That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with all might;' with Col. 1:11, 'Strengthened with all might according to his glorious power.' And this power doth effect that great change in us which fits us for the new life; as Eph. 1:19, 20, 'And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places;' Col. 2:12, 'Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.' It is the mighty operation of God that beginneth this life in us; the same power raiseth us first to a new life, then to a glorious eternity.

Secondly, The apodosis, wherein it is applied, 'Even so we also should walk in newness of life.' The similitude holdeth good in these things:—

1. As the resurrection of Christ followed his death, so doth newness of life our death to sin.

2. As Christ was raised to a blessed immortal life by the glorious power of the Father, so are we renewed and quickened by the same power.

3. The effect of the new birth is mentioned; our walking in newness of life, rather than regeneration or the new birth itself, which yet is signified by baptism, and Christ's resurrection is the pattern and cause of. The similitude holdeth good in the power, and in the new state of life, which supposeth such a principle.

Doct. That baptism strongly obligeth us to walk in newness of life.

1. Let me speak of the nature of this new life.

2. How strongly we are obliged by baptism to carry it on through the power of God.

First, This newness of life, it may be considered—

1. In its foundation, which is the new birth or regeneration; for till we are made new creatures we cannot live a new life: John 3:5, 6, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God: that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;' 2 Cor. 5:17, 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' A bowl must be made round before it can run round; all creatures are first made and fitted for their use before they can perform the operations belonging to that creature; so a new being and holy nature is put into us, and we are powerfully changed before we can live unto God. Man's nature is not in such a condition as to need some reparation only, but is wholly corrupt. Therefore we must be born again, there must be a change of the whole man from a state of corruption to a state of holiness, and a principle of new life must be infused into us, whence flow new actions and delights.

2. The first regeneration consists of two parts—mortification and vivification. Mortification doth conquer the fleshly inclination to

things present, and vivification doth quicken us to live unto God. There is need of both. Of mortification, that we may die to the flesh and to the world, for there is a seducing principle within, and a tempting object without: within there is the flesh, without the world; we die to both. To the flesh: Gal. 5:24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.' To the world: Gal. 6:14, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.' While the mind and heart is captivated to the flesh, we can never cease to sin. There is need of vivification, that you may live to God; for the recess from the world is not enough, unless there be an access to God; and therefore the immediate principles that carry us to God are love kindled in us by faith in Christ. For the new creature, being interpreted as to vivification, is nothing else but faith working by love. Compare Gal. 5:6, 'In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any' thing; but faith worketh by love,' with Gal. 6:15, 'In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a new creature.' These two, faith and love, are the principles and springs of all christian practice and conversation. You are never changed till the heart be changed; and the heart is never changed till the will and love be changed. Well, then, it is not enough to die to sin, but we must walk in newness of life; both must be minded; but we begin first at mortification, and then proceed to the positive duties of a new life. Holiness consists not in a mere forbearance of a sensual life, but principally in living to God; the heart of it within is the love of God, its inclination towards him, delight in him, desire after him, care to please him, loathness to offend him; and the expression of it without is the exercise of grace according to the direction of God's word. Yea, these two branches are not only seen at first, but every step of the new life is a dying to sin, and a rising to newness of life, a retiring from the world to God.

3. As to the rule, which is the infallible revelation of God, delivered to the church by the prophets and apostles, comprised in the Holy Scriptures, and sealed by miracles and operations of the Holy Ghost, who was the author of them. The new creature is very inquisitive to

know God's will: Rom. 12:2, 'And be not conformed to this world; but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.' Grace is sometimes called light, and sometimes life, for there is direction in it as well as inclination. This light we have from the word and Spirit. In the word our duties are determined, and the new creature is naturally carried to the word; it is the seed of that life it hath: 1 Peter 1:23, 'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever;' and it is the rule of acting and exercising this life: Gal. 6:16, 'As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them,' &c. There is a cognation between the word and the renewed heart: Heb. 8:10, 'I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their heart;' as the stamp and impress answereth to the seal, or the law within to the law without, the law written on the heart to the law written on tables or in the Bible.

4. As to the end, which is the pleasing, glorifying, and enjoying of God; it is a living to God: Gal. 2:19, 'I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God;' 1 Cor. 10:31, 'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God;' 2 Cor. 5:9, 'Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.' A new life inferreth new ends and pursuits, the new being obligeth us 'to be to the praise of his glorious grace,' Eph. 1:12.

5. The properties of it.

[1.] It is a godly life, as beginning and ending in God, and carried on by those who are absolutely devoted and addicted to him: 2 Peter 3:11, 'What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?' It is called 'the life of God,' Eph. 4:18. It is from God and for God; you live by him and to him; in others, self is the principle, measure, and end.

[2.] It is a holy life, measured by the pure word of God: Ps. 119:140, 'Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it;' Rom. 7:12, 'The law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good;' not by our own natural inclinations, or the fashions of the world, but God's direction: 1 Peter 1:15, 'As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;' Luke 1:75, 'That we should serve him in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our lives.' The inclinations are planted in us by God's first work: Eph. 4:24, 'That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.' They are directed by his word, all moral duties being comprised in those words, holiness or dedication to God, righteousness, performing our duties to men: Acts 24:26, 'Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men.'

[3.] It is an heavenly life: Phil. 3:20, 'Our conversation is in heaven.' Our great work is to prepare for everlasting life, seeking, rejoicing in that endless happiness we shall have with God; a living for or upon the unseen everlasting happiness, as purchased for us by Christ, and freely given us of God. We live for it, as we seek after it with our utmost diligence: Acts 26:7, 'Unto which promises the twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.' We live upon it, as fetching thence all our supports, solaces, and encouragements: 2 Cor. 4:18, 'While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.'

Secondly, How strongly we are obliged by baptism to this kind of life. Baptism hath three offices, it representeth, sealeth, undertaketh; it representeth as a signifying sign, sealeth as a confirming sign, undertaketh as a bond, wherewith we bind ourselves when we submit to it.

1. What it representeth, primarily and principally the death of Christ, and secondarily his resurrection, the one in order to the other.

[1.] The death of Christ, which is the meritorious cause of all the grace and good which is communicated to us in this or any other sacrament or mystery of the gospel. We are told, 1 Peter 2:14, 'That he himself bore our own sins in his body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, might be alive to righteousness.' I told you before that Christ's death may be considered as an instance of his love, or as the price paid for the blessings of the new covenant; as an instance of his love it worketh morally, as the price of our blessings meritoriously; as it worketh morally and exciteth our gratitude, we should not go on in that course which brought these sufferings on Christ, but live holily, in gratitude to him, and kindness to ourselves, lest we bear our own sins, which are so hateful to God. This consideration we exclude not; but to make this all the sense of the place, no christian heart can endure; therefore we go to the second consideration, as the price and ransom of our own souls, and of the blessings we stand in need of. He purchased grace to mortify sin, and quicken us to the duties of holiness, that the love of sin might be weakened in our hearts, and we might be quickened to live to God in the Spirit. Now, if this be represented in baptism, then surely it strongly obligeth us to improve this grace for those ends and purposes; and that this is represented is evident, for in the apostle's interpretation baptism is a sort of burial; and first it is a commemoration of the burial of Christ, who, when his soul was separated from his flesh, he was buried, his sacred body was laid up in the chambers of the grave. This was necessary not only in compliance with the types—Mat. 12:40, 'As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.' Christ was found to be the true Messiah by his resurrection from the dead, as Jonas was authorised to be a true prophet of the Lord by his miraculous deliverance. Prophecies of this you may see: Ps. 16:9, 'My flesh also shall rest in hope;' Isa. 53:9, 'He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death,'—but also this was necessary for the confirmation of the reality of his death past, and the verity of his resurrection suddenly to follow. Therefore in baptism the truth of his death is represented as the ground of all our hopes.

[2.] The next thing which is represented is the truth of his resurrection. Christ, that purchased this grace, is risen to apply it; he is a saviour *merito et efficacia*; his merit immediately depended on his death, and his power for effectual application (though mediately on that too) depended immediately on his resurrection; for Christ rose on purpose to turn men from their iniquities: Acts 3:26, 'God having raised up his Son Jesus, hath sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.' Christ's resurrection hath a twofold regard—(1.) It is a pattern; (2.) It is a pledge.

(1.) It is a pattern of our rising from the death of sin to newness of life. If Christ, that was dead and buried, rose again, and cast off the burden of our sins, which for our sakes he undertook, or cast off the form of a servant, we must not only be dead and buried, but we must rise also. Christ's resurrection is everywhere made a pattern of the new birth: 1 Peter 1:3, 'He hath begotten us to a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead;' that is the influential cause and pattern of it. So 1 Peter 3:21, 'The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.' *Anima non lavatione, sed responsione sancitur.* The soul is dedicated to God to live a new life, not by the water, but by the answer to the demands of the new covenant, and this is by the resurrection of Christ.

(2.) As it is a pledge of his power, by which that great change is wrought in us: Eph. 1:19, 20, 'And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.' To convert souls to God there needeth a mighty working of efficacious power, which exceedeth all contrary power which might hinder and impede that work. Men by nature are averse from God; the devil seeketh to detain them from him, and his powerful engine is the world. But now, if they are to be raised as Christ was raised, what can oppose this work? So that we have not only the merit of his humiliation, but the power of his exaltation. And besides, that this

power is likely to be exercised for us, we may consider that Christ is said to rise by his own power: John 2:19, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up;' John 10:17, 'I lay down my life, that I may take it again;' and to be raised by the power of his Father, which noteth authority to rise again, and having fully done his work, upon which account he is said 'to be brought again from the dead,' Heb. 13:20; and the apostle inferreth from thence, ver. 21, 'Being made perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.' Now, if both these be implied in baptism, it doth mightily oblige the parties baptized to look after the effect of these two acts of Christ's mediation; for christians should not only believe the death and resurrection of Christ, but feel it: by the merit of his death and efficacy of his resurrection we obtain this new life, and both are the causes of our dying to sin and living to God.

2. What it sealeth or confirmeth. The new covenant, wherein God hath promised the gift of the Spirit, to renew, sanctify, and heal all those that enter into it. We have the grace to destroy sin by virtue of the death and burial of Christ, but the promises are in the new covenant. That the new covenant is sealed in baptism, see Mat. 28:19, 20, 'Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;' Mark 16:16, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.' Now the great promise of the new covenant is the Spirit to renew and cleanse the soul. Surely this is properly signified in baptism: John 3:5, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' And Titus 3:5, 'According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' As the body is washed with water without, so is the soul cleansed by the Spirit within; as at the baptism of our Saviour, the descending of the Holy Ghost upon him was a visible pledge of what should be done afterward; for at his baptism the fruit of all baptisms was visibly represented; we are admitted children of his family, as Christ was declared to be 'the

well-beloved Son of God,' Mat. 3:17; and we have the Spirit of his Son: Gal. 4:6, 'Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.' As God promiseth 'to pour out water on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground,' so to 'pour out his Spirit on the seed, and his blessing upon thy offspring,' Isa. 44:3. And the Spirit itself is figured by water: John 4:14, 'Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life;' John 7:37, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;' Rev. 22:17, 'Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' Now, unless we will receive this grace in vain, we are bound to wait for and obey the Spirit's motions, either by way of restraint or excitation: Rom. 8:13, 14, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God;' we that pretend to come to God for this promise of the Spirit, as in baptism we do: Acts 2:38, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'

3. It obligeth, as there is a kind of undertaking to show forth the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection by our submission to it. Our receiving baptism implieth two things—(1.) A public and open profession; (2.) A solemn bond, wherewith we bind our souls.

[1.] A public and open profession, wherein we profess a communion with Christ's death and resurrection, or to die and rise with Christ. In the general, that baptism is an open profession; for it is required as a sign of the faith that is in our hearts: Rom. 10:10, 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation;' and Mark 16:16, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned;' Acts 2:38, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' As circumcision was the badge of the Jewish profession, so is baptism of the profession of Christianity. Therefore

the Jews are called circumcision, and we are called the purified people: Titus 2:14, 'Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works;' and 'those that are purged from their sins,' 2 Peter 1:9. And more distinctly what we profess is plain and evident in this ordinance; we profess to die and rise with Christ.

(1.) Death; yea, in the text not only and simply to be dead, but to be buried with Christ. If baptism expresseth an image of burial, and every burial supposeth death, not only of Christ, but us, surely we are bound not only to die unto sin at first, but to make our mortification more thorough and constant; for as burial noteth the continuance of Christ's death, so should we persevere and increase in the mortification of sin, for burial is a continued dying to sin. We should not only renounce and give over all the sins of our former lives; but persevere in this resolution, and increase in our endeavour against sin daily. A christian living in sin, and serving his lusts, is like a spectre and ghost arisen out of the grave.

(2.) So for Christ's resurrection. In this ordinance we profess to rise again with Christ, and therefore should not only put off the old man, or body of sin, but have an earnest impulsion within ourselves to the duties of holiness, and be breathing after, and pressing on yet more and more to the purity and perfection of the heavenly estate: Phil. 3:14, 'I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' Well, then, unless those that are baptized into Christ change their course of life, all their profession is but an empty formality, a mockery, a mere nullity as to reward, not as to punishment: 'Their circumcision is made uncircumcision,' Rom. 3:25. As when God came to reckon with his people: Jer. 9:25, 26, 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will punish the circumcised with the uncircumcised; Egypt, Judah, and Edom with the children of Ammon and Moab, and all that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness; for all these nations are uncircumcised in flesh, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.' Circumcision was the sign and seal of the new covenant

to them, as baptism is to us; they were distinguished from other nations that were without it, and this prerogative they stood not a little upon: Gen. 34:14, 'We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised, for that were a reproach unto us.' They quarrelled with Peter: Acts 11:3, 'Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.' Now, to cut off this presumption, God telleth them this was a sorry stay for them to trust to; for he intended shortly to hold a visitation wherein he would proceed against wicked persons without difference, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, and would deal impartially with the one and the other, because the one were such in heart as the others were in flesh. The outward rite is of no force and worth in God's account.

[2.] It is a bond wherewith we bind our souls. It is enough to evidence that, because it is 'an answer to the covenant,' 1 Peter 3:24. As there God undertaketh to renew and strengthen us, and give us grace by his almighty power, so we undertake to improve this grace, and to put off the old man, that we may walk in newness of life; and covenant-engaging is the most solemn engaging: Ezek. 20:37, 'I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.' As also by analogy: Gal. 5:3, 'I testify to every man that is circumcised that he is a debtor to the whole law.' He obligeth himself to the whole economy of Moses. So by parity of reason, he that is baptized is a debtor to the law of faith. And so debtors is the word used by the apostle: Rom. 8:12, 'Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.' A covenant-bond is sacred as that of an oath or vow. A solemn promise made to God hath the nature of a vow: Num. 30:2, 'If a man vow a vow to the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.' Now, if it be not performed, we violate God's ordinance, and are infringers of the oath sworn to Christ, and so are to be reckoned among the perfidious rather than the faithful. Besides, take it in the notion of a dedication, or consecration, or yielding ourselves to the Lord. Every consecration implieth an execration, whether it be

formally expressed or no. Sometimes it is expressed: Neh. 10:29, 'They entered into a curse, and into an oath to walk in God's law.' Now see if this holds not good in the new covenant; consider the tenor of it: Mark 16:16, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.' Therefore the bond of the covenant is a strict bond.

Use 1. Is matter of lamentation that so many are baptized into Christ, and yet express so little of the fruit of his death or resurrection. Alas! the rabble of nominal christians live in defiance of the religion which they profess, and are angry with those that would reduce them to the strictness of it. They are alive to sin and dead to righteousness; as if they had promised rather to continue in their sins than to renounce and disclaim them, and were in covenant with the devil, the world, and the flesh, rather than Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; as if they had vowed to be utterly unlike to Christ. Now, it will go ill with them in the judgment, worse than with heathen, because they knew better, were obliged to do better, had grace to do better, in offer at least. We laugh at the rudeness of one bred up at the plough, but are sorely displeased at the ill-manners of one bred in places of more refined conversation. The heathens were never buried with Christ in baptism, never professed to be dead to the world or alive to God; but christians are under a solemn engagement, and if they had the courage to set about their duty, would God be wanting to them?

Use 2. To persuade you to make conscience of your baptismal vow, and to observe and perform it with all good fidelity, and that in both parts of it.

1. Dying to sin; you are not only dead, but buried. Oh! do not neglect the mortifying of your sins. You think it hard to renounce sensual delight and pleasure, but better lose the pleasure of the senses than incur the pains of hell. That is that which our Saviour teacheth us: Mat. 5:29, 30, 'If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. For it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.'

And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee,' &c. Literally that place cannot be taken; no man ever yet hated his own flesh, nor can he lawfully hate it; this is contrary to the sixth commandment. For a man to hurt his body to prevent his sin is to run from one fire into another, to be guilty of murder to prevent adultery; the fault is not in the eye, but in the heart: Mat. 15:19, 'For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies.' If the right eye were plucked out, the left eye might easily transmit the temptation. Metaphorically you may take it for the principal members of the body of sin, beloved lusts. But the meaning is, it is better to be blind than damned, to lose their senses than lose their souls, much more to deny the pleasures of sense. You may say, If you allow yourselves a little liberty, the danger is not great; you should say rather, The pleasure is not great, therefore mortify your sins.

Motives.

[1.] Till sins be mortified they easily break out again: 2 Peter 2:20, 'For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome,' &c. Their heart is in secret league with their lust, which is never thoroughly dissolved.

[2.] Your consolations will be but small. Mortification breeds joy and peace, especially the mortification of a master-sin: Ps. 18:3, 'I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.' A man showeth his uprightness in mastering this sin. The dearer any victory over sin costs you, the sweeter will the issue be. Voluntarily and allowedly to commit a known sin, or omit a known duty, maketh our sincerity questionable: James 4:17, 'Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.'

[3.] Crosses will be many: Hosea 5:15, 'I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early;' Isa. 27:9, 'By this therefore shall

the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.'

[4.] Doubts will be troublesome. To obey Christ a little and the flesh more is no true obedience, and such will have no rejoicing of heart: Job 20:12–14, 'Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue, though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth, yet his meat in his bowels is turned into poison, and becomes the gall of asps within him.' Sin proveth bitter and vexing till we leave it, and sinners still have a secret sting within.

[5.] The heart is benumbed and stupefied: Heb. 3:13, 'Hardened through the deceitfulness of sin;' that is the sorest judgment, to become stupid.

2. To walk in newness of life.

[1.] It is the most noble life the nature of man is capable of; it is called 'the life of God,' Eph. 4:18. It floweth from the gracious presence of God dwelling in us by the Spirit, which engageth us in the highest designs.

[2.] It is the most delectable life: Prov. 3:17, 'Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.' We live upon God as represented to us in a mediator, and avoid the filthiness, delusions, vexations of the world and the flesh.

[3.] It is the most profitable life; it is a preparation for and introduction into eternal life: Rom. 6:22, 'But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.'

SERMON IV

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.—ROM. 6:5.

HERE the apostle proveth that continuance in sin cannot be supposed in them that are really and sincerely dedicated to Christ in baptism, from the strict union between Christ and them, and their communion already thereupon with him in his death. They are 'planted into Christ,' and particularly 'into the likeness of his death;' therefore the virtue and likeness of his resurrection is communicated to them: 'For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.'

In the words—(1.) A supposition; and (2.) An inference.

1. The supposition proceedeth on two grounds. One is taken from the general nature of sacraments, that they signify and seal our union and communion with Christ. The other from their direct and immediate use, our communion with his death.

2. The inference and consequence drawn thence, that 'we shall be also planted into the likeness of his resurrection.' The reason of the consequence is, because if we have indeed communion with Christ in one act, we shall have communion with him in another; for the one doth but make way for the other, the death of sin for the life of holiness. But what is this likeness of his death, and this likeness of his resurrection? (1.) The likeness of his death hath been already explained to be a dying to sin and to the world, as the fuel and bait of sin: 'Our old man is crucified,' ver. 6; and 'The world is crucified to us, and we to it,' Gal. 6:14. Not that we are utterly dead to all the motions of sin, but the reign of it is broken, its power much weakened. (2.) What is this likeness of his resurrection? There is a twofold resurrection—a resurrection to the life of grace, and to the

life of glory. The one may be called the resurrection of the soul, the other the resurrection of the body. Both are often spoken of in scripture. The first is spoken of here; our being quickened when we were dead in trespasses and sins, and raised from the death of sin to newness of life, ver. 4. But though regeneration or resurrection to the life of grace be principally intended, yet resurrection to the life of glory is not altogether excluded; for the one is the beginning of the other, and the other surely followeth upon it by God's promise. The joys and bliss of the last resurrection are the reward of those who have part in the first resurrection, and are raised to holiness of life. When the apostle had first said, Phil. 3:10, 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection,' he presently addeth, in ver. 11, 'If by any means I may attain to the resurrection of the dead.' When once we are raised from the death of sin to the life of grace, then the benefit reacheth further than to anything within time; it accompanieth a man till death and after death, and preserveth his dust in the grave, that it may be raised into a body again; and so in body and soul we are made partakers of the glorious resurrection of the just. So Eph. 2:5, 6, 'He hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together with Christ.' The one expression signifieth our regeneration, the other our rising to glory. First he quickeneth us by his converting grace, and then glorifieth us by his rewarding grace. All that I shall say concerning this double resurrection may be referred to these three considerations:—

[1.] That both are the fruit of our union with Christ, his raising us to a new life, and his raising us to the life of glory: Rom. 8:11, 'If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.' The same Spirit that we received by union with Christ doth first sanctify our souls, and then raise our bodies.

[2.] That the one giveth right to the other: Rom. 6:8, 'If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also rise with him;' that is, live

with him in glory: Rom. 8:13, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.'

[3.] That when we are fully freed from sin, then we attain to the full resurrection. Somewhat of the fruit of sin remaineth in our bodies till the last day, but then is our final deliverance; therefore it is called 'the day of redemption,' Eph. 4:30. Well, then, the meaning is, if the fruits of his death be accomplished in us, we shall be sure to partake of all the fruits of his resurrection.

Doct. That union with Christ, sealed in baptism, inferreth a conformity or likeness both to his death and resurrection.

This point I will lay forth to you in these five distinct considerations.

1. That there is a strict union between Christ and believers.
2. That this union is signified and sealed in baptism.
3. That this union sealed in baptism inferreth a likeness or conformity to Christ.
4. That this likeness and conformity to Christ is both with respect to his death and resurrection.
5. If with the one, by infallible consequence it must be with the other.

First, That there is a strict union between Christ and believers. It is represented in scripture by many metaphors. I will look no further than that of the text. The similitude is taken from a graff, which becometh one plant with the tree upon which it is engrafted, and draweth the sap of life and fruitfulness out of it. So we are united to Christ as the stock, and receive the Spirit from him, as the graff doth the sap from the root. The apostle's word is *σὺμφυτοί*, 'we are planted together.' We are not so planted together as one tree is by another, *sicut arbor inter vel juxta arbores*; thus a whole orchard is planted together; but the one is planted into another, as the branch is

into the stock and root. Trees that are planted by one another may be said to be planted together in regard of situation and place; but a slip planted into a stock is planted together in regard of sustentation and influence. Once more, this being planted together is not in regard of time, for now some, now others are planted into it; but in regard of union. All first or last are planted into Christ; they do not all live together in one age, nor are they converted at one time, but they all live in Christ. But because similitudes do not every way square with the thing which they are brought to represent, let us see wherein this similitude of a graff is like or unlike the mystery set forth thereby.

1. Let us take notice of the difference and dissimilitude.

[1.] In ordinary engraffings the stock is base when the plant is noble and generous, as when the branch of a choice apple-tree is planted into a crab-stock. But the case is quite otherwise here; all the goodness is in the stock or root; we were 'branches of the wild olive-tree,' Rom. 11:17; or 'the degenerate plants of a strange vine,' as the prophet speaketh, Jer. 2:21. Men, when they engraff, seek out the choicest slips or plants, and are wont to send far and near for such; but God maketh another choice of plants, wild by nature, who can bring forth no good fruit of themselves, and graffeth them into Christ the mediator, 'That they may be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ Jesus to the praise and glory of God,' Phil. 1:11.

[2.] Be the slip generous or base, if it be dead, the engraffing is in vain. Though the stock be never so lusty and growing, it cannot quicken a dead slip. But it is otherwise here: Eph. 2:1, 'And you that were dead in trespasses and sins, yet now hath he quickened.'

[3.] The graff bringeth forth fruit according to its own nature and its own kind; but here the graff is changed by the stock, and followeth the nature of the stock: 'We are made partakers of a divine nature,' 2 Peter 1:4, and so live to God; this fruit belongeth to the stock, and wholly cometh from his influence.

2. Let us see the likeness and resemblance.

[1.] As the branch and stock make one tree, so we that are cut off from our old root, and planted into Christ, become one with him: 'I am the vine, ye are the branches,' John 15:5. We are one with him, not by way of adhesion, as ivy cleaveth to the oak, and receiveth nourishment from it; but by way of insition and implantation: there is a closer union between the graff and the stock than there is between the ivy and the oak.

[2.] In regard of influence, as plants receive moisture and juice from the root, so do we receive nourishment from Christ. As the apostle speaketh of the covenant-stock: Rom. 11:17, 'Thou partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree;' meaning it of the privilege of ordinances and means of grace, which the Gentiles did partake of by becoming Abraham's seed by faith. So it is true of the mediator, or the root and head of the renewed estate; we partake of his fatness, without which we should soon die and wither: John 15:4, 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.' The Spirit by the grace of the Redeemer is distributed to believers, as juice to the branches, as long as they abide in their stock, and are not cut or broken off. It is not a bare imitation, but influence.

3. The effects are life, growth, and fruitfulness.

[1.] Life: 1 John 5:12, 'He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.' We have no life but as planted into Christ, who is our root; both the life we have and the life we hope for cometh from him: Gal. 2:20, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'

[2.] Growth: Col. 2:19, 'Not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit

together, increaseth with the increase of God.' Every member doth its part, but the influence, whereby they increase, is from the head. Now our growth is either in mortification, when by degrees we get more strength to kill sin, or in vivification, or our rising more and more to newness of life.

[3.] Fruitfulness: John 15:5, 'He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit;' and the wisdom that is from above is said to be full of good fruits, James 3:17, that is, plentiful in acts of holiness, obedience, and love: to do a little good may be more from chance than nature. Well, then, from the whole we see that the power of dying to sin and walking in newness of life is derived from Jesus Christ, and he should have the praise of all; for he merited these benefits for us, and effecteth them in us by his Spirit, which we receive by virtue of union with him.

Secondly, That this union is signified and sealed in baptism. I will not speak much of this, because I handled it before in another verse. Only let me mind you that there is a visible external professed implantation into Christ, and an internal and real implantation: the one is by baptism, the other is by the Spirit; both together make complete baptism: 1 Cor. 12:13, 'For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.' One alone is the baptism of water, the other the baptism of the Spirit. The one inferreth an obligation, the other produceth an inclination, to die unto sin and to live unto God. And therefore—(1.) Let us speak of baptism; and (2.) Of regeneration.

1. Of baptism, which inferreth an obligation. All those that profess faith in Christ, and an interest in him, are by baptism taken into the number of his disciples, and visibly joined into his church: Acts 2:41, 'Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.' And therefore they are bound to rise from the death of sin to the life of grace, and to make use of the virtue purchased by Christ's death, and

evidenced by his resurrection, to this end and purpose, and to use all good endeavours to subdue sin; and a double woe and curse shall befall us unless we verify and make good this vow and profession by our constant practice. And therefore all the members of the visible church are to be put in mind that they are planted into the likeness of his death, and engaged to walk in newness of life: 1 John 2:6, 'He that saith he abideth in him, ought to walk also as he walked.' Not only he that abideth in him, as a real member of his mystical body, but he that saith he abideth in him. All that profess communion with Christ, their profession bindeth them to a resemblance of Christ, otherwise their baptism is but a mockery, and their profession a dissembling and counterfeit respect to Christ's name and memory. It may be said to them, as Alexander said to one that bore his name, but was a coward, Either lay aside the name, or put on greater courage. So either do as christians, or do not pretend to be christians.

2. As to regeneration figured by baptism. In regeneration there is planted in us, or put into us, a principle destructive of sin, and impulsive to holiness. Now the working and urging of this principle should not be restrained or obstructed.

[1.] As to the destruction of sin, the checks of the new nature should be observed: 1 John 3:9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.'

[2.] As to the perfecting of holiness, where the life of holiness is begun, we should give way to its operations; and when the new nature would break out with operations proper to itself, we should obey these motions: 1 John 2:5, 'But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected;' that is, breaketh out into its consummate and perfect effect. So 2 Peter 1:8, 'For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that you shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Grace in its vigour will put you upon fruits becoming a christian; this vigour should not be quenched, which is our internal baptism.

Thirdly, This union sealed in baptism inferreth a likeness and conformity to Christ. I prove it thus:—

1. Surely we are cut off from our old stock, and planted into a new one to better our condition, that it may be otherwise with us in Christ than we were when we merely belonged to Adam. This improvement of our estate and condition cometh from our being planted into a new stock, and partaking of his virtue and influence, and that inferreth a likeness: 1 Cor. 15:49, 'As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.' As we grew upon our natural root, we were like Adam; but when cut off and planted into a new root, we are made like Christ. How like Adam? Gen. 5:3, 'Adam begat a son in his own likeness;' corrupt man begat a corrupt son, mortal man begat a mortal child. So by proportion we may conceive of the image of the heavenly, first made holy, then happy creatures. In the first we had the seed and pledge of death and corruption, and in the second the seed and pledge of incorruption, immortality, and life.

2. Christ was fit to be a pattern to whom all the rest of the heirs of promise should be conformed, for this reason, because he was the head of the renewed state. *Primum in unoquoque genere est mensura et regula cæterorum*—the first and best in every kind is the measure and rule of the rest. He is a fountain of grace set up in our nature: Rom. 8:29, 'He hath predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be *πρωτοτοκος*, the first-born among many brethren,' that principal new man to whom we might be conformed. In every case wherein one thing beareth the image and likeness of another, there must not only be similitude, but deduction, or a means of conveying that likeness. Both are in Christ, therefore Christ is set up as a pattern in our nature, who lived among men in the same flesh that we have, to teach us a life of holiness and patience, and contempt of the world.

3. The sameness of the Spirit in head and members doth evidence this. For the Spirit worketh uniformly in both: Rom. 8:9, 'But ye are

not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you.' The sap of the stock doth all. Now, if the stock be the good vine, the fruit must be as the sap is, the branches must bring forth grapes. Christ as the root communicateth to us not only the fruits and effects of his death and resurrection, but also the likeness of it, in a way proper for our reception. We partake of the likeness of the root by analogy and just proportion, and what was done to Christ literally is spiritually done to us. He died for sin, we die unto sin; he rose to live unto God, so do we in our way here upon earth, as we seek his glory and do his will.

Fourthly, That this likeness and conformity to Christ is carried on with respect to his death and resurrection. To clear this it is good to see wherein our likeness to Christ consists. He was to be a pattern to us in three things—(1.) His graces; (2.) His states; (3.) The special acts of his mediation.

1. His graces. There are certain graces wherein we resemble God, as wisdom, purity, holiness, goodness, and truth; in these God himself is our pattern: Mat. 5:8, 'Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' There are other graces that help us in the duties of subjection to God, as faith, patience, humility, self-denial, and obedience; in these we cannot have the pattern from God, for God is over all, and subject to none, therefore in these Christ is a pattern to us. As, for instance, humility: Mat. 11:29, 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.' For obedience: Heb. 5:8, 'Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.' For patience and self-denial: 1 Peter 2:21, 23, 'Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.' Thus in his graces must we resemble him.

2. In his states of humiliation and exaltation, wherein we must be content to follow him, who first suffered, and then entered into the glory that he spake of. His people are usually afflicted, persecuted,

slandered; now they must suffer all for the hopes of a better life, because therein they do but 'follow the captain of their salvation, who was made perfect through sufferings,' Heb. 2:10; 'And if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together,' Rom. 8:17. So 2 Tim. 2:11, 12, 'If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him;' 2 Cor. 4:10, 'Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.' And in many other places, where Christ's pattern is urged to bespeak our patience and encourage our hopes, that we may bear his cross after him, with a hope of those endless joys which our Redeemer now possesseth. He first 'endured the shame,' Heb. 12:2, and was misrepresented in the world as we are, but at length was vindicated, being mightily 'declared to be the Son of God with power.'

3. In the special acts of his mediation, which are his death and resurrection. These are of special consideration; for these are not barely a pattern propounded to our imitation, but have a great influence upon our dying to sin and living to holiness. To clear this, let me note to you that effects of grace in us are ascribed to those acts of Christ's mediation which carry most correspondence with them. Thus our mortification is referred to Christ's dying, and our vivification to his resurrection unto life, our heavenly-mindedness to his ascension; so that all Christ's acts are spiritually verified in us. We die to sin as Christ died for sin, and rise again to newness of life as Christ, rising from the dead, liveth a new kind of life to what he did before. Let us a little state the dependence of the one upon the other. Our acts depend on Christ four ways—(1.) As the effect on the cause; (2.) As the thing purchased on the price; (3.) As the copy on the pattern; (4.) As the thing promised on the pledge thereof.

[1.] As the effect on the cause. By the same virtue by which Christ was raised from the dead, by the same almighty power are we raised to newness of life; the same almighty power is engaged for working grace, and carrying on grace, and perfecting grace, in believers, which wrought in Christ when he was raised from the dead: Eph.

1:19, 20, 'According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead;' compared with Rom. 6:4, 'Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.'

[2.] As the thing purchased on the price. All Christ's actions have an aspect on his merit. The foundation was laid in his death. This resurrection evidenceth that this purchase holdeth good in heaven, and that his merit, ransom, and satisfaction are perfect: Rom. 4:25, 'Who was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification.'

[3.] As the copy on the pattern or original. Christ dying and rising in our nature is a pattern to which all the heirs of promise must be conformed, as the apostle telleth us, 1 Cor. 15:23, 'First Christ, then they that are Christ's.'

[4.] As a thing promised on the pledge thereof. Christ dying is a pledge of our dying to sin; and his rising a pledge of our rising to holiness first, and glory afterwards; therefore our old man is said to be 'crucified with him,' Rom. 6:6, and we are said to 'sit down with him in heavenly places,' Eph. 2:6. It is already done in the mystery, and shall be surely done in the effectual application in all that belong to God.

Fifthly, If there be a likeness to his death, by infallible consequence there shall be a likeness to his resurrection. Those that are dead with Christ shall also live with him: Gal. 2:20, 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live.' Where sin is mortified, there is a new life engendered, which will at length end in the life of glory. It must needs be so for these reasons:—

1. Christ is not divided; those that really partake with him in one act, partake with him in all; it is a necessary consequence. The death of sin and the life of holiness are the two branches wherein we profess our communion with Christ in his death and resurrection, and

therefore these cannot be sundered; we must reckon upon both, or else we have neither: Rom. 6:11, 'Likewise reckon ye yourselves also to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' In our dying to sin Christ's dying is conspicuous in us, and his resurrection in our walking in newness of life; as it was with him, so must it be with us.

2. God doth not love to leave his work imperfect. Now imperfect it would be, if, besides ceasing to do evil, we should not learn to do well: Amos 5:14, 'Seek good, and not evil, that you may live;' and again, ver. 15, 'Hate the evil, and love the good.' Their affection to good must be evidenced by their cordial detestation of evil, and their hatred of evil must kindle their affection to good. This is perfect Christianity. It is said of the foolish builder, that 'he began, and was not able to make an end,' Luke 14:30. Our conversion is complete when there is a turning from sin to God.

3. That the temper of our hearts may carry a meet proportion with the divine grace. Duty is the correlate of mercy. Now grace and mercy are not only privative, but positive: Gen. 15:1, 'I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward;' Ps. 84:11, 'The Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.' So the godly man is described, Ps. 1:1, 2, 'Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in that law doth he meditate day and night.' There is not only an abstinence from gross sins, but an earnest love to God and his ways: Rom. 8:1, 'Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'

4. This is the end of mortification. God subdueth sin to make way for the life of grace: 1 Peter 2:24, 'That we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.' Dying to sin is made a step to the life of righteousness. So Heb. 9:14, 'How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to

God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?' We are hereby freed from clogs and impediments.

5. Sin is the better mortified when life is introduced; for the love of God doth most engage us to hate evil: Ps. 97:10, 'Ye that love the Lord hate evil.' Life is sensible of what is contrary to it.

Use 1. Information. It informeth us of divers truths.

1. Except a man be turned from sin to holiness, he is not made a partaker of Christ; and therefore, while he lives in sin, cannot be justified, or have any right to pardon: he that continueth to live in his sins shall die in his sins, and miserable shall his portion be for ever. Well, then, be persuaded, if we would have the comfort of Christ's death, we must be changed into the likeness of it.

2. How much it concerneth every christian to be cautious and watchful. For he is to remember this within himself, I am to represent Christ's rising and dying; the death of sin must answer the death of Christ, and the new life his resurrection. Now, is Christ's dying and rising seen in us? We were never implanted into him, unless it be so. Therefore, unless we will declare to the world that we have no union with Christ, we must endeavour after holiness. What maketh so many atheists in the world, but because so few christians discover the fruit of their baptism? They live as if they were wholly alive to sin and the world, and dead to righteousness.

3. That they have not yet attained to true Christianity that content themselves with abstaining from gross sins, but make no conscience of loving, serving, pleasing and glorifying God, or preparation for the world to come. They do no man wrong, but have no care of communion with God. Paul could say, ἐμοὶ τὸ ζῆν Χριστὸς, 'To me to live is Christ,' Phil. 1:21, meaning, that he had no other object and employment for his life but Christ and his service. But these wholly live to themselves; a true christian can say, Rom. 14:7, 8, 'None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live,

we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.'

Use 2. Is exhortation, to press you—

1. To die unto sin. All that profess themselves christians are by obligation dead. Oh! do not keep it alive after you have undertaken its death; charge your consciences with your baptismal vow. Besides, Christ hath purchased grace enough for the subduing and mortifying of sin, and we have engaged ourselves to improve this grace. The ordinances call upon us every day to do it yet more and more, the word and sacraments, with the dispensations of which there go some motions of the Holy Ghost: Neh. 9:20, 'Thou gavest them also thy good Spirit to instruct and teach them.' Oh! quench not his motions, disobey not the sanctifying Spirit. If this grace hath taken hold of your hearts in any sort, and you are affected with the offers of it, you are bound to improve it the more: Col. 3:3, 'For ye are dead;' ver. 5, 'Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.' You are dead by vow and covenant, dead by grace offered, dead by grace received. Habitual mortification maketh way for actual. Habitual mortification is when the heart is turned from sin, so that it is turned against it. Actual mortification consists in the resisting and suppressing its motions: Rom. 8:13, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' Once more, none are in such a dangerous condition as those who have begun the work, and then give it over: 2 Peter 2:20, 'For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.' Those that fall from a common work make their condition more uncomfortable. For real believers the reign of sin is broken, its strength and power much weakened by grace, but still it is working and stirring: Gal. 5:17, 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would do;' Rom. 7:23, 'I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into

captivity to the law of sin that is in my members.' Therefore still you must take care of this work.

Means.

[1.] Be sensible of the evil of sin.' When once we begin to make light of sin, we lie ready for a temptation. God doth not make little reckoning of sin; Christ's death showeth it: Rom. 8:3, 'What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.' Infants' death showeth it: Rom. 5:14, 'Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.' The punishment of the wicked showeth it: Rom. 2:9, 'Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.' The smart of God's children showeth it: Prov. 11:31, 'Behold the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner.'

[2.] Earnestly resolve against it in the strength of Christ: 1 Peter 4:1, 'Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.' The mind is hereby fortified. Christ's dying engageth them to it. Christ hath suffered for it, and we are bound to subdue the flesh, and deny the pleasures of it.

[3.] Seriously endeavour against it, according to the advantages the Spirit giveth you. A conscientious attender on the ordinances of God hath many motions and helps.

2. To walk in newness of life, or to express the likeness of Christ's resurrection. The spiritual resurrection is described—(1.) By the cause of it: John 5:25, 'The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live;' in the spiritual sense that power was already executed by him, in raising sinners out of the grave of sin, for he saith, 'It now is.' It is

the voice of Christ awakens, as, 'Lazarus, come forth.' Do not then delay; do not say, It is too soon: Heb. 3:15, 'To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.' (2.) The nature of it; as to the first grace: Eph. 5:14, 'Awake thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light;' awake as a man out of his wine. As to the progress of it: 1 Cor. 15:34, 'Awake to righteousness, and sin not.' Rouse up yourselves out of this drowsy condition of sin to a lively exercise of grace. (3.) The tendency and end of it: Col. 3:1, 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.'

SERMON V

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.—ROM. 6:6.

IN this verse the apostle explaineth how we are planted into the likeness of Christ's death, 'Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him,' &c.

In the words—

First, A truth represented, 'That our old man is crucified with him.'

Secondly, The manner of applying and improving this truth.

For the former branch—

1. Christ's undertaking, 'Our old man is crucified with him.'
 2. The fruit and end of it, 'That the body of sin might be destroyed.'
 3. The obligation lying upon us, 'That we might no longer serve sin.'
- Or,

[1.] what Christ doth, he was crucified, and our old man crucified with him.

[2.] What the Spirit doth, 'That the body of sin might be destroyed;' that is, the reign of it broken, the power of it weakened yet more and more, acts prevented, habits cast off.

[3.] What we must do, 'That henceforth we may not serve sin.'

Doct. That the reign of sin would be sooner broken if we did seriously consider and believe the great end of Christ's death and undertaking on the cross.

This will appear—(1.) By explaining the several branches of the text; (2.) Giving reasons.

First, In the explication take notice of the truth represented, which is expressed in three branches—

First, What Christ doth, or his intention and undertaking on the cross, 'Our old man is crucified with him.' Where observe—

1. That sin within us is called an 'old man,' partly because it is born and bred with us; it had its rise from Adam's fall, and is ever since conveyed from father to son unto all who are descended from Adam: Rom. 5:12, 'Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;' Ps. 51:5, 'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.' Partly because this natural corruption, which we inherit from the first man, is opposite to that new man which consisteth in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness: Eph. 4:22, 24, 'That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts: And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;' and Col. 3:9, 10, 'Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.' So that the old

man is that perverse temper of soul which was in us, before we had the knowledge of Christ, or embraced him by faith. Partly because it is an antiquated thing, as is upon the declining hand, and hasteneth in the regenerate (as men in their old age) to its own ruin and destruction: 2 Cor. 5:17, 'Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new;' 1 Cor. 5:7, 'Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump.'

2. This old man must be crucified; that is the kind of death which it must die. Sometimes the destruction of sin is called a mortifying of sin, that implieth a putting to death in the general, or a killing the love of sin in our souls; sometimes a crucifying of sin, that showeth the particular kind of death we must put it to, and this for a double reason—partly to show our conformity and likeness to Christ's crucifixion, partly because it expreseth the nature of the thing itself. The cross bringeth pain and death: so is sin weakened by godly sorrow, which checketh the sensual inclination. The strength and life of sin lieth in a love of pleasure, and one special means to mortify it is godly sorrow: 2 Cor. 7:10, 'For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, never to be repented of.' Those that have tasted the bitter waters are more easily induced to forsake all known sin. Well, then, sin must be crucified. A man fastened to the cross suffereth great pain, his strength wasteth, and his life droppeth out with his blood by degrees. So sin is not subdued but by constant painful endeavours; not by feeding the flesh with carnal delights, but by thwarting it, watching, striving against it, bemoaning ourselves because of it, and so by degrees the love of it is not only weakened, but deadened in our souls. If it be tedious and troublesome, nothing that hath life will be put to death without some struggling: we must be content to suffer in the flesh; Christ suffered more, and none but 'he that hath suffered in the flesh ceaseth from sin,' 1 Peter 4:1. You make it more painful by dealing negligently in the business, and draw out your vexation to a greater length: the longer you suffer the Canaanite to live with you, the more doth it prove a thorn and goad in your sides. Our affection increaseth our affliction; your trouble endeth, and your delight increaseth, as you bring your souls to a

thorough resolution to quit it. *Quam suave mihi subito factum est carere suavitatibus nugarum!* No delight so sincere as the contempt of vain delights. The crucified man's pains end when death cometh.

This old man was crucified with Christ. This phrase and manner of speech is difficult, and therefore must be explained.

[1.] That Christ was crucified for us in *bonum nostrum*, for our good, is past dispute with christians: 'Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows,' Isa. 53:3; he endured the punishment which sin had made our due.

[2.] That he stood before the tribunal of God representing us, and so died *loco et vice omnium nostri*, in the room as well as for the good of his people, should as little be doubted: 2 Cor. 5:14, 'For if he died for all, then were all dead;' that is, in him: he died not on the cross as a private, but a public person.

[3.] Christ died not only to expiate our guilt, but to take away the power of sin; at least, the end of Christ's suffering and dying on the cross for our sins was to purchase grace that we might crucify sin, that is, forsake it with grief and shame: Heb. 9:26, 'Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;' that is, not only to expiate the guilt of our sins, but to abolish the power of them. He came to redeem us from the slavery of sin: Titus 2:14, 'Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.'

[4.] As soon as we are regenerated and converted to God, there is a closer application of the death of Christ; we partake of the influence and fruit of his merit and purchase, and the benefit is made ours; and so our old man is said to be crucified with him. The merit of his passion beginneth then to take place, so that every good christian can say, 'I am crucified with Christ,' Gal. 2:20; our old man beginneth then to receive its death-wound; so that we are not the same men we were before, being made partakers of the fruit of Christ's death.

Secondly, The fruit of it, or what the Spirit is to do; that is intimated in the next clause, 'That the body of sin might be destroyed.' Here— (1.) What is meant by the body of sin; (2.) In what sense it is said to be destroyed.

1. What is meant by the body of sin? Ans.—By the body of sin is meant the whole stock and mass of corruption, which is called a body of sin.

[1.] Because it is composed of many sinful passions and disorders, as the body is of divers members: Col. 2:11, 'In putting off the body of the sins of the flesh;' and again, Col. 3:5, 'Mortify your members upon the earth.' It is not meant of the natural, but sinful body; for it follows, 'Fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence and covetousness, which is idolatry.'

[2.] Because they are executed by the body: Rom. 6:12, 'Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies;' and Rom. 8:13, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' Sin is gotten within us by the soul, but it hath taken possession of the body; the gate of the senses let it in, and other powers of the body are as ready to let it out.

2. In what sense it is said to be destroyed? The duty is ours, but the grace is from God; it is done on God's part by the Spirit, but it is our duty: Rom. 8:13, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' Both agents carry it on to such a degree in this life as it may not reign in us. On God's part there needeth no more merit to get sin destroyed but that of Christ, nor a greater power than that of the Spirit to subdue it: and by degrees the work is accomplished; its reigning power is taken away by converting grace, its very being is abolished by his final perfecting grace. The same Spirit that begun it at first ceaseth not to work till it be wholly abolished in us. On our part, we must yield up ourselves to be renewed by him, and obey his sanctifying motions, till our cure be perfectly wrought. Observe here

—

[1.] It is the whole body of sin must be quitted and put off; not actions only, but lusts: 1 Peter 2:11, 'Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.' Not some parts only and branches, but all sin. As the body compasseth about, and encloseth the soul, so doth the body of sin enclose us. The corrupt mass is made up of many sins; it is an impure body that hath many members: now all these must be mortified.

[2.] It must be carried on to such a degree that sin may lie a-dying. We must not cease to oppose sin till it be destroyed, not only scratch the face of it, but seek to root it out. Christians are said to destroy sin four ways:—

(1.) *Proposito*, in the settled purpose of their hearts, as Christ ceased not till he had done his work; so a christian: 1 Peter 4:1, 'Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.' Now a work is spoken of as done when it is thoroughly purposed to be done; as a fire is said to have taken a house when it hath only taken a little corner of the house, because if it be not quenched, it will in time consume all. There is a fixed purpose to get rid of it.

(2.) *Voto*, in desire, in their constant prayer accompanied with hearty groans: Rom. 7:24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Ps. 119:133, 'Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.' Nothing less will content them than a total extirpation of sin.

(3.) *Conatu*, they have begun it with a mind to finish it, and are always thwarting and curbing the desires of corrupt nature: 1 Cor. 9:27, 'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest after I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.'

(4.) Eventu, the work is not only really begun, but they have some success in it, and while it is a-doing, they have the comfort of it. The reign of sin is broken: Rom. 6:14, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law, but under grace,' They are somewhat enabled to prevail over it, so far that there is a manifest difference between them and the carnal; whilst others cherish their lusts, and make provision for them, they crucify them, and are freed from that base servitude.

Thirdly, What man must do, or the obligation lying upon us, 'That henceforth we should not serve sin.' Here observe—

1. The word 'henceforth.' We did before serve sin; before regeneration we were all slaves: Titus 3:3, 'Serving divers lusts and pleasures.' There is a double notion of servitude intimated in scripture, and confirmed by the practice of all nations. One is of those that yield up themselves, by their own consent and willing subjection, in bondage to another, of which that text speaketh, Rom. 6:16, 'Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey. These are servants by consent, that yield up their time and strength and life to be disposed of by another, to whom they have sold themselves. The other is of that slavery which is introduced by conquest; as those that were taken in war were at the dispose of him that took them. That is spoken of, 2 Peter 2:19, 'While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.' The first deliver up themselves as servants and slaves by their own consent; the other by conquest: for by the law of nature victory giveth dominion, and though men had a mind to do otherwise, they cannot help themselves. Both notions express the reign of sin, and our servitude under it, which is both voluntary and unavoidable; at first it is voluntary, afterwards unavoidable; they first yielded up themselves, and then are overcome by their base and brutish lusts, and so lose all liberty and strength of will to help themselves. First willingly and by our own default we run into it, and afterwards we are captivated, and

though we are convinced of better, we shall do that which is worse, being overcome by our lusts. Though they see their duty, they are not able to perform it, they have some kind of remorse and trouble, but they cannot help or free themselves.

2. Observe that the gospel looketh forward to the time to come. It respecteth not what believers have been before conversion and turning to God; but thenceforward they must forsake their sinful lusts, and turn to God. So 1 Peter 4:2, 'That he no more should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.' Time is short, work is great, since it is not enough for a christian to cut off one member, but the whole body of sin must be destroyed, and they have been too long dishonouring God, and destroying their own souls, and cherishing divers lusts in themselves. Therefore now they should more earnestly set about the mortifying of sin. Now, as this is an encouragement to those that have long been serving their base lusts and vile affections, and been eminent in wickedness, so it is an engagement to them to double their diligence for the future to serve God, by virtue of their deliverance by Christ: Heb. 9:14, 'How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?' Luke 1:74, 75, 'That we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.' If the gospel doth not look backward, surely it looketh forward, it obligeth us to be more assiduous and serious in the study of holiness after conversion, that, if it be possible, they may restore the Lord to his honour, reclaim those whom they have hardened in sin, and get their own hearts more loosened from it, since custom hath deeply rooted it in them.

3. Observe the apostle saith, 'That we should not serve sin.' It is one thing to sin, another thing to serve sin. Though sin doth remain in the godly, it doth not reign in them: to serve sin is to yield willing obedience to it. This may be done two ways:—

[1.] When men slavishly lie down in any habit and course of sin. There is ἡ ἐν κακίᾳ διατριβή, a way of sinning, as David, Ps. 139:24, 'See if there be any way of wickedness in me.' David would not be corrupt in any of his ways. And again, Ps. 119:29, 'Remove from me the way of lying.' Some are given to one sin, some to another; some covetous, others sensual; some proud, others brutish; there is some iniquity they regard in their hearts and make much of, and indulge in themselves, and so grow slaves to that imperious lust. Now, whatever good properties we have otherwise, we must take heed of any one perverse habit or evil frame of spirit, lest it hamper us and make fools of us, and make us liable to be caught again after some show of escape. A beast escaped with a halter is easily caught again; so this lust indulged will bring us into our old bondage.

[2.] When we willingly indulge any presumptuous acts; for, John 8:34, 'He that committeth sin is the servant of sin.' If we allow ourselves to commit any one gross sin, we serve it. Other sins steal into the soul by degrees, but these at once; therefore we must take heed that we run not wilfully into these inordinacies, and yet hope to escape the danger.

Now, all this must be improved by us: τοῦτο γινώσκοντες, 'knowing this.' The word signifies—(1.) Knowledge; (2.) Consideration; (3.) Assent.

1. Knowledge, understand this. This is of use here; for ignorance of Christ and his gospel is a great cause of sin, whereas a sound knowledge produceth mortification. Ignorance causeth men to become brutish: 1 Peter 1:14, 'Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance;' 1 Cor. 15:34, 'Some have not the knowledge of God; I speak this to your shame.' On the other side, knowledge is a help to mortification, provided it be sound, and such a knowledge both for matter and manner as it ought to be. For matter, that it be a thorough knowledge: Eph. 4:20–22, 'But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, that ye put off concerning the

former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.' If men were thoroughly instructed in the christian doctrine they could not so easily sin against God; but a partial knowledge encourages our boldness in sinning. For manner, it must be lively: 2 Peter 2:20, 'If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;' John 8:32, 'And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make ye free;' Jer. 31:19, 'After that I was instructed, I smote on my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.' It is but a form of knowledge, not the lively light of the Spirit, which doth not break the power of our lusts.

2. It may import consideration, and so 'knowing this' is seriously considering this. Many truths lie by neglected, unimproved, for want of consideration, and that is the cause of men's sins; they consider not God's benefits: Isa. 1:3, 'The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider;' nor his judgments: Job 34:27, 'They turned back from him, and would not consider his ways;' that is made the reason of their sin; 'they consider not his ways,' that is, the ways of his providence towards them and others. If men did consider and ponder with themselves how hateful sin is to God, with what severity he will punish it, what obligations they have to the contrary, it would much check the fervour of their lusts, and they could not go on so quietly in a course of disobedience against God; but they do not seriously consider what they are a-doing. Above all, the death of Christ should be considered by us; as, 1 Peter 1:18, 19, 'Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversations, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' If men would know, that is, ponder these things in their hearts, and discourse with themselves, why was so great a price given for our reconciliation, but that sin might be destroyed, and the great makebate between God and us removed out of the way?

3. Knowing is often put for assent; for faith is not a doubting, but a certain knowledge. And this enliveneth every truth. If you do believe that Christ came to take away every sin, you have no reason to cherish it. The word worketh not till it be believed: Heb. 4:2, 'To us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.' But then it worketh mightily and effectually; for it cometh not to us in word only, but in power: 1 Thes. 2:13, 'Ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.' And more particularly in mortification; for it is 'faith that purifieth the heart,' Acts 15:9. Where the christian doctrine is really entertained and received by faith, it taketh men off from their old sins: 1 Peter 1:22, 'Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.' The obedience of the truth is nothing else but faith wrought in us by the Spirit upon the hearing of the gospel; this produceth in us that purity of heart and life which becometh christians.

Secondly, I will give you the reasons. The death of Christ may be considered as it worketh morally, or as it worketh meritoriously. As it worketh morally, it hath a full and a sufficient force to draw us off from sin; as it worketh meritoriously, it purchaseth the Spirit for us. As it worketh morally, it layeth a strong engagement upon us; as it worketh meritoriously, it giveth great encouragement to oppose and resist sin, and set about the mortification of it. So that the true way of subduing sin is by serious reflection on the death of Christ, which we shall consider—(1.) As it is a strong engagement; (2.) As it is a great encouragement.

1. As it is a strong engagement; and there—

[1.] It is a pattern to teach us how to deny the pleasures of the senses. Pleasure is the great sorceress that hath bewitched all the world, and that which giveth strength to all temptations: James 1:14, 'Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.' There is some sensitive carnal bait which first inviteth, and then draweth us

from our duty; and all the charms sin hath upon us, are by the treacherous sensual appetite, which is impatient to be crossed. So when another apostle speaketh of a revolt to the carnal life after some partial reformation, he giveth this account of it: 2 Peter 2:20, 'After they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled and overcome.' Before men be overcome by temptation, they are first enticed by the apprehension of some pleasure or profit which is to be had by their sins, by which apprehension the danger of committing the sin is covered and hid, as the fisher's hook is by the bait; that is the metaphor there, ἐμπλακέντες ἠττῶνται, lapse again into the slavery of the former sins, which they seemed to have escaped. Therefore till we are dead to the sensitive lure, and can be content to suffer in the flesh, and to deny the satisfactions of the animal life, we shall never avoid the slavery of sin, nor know that our old man is crucified. Now what is more powerful than the consideration of the death and example of Jesus Christ? In his whole life he was a man of sorrows, and so taught us to contemn the world, and the pleasures of the flesh; but especially at his death, when pain was poured in upon him by the conduit of every sense, there 'he pleased not himself,' Rom. 15:3, but conquered the love of life, and all the natural contentments of life, that he might please God, and procure our salvation. Now we have not the spirit of our religion till we grow dead, not only to the pleasures of sin, but the natural pleasures of life, yea, life itself, and can submit all to God's glory.

[2.] As it is an act of love, which should beget love in us to God again, which love will make us tender of sinning. There are many aggravations of sinning; but the greatest of all is because we sin against so much love as God hath showed us in our redemption by Christ. Sin is aggravated by the greatness of the person against whom it is committed, against the infinite majesty of God; as to strike an inferior person is not so heinous a crime as to strike a magistrate or prince; but this will not hold in all cases, for foul indignities and grievous wrongs offered to meaner persons are a greater offence than the omission of a ceremony to a prince, as if a man through

ignorance of the customs of the court should not be bare before his chair of state. Therefore take in the other consideration of the infinite goodness and love of God towards us in Christ; this doth exceedingly aggravate our sins. They are acts of unkindness: 'After such a deliverance as this is, shall we again break thy commandments?' Ezra 9:13, 14; after a deliverance out of Babylon, out of hell. To sin against the infinite goodness of a creator by eating the forbidden fruit, we see what mischief it brought upon mankind; conscious of this transgression, the first actors hid themselves from God's presence. But what is it to sin against the infinite goodness of a Redeemer, who came to recover us from this thralldom and bondage, and to draw us to himself with the cord of love? He chose rather to suffer the punishment due to our sins than to suffer sin still to reign in us, whom he loved more dearly than his own life: Gal. 2:20, 'Who loved me, and gave himself for me;' Rev. 1:5, 'To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.' Now, if after this manifestation of his love we shall still continue in sin, the heinousness of our offence is greatly increased.

[3.] Christ's death is the best glass wherein to view the deadly nature of sin. It was so great and heinous an evil in the sight of God, that nothing but the blood of the Son of God could expiate it: Rom. 8:3, 'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.' Jesus Christ must come and suffer a shameful death; this painful, shameful, accursed death of the Son of God showeth God's displeasure against sin, and what it will cost us if we allow it, and indulge it in our hearts and lives; for if this be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

[4.] It showeth us also what a great benefit mortification is. This among others was intended by him, and moved him to bear our sins in his body on the tree: 1 Peter 2:24, 'Who his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.' To remember a good turn done by a friend, and not to prize and value it as we ought, is rather to forget than to

remember his friendliness. So here, if we do not prize Christ's benefits, we undervalue his death, and a lessening of the benefits is a lessening the price. Now one of the chief of them is to take away sin, and to break the reign of it in the heart of his renewed ones. This argument seemeth to be urged, 1 Peter 1:18, 19, 'Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversations, but with the precious blood of Christ,' &c. If there be a liberty purchased and bought at so dear a rate, and then proclaimed, and we will not accept it, it is a plain slighting the benefit we have by Christ.

[5.] The sins of christians, who profess a communion with his death, are more criminal and scandalous than the sins of heathens. They never heard of the Son of God, that came to redeem them from their vain conversations at so high a rate as his own precious blood. They never were called solemnly to vow integrity of life and conversation, as a service due to that Redeemer, as is done by christians in baptism. All this we believe, and this some have done, and yet disobeyed our master's will. Heathens had no expectation of any gracious immortal reward, feared no dreadful doom nor sentence after death. We are hedged in within the compass of our duty both on the right hand and the left: on the right hand with the hopes of a most blessed everlasting estate; on the left, with the fears of an endless and never-dying death: all which are included in our baptism, and so, if all be not mockery, our old man is crucified with Christ.

[6.] A christian's living in sin is a greater injury to Christ than the persecution of the Jews that crucified him, because we daily and hourly do that which is more against his holy will. The rule for measuring the greatness of our personal injury and wrong is the opposition which the act includeth to the will and liking of the party who is displeased and wronged. Well, then, which is most displeasing to Christ, his dying for sin, or our living in sin? Surely his dying for sin, as an act of obedience to his father, or love to us, was very pleasing to Christ: Ps. 40:8, 'I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea,

thy law is within my heart.' He is more willing to suffer death for us than to suffer us to live and die in our sins. You will say, That is not the case we speak of, not the submission of Christ, but the Jews' act. But this will not lessen the argument, if we compare the Jews' act with our disobedience; that was against his human life, this is against his office. Now, as Christ preferred his office above his human and natural life, so those that neglect his office or contradict his office are more offensive to him than those who did wrong to his natural life. Therefore those that profess christianity, and yet live in their sins, do more wrong to him than Judas, or Annas and Caiaphas, or any that had a hand in his death merely as such. They did wrong to Christ indeed, as Cain did to Abel when he took away the life of his innocent brother; and these personal wrongs are more displeasing to his holy will as the Son of God than unto the affections of his human nature as the son of David, as sins against God more than as injuries against a man. But for us, who pretend to adore and worship him, our crime is the more horrid, because we build those things again which he came to destroy, and so evacuate the fruit of his sufferings, and make his office of no effect, and thereby take part with the devil, the world, and the flesh against him.

2. As it is a great encouragement, as Christ's death was the merit and price by which grace sufficient was purchased to mortify and subdue our old man. The work of mortification is carried on in the hearts of God's people by the Spirit, and the Spirit is also purchased by the death of Christ: Titus 3:5, 6, 'According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;' Gal. 3:14, 'That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we 'might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' The Spirit worketh as Christ's Spirit, that he might be glorified by the full extent of his merit; and in the use of means we may comfortably expect the virtue of Christ crucified. We are not obliged only, but enabled, and are convinced of faulty laziness and despondency; if we do not resist sin, it is a sign we affect our slavery. It is not want of power, but of will.

Use 1. It informeth us that Christianity is the only true doctrine that teacheth us the right way of mortifying sin: 'Haman refrained himself,' Esther 5:10. Moral instructions cannot reach the root of this woful disease, so dark are our minds, so bad our hearts, so strong our lusts, so many are our temptations; but the doctrine, example, merit, and Spirit of the Lord Jesus will do the work.

Use 2. Direction. Let us often and seriously consider the death of Christ, and the great condescension of the Son of God, who came and suffered in our nature an accursed death to finish transgression and make an end of sin. As the leper was cleansed by the blood of the slain sparrow dropped into running water, Lev. 14:5, 6, this signifies the cleansing of us sinners by Christ, who, as the bird that was killed, 'was put to death in the flesh,' but as the living bird 'was quickened by the Spirit,' 1 Peter 3:18; and 2 Cor. 13:4, 'He was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God.' The dropping the blood of the slain sparrow into running water representeth Christ, 'who came by water and by blood,' 1 John 5:6. Blood noteth Christ's satisfaction, running water the Spirit: John 4:14, 'The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life;' John 7:38, 'He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.' The living bird was to be dipped in the blood and water, and then to be let go in the open field up to heaven, Lev. 14:8. The scaping of the bird noteth the resurrection of Christ; his flying in the open field with bloody wings in the face of heaven, his intercession, or representation of his merit to God, and herein is all our confidence.

Use 3. Caution. Let us not serve sin.

1. See you be dispossessed of every evil habit and frame. Many profess obedience to God, but still retain the yoke of sin; as Israel, delivered out of the house of bondage, returned in their hearts, wishing themselves there again, Acts 7:39. The league between them and their lusts is not fully dissolved; so that though they forsake many sins, yet not all their sins; they keep some beloved sin: Ps.

18:23, 'I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.' Herod would not part with his Herodias; so they return like the dog to his vomit.

2. See you resist actual temptations. God calleth to you, Jer. 44:4, 'Oh! do not this abominable thing that I hate.' Conscience calleth to you, as David's heart smote him; it is time to stop then. Is this becoming your solemn vow? Will it consist with the love of God?

Use 4. It puts us upon self-reflection. Do I know that my old man is crucified with Christ? There is a knowledge of faith and a knowledge of spiritual sense.

1. Have you experimentally felt the power of his death: Phil. 3:10, 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.' Is the body of sin destroyed, or at least considerably weakened?

2. Whom do you serve, God or sin? Have you changed masters? Are you as free from sin as before from righteousness? And do you as much for God as before for sin? Rom. 6:19, 20, 'As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness; for when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.'

SERMON VI

For he that is dead is freed from sin.—ROM. 6:7.

THE words are a reason to prove what was asserted in the former verse. Two things were there asserted—(1.) That their old man is crucified with Christ; (2.) That therefore we must not serve sin. This the apostle proveth. This reason is taken from the analogy between

death natural and death spiritual. He that is dead naturally is freed from the authority of those who formerly had power over him; human slavery endeth with death. In the grave 'the servant is free from his master,' Job 3:19. Death levelleth the ranks of persons, and the imperious lord and master hath no more privilege than his vilest slave and servant. So he that is dead to sin is delivered from the power of sin acting formerly in him, 'For he that is dead is freed from sin.'

In the words—(1.) A subject; (2.) A predicate.

1. A subject, 'He that is dead.' A man may be said to be dead properly and naturally, or improperly and metaphorically.

[1.] Properly and naturally, when the body is deprived of the soul: James 2:26, 'The body without the spirit is dead.'

[2.] Improperly and metaphorically, for death spiritual; and this either with respect to unbelievers, who are said to be dead in sin: Eph. 2:1, 'You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;' and ver. 5, 'Even when we were dead in sins hath he quickened us together with Christ.' And therefore, when we come out of that estate, we are said 'to pass from death to life,' 1 John 3:14; or, with respect to believers, who are dead to sin: Col. 3:3, 'For ye are dead.' Real believers are dead, not in sin, but to sin, the dominion and reign of it being broken, though it be not totally subdued. This is here intended.

2. The predicate, 'Is freed from sin.' The word δεδικαίωται, the vulgar hath justificatus est a peccato. Beza, with many of the ancients, liberatus est. Our translation hath both; in the text, freed; in the margin, justified. Whether you take one or the other word, it importeth deliverance from the yoke and dominion of sin, so as not to obey its motions and commands. For the apostle doth not speak here of the forgiveness of sin, but the abolition of its power and dominion; for it is brought as a reason why those whose old man is

crucified with Christ should not serve sin; and the word justified is the rather used, because one justified and absolved by his judge is also released and set free from his bonds; so are we.

Doct. That freedom from sin is the consequent of our dying with Christ.

I shall handle—(1.) The nature of this freedom from sin; (2.) The degree to which we attain in this life; (3.) The value of this benefit; (4.) How it is the consequent of our dying with Christ.

First, The nature of this freedom from sin. I told you before it is an exemption from the dominion and reign of sin.

1. We quit the evil disposition and temper of our souls; we are dispossessed of every evil habit. Our first work is to put off the habit, and then the act ceaseth. The apostle telleth us, 1 Peter 2:11, 12, 'Dearly beloved, abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul, having your conversation honest amongst the Gentiles,' &c. In vain do we lop off the branches till the root be first deadened. The life and reign of sin lieth in the prevalency of our lusts within; all outward sins are but acts of obedience to the reigning lust.

2. We renounce our former course of living; after the habits, we are free from the acts. We do not, and durst not to live in sin; the former conversation is cast off, as well as the former lusts: Eph. 4:22, 'That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.' Sin must not break out in our conversations; for it is but a deceit to think we have quelled the lust when the acts appear as frequently and as easily as they did before. A change of heart will be made manifest by a change of conversation. So 1 Peter 1:14, 'As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.' They must not shape and mould their actions and endeavours according to the sinful motions of their corrupt nature. So 1 Peter 2:12, 'Having

your conversation honest.' If sin be weakened in the heart, the fruit of it will appear in the conversation.

Now this freedom is expressed by a word that signifieth justification, and fitly—

1. Because of the nature of justification, in which there are two branches—*liberatio a pœna*, and *acceptatio ad vitam*. The punishment incurred by the fall is *pœna damni* and *pœna sensus*, the loss and the pain. Both may be considered as in this life, or the life to come. To begin with the highest and most dreadful part of the punishment, the loss of God's eternal and blessed presence, or the fruition of him in glory: Mat. 25:41, 'Depart, ye cursed.' The pains are those eternal torments which are appointed for the wicked when they shall fall immediately into the hands of an angry and offended God: Heb. 10:31, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' But in this life we must also consider the loss and pain. The pains are all those miseries and afflictive evils which came into the world by reason of sin. The loss is loss of God's image: that threatening, 'Thou shalt die the death,' Gen. 2:17, implied spiritual death as well as temporal and eternal. Now we are justified when we are freed from punishment, and among other punishments from the punishment of loss, when God giveth us the blessing which sin had deprived us of. As for instance, when he giveth us the sanctifying Spirit, this is called 'a receiving the atonement,' Rom. 5:11. We had forfeited it by sin, and God, being pacified in Christ, doth restore it to us. Man brought upon himself spiritual death by sin, and the gift of the sanctifying Spirit is the great and first act of God's pardoning mercy, and a means to qualify us for other parts of pardon. Though the thing be plain of itself, yet to make it more clear to us—

2. Let us distinguish of the kinds of justification. There is a twofold justification—it is either constitutive or executive.

[1.] Constitutive justification is by the new covenant, when those who submit to the terms are constituted or made righteous: John 5:24,

'He that heareth my word, and believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.' There is God's grant, and whosoever can make good his claim hath a right to justification by God's own grant; according to the law of grace, he is one freed from sin.

[2.] Executive, when God accordingly taketh off all penalties and evils, and giveth us all the good which belongeth to the righteous or justified; as in the case in hand, when God giveth us the Spirit to break the power and reign of sin; and therefore so often in scripture is God said to sanctify us as a God of peace, or as a God pacified and reconciled to us in Jesus Christ: Heb. 13:20, 21, 'Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight;' 1 Thes. 5:23, 'And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly,' &c.; 2 Cor. 5:18, 'And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.' This God doth as a judge, acting according to the rules of government constituted in the new covenant, upon the account of the merit of Christ, and our actual interest in him.

Secondly, As to the degree, how far we are freed from sin.

1. All the justified and converted to God are freed from the reign of it. The flesh, though it remaineth, is made subject to the Spirit, which by degrees doth destroy the relics of sin; for it is said of the justified: Rom. 8:1, 'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'

2. The more obedient we are to the motions of the sanctifying Spirit, the more power we have against sin: Gal. 5:18, 'If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law,' under the irritating power and curse of it. Many sins are in a great measure left uncured as a part of our punishment. We should have more of his Spirit; and so more of his grace to mortify sin, if we did mind more the covenant we have made

with God as our sanctifier: but degrees of grace may be forfeited by our unworthy dealing with the Spirit: Eph. 4:30, 'Grieve not the Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption.' He seeketh by degrees to fit us for our everlasting estate and final deliverance from all sin, and the consequence of sin: 2 Cor. 5:5, 'Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given to us the earnest of his Spirit.' And therefore he must not be obstructed in his work while he is preparing the heirs of promise afore-hand unto glory, lest we lose not only the comfort of our future hopes, but also be set back in the spiritual life, and so grieve both our sanctifier and our comforter.

3. If we fall into heinous wilful sin, God manifesteth his displeasure against the party sinning by withdrawing his Spirit. This was the evil that David was so much afraid of: Ps. 51:10–12, 'Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me by thy free Spirit.' In which expressions he desireth that God would not withdraw his grace and the influence of his Holy Spirit, which by that heinous sin he had so justly forfeited. This is the sorest judgment on this side hell, to be deprived of communion with God in point of grace. Though it may be not a total separation from his presence and grace, yet it is a degree of it, when God is strange to us, and suspendeth all the acts of his complacential love, leaving us dull and senseless, that we have no heart or life to anything that is spiritually good. Yea, if after such scandalous falls, we repent not the sooner, God may deliver us up to brutish lusts; the evils are lesser and greater according to the rate of our sins or neglects of grace. These penal withdrawals of his Spirit should therefore be observed; for God showeth much of his pleasure or displeasure by giving and withholding the Spirit. His blessing and favour is showed this way: Prov. 1:23. 'Turn ye at my reproof: behold I will pour out my Spirit upon you, and I will make known my words unto you.' But when God is refused, or neglected, or highly provoked: Ps. 81:11, 12, 'My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me; so I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust, and

they walked in their own counsels.' This is more than all the calamities of the world.

4. Where the work is really begun and duly submitted unto, we have hopes of a better estate, it still increaseth towards that perfect blessedness, when we shall be 'without spot and blemish, or any such thing,' Eph. 5:27. What a life do God's holy ones live in heaven, who are wholly freed from sin! There is no worldly mind, nor pride, nor passion, nor fleshly lust to trouble them. Here many wallow in their own dung, others are in a great measure defiled and blemished; but there they are freed, not only from the reign, but being of sin. Hath God been so kind to them in glory? And will he not do the same for us also? There is none in heaven by the first covenant, all that are there come thither as sanctified and justified by Jesus Christ, and in the way of his pardoning grace. Surely since we have the same Redeemer, depend upon the merit of the same sacrifice, and wait for the same Spirit in the use of all holy means and endeavours, he will not be strange to us. Christ is willing if we are willing; there you will find it sticketh, he came to take away sin, but we will not give way to his Spirit; we are neither sensible of our sickness, nor earnest for a cure, at least a sound cure. We seek ease and comfort more than the removing of the distemper; but if we were thoroughly willing, will he fail a serious soul? It is Christ's office to expiate sin, and destroy it; his blood was shed for his church for this purpose: Eph. 5:26, 'That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.' For the same end he intercedeth now in heaven: Heb. 7:25, 'Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.' He that hath undertaken this work counteth it his honour and glory to perform it: Eph. 5:27, 'That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish;' and Jude 24, 'Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding great joy.' It is matter of rejoicing not only to us, but to him.

Thirdly, The value of the benefit; surely it is a great mercy to be freed from the power of sin, and to have our enthralled souls set at liberty.

1. Because sin is the cause of all the controversy and variance between God and us: Isa. 59:2, 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.' This is the abominable thing which he hateth: Jer. 44:4, 'Oh, do not that abominable thing which I hate!' It is sin that maketh the great distance between man and God, not in position of place, for so he is everywhere present, with bad and good; but in disposition of mind and affection of heart; it hath caused him in anger to withdraw his gracious presence from you. Would you not be glad to have the great difference between God and you compromised and taken up, and all enmity to cease between you and heaven? It can never be till sin be mortified as well as pardoned; for till man be converted, as well as God satisfied for the breach of his law, there is no due provision made for our entering into fellowship with him; we shall stand aloof from him as a holy, sin-hating, and condemning God, and so have no heart to communion with him.

2. It is a defacing God's image in us, and a bringing in of a contrary image, the image of the devil. God's image is defaced while we live in sin: Rom. 3:23, 'We have all sinned, and are come short of the glory of God.' By the glory of God there is meant his image, not his glorious reward, but his glorious image; as 1 Cor. 11:7, 'The man is the image and glory of God, and the woman is the glory of the man;' that is, hath some likeness of his power and majesty. Similitude and likeness is often called glory. So 2 Cor. 3:18, 'We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' Now this is lost, which is the beauty, as sin is the deformity of the soul; and on the contrary, the image of the devil is introduced into the soul, as we are proud, envious, revengeful: John 8:44, 'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a

liar, and the father of it.' The properties of the devil like us much better than the excellences of God. Now, is it not a great mercy to be freed from this disposition and temper of heart, especially since image, favour, and fellowship go together?

3. It disableth us for God's service. While we live in sin, we are not only weak, but dead. Let us take the softest notion: Rom. 5:6, 'When we were yet without strength,' &c., that is, unable to perform any obedience to God, sick and weak, yea, in a dangerous estate. A heart under the power of sin is feeble and impotent: Ezek. 16:30, 'How weak is thine heart, seeing thou dost these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman?' The strength of the disease is the weakness of the person that suffereth it; so the strength of sin is the weakness of the soul that cannot break the force of their own passions and affections, but are easily led away by temptations, have no strength left to do the will of their creator, to overcome temptations to sin, to govern their own passions and affections, but are at the beck of every foolish and hurtful lust, pride, sensuality, worldliness, carnal fear, sorrow, &c.

4. It not only disableth us for our duty, but setteth our hearts against it: Rom. 8:7, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' It disliketh his government, riseth up in defiance of his strict laws, so that man is a perfect rebel to God. If this law be enforced by external messengers: Hosea 4:4, 'Let no man strive nor reprove another, for this people are as they that strive with the priest.' It is to no purpose to seek to reclaim them, for they would admit of no admonition; for they opposed their teachers, urging not their own private suggestions, but the sentence of the law of God; slight all those that would oppose their growth and continuance in sin; are enemies to them that tell them the truth. So in the checks of their own consciences: Rom. 7:23, 'I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin and death that is in my members.' Sin sets up a commanding power, in direct opposition to the dictates of conscience. So for the spirit: Gal. 5:17, 'The flesh

lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.' Now, to be freed from this enmity and opposition to God, and averseness from all that is good, is certainly a great mercy, and this we have by a due improvement of the death of Christ.

5. It is not a distant evil, but in our bowels, always present with us, hindering that which is good: Rom. 7:21, 'When I would do good, evil is present with me;' urging us to that which is evil; therefore called, Heb. 12:1, 'Sin that doth so easily beset us.' This inbred corruption is ever with us, lying down and rising up, at home and abroad; it is ready to open the door to all temptations: James 1:14, 'Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed.' It poisons all our comforts and mercies, and strengthens itself against God by his own benefits, while it useth them 'as an occasion to the flesh,' Gal. 5:13. It corrupts all our duties, distracting us with vain thoughts in prayer: Mat. 15:8, 'This people draweth nigh to me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.' It choketh the good seed: Luke 8:14, 'That which fell among thorns are they which, when they have heard the word, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring forth no fruit to perfection.' It makes our abode in the world dangerous: 2 Peter 1:4, 'Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.' It maketh us lazy and negligent in our callings. It turneth our table into a snare, while we glut ourselves with carnal delights, and oppress our bodies, when we should refresh them; and maketh us inordinate in all that we enjoy and do. Therefore, to get rid of such an enemy surely is a great mercy.

6. Till you get rid of sin, there is a thorn in your foot, so that you will have no ease nor comfort till you set yourselves to destroy every sin of heart and life, and make it your principal care and daily business. For if you live in wilful sin and negligence, you are unwilling to be delivered, and so lose all comfort of justification and hope by Christ. While you cherish sensual lusts, which you should mortify, all the promises in God's book will not yield you one dram of comfort, nor

help you to assurance: you may complain long enough before you have ease, for this still lieth against you, 'You regard iniquity in your hearts,' Ps. 66:18. Conscience must be better used before it will speak peace to you. They only that have cast off the yoke of sin are freed from the guilt of it; they that give way to sin are not justified. Justification is opposed both to the condemnation of a sinner, and to the condemnation of a hypocrite. A sinner is justified from his sin by faith in Christ only, if his faith be sincere; if he still indulge sin in his heart, and be a servant of sin, he is still liable to be condemned, both as a sinner and a hypocrite; for he remains a sinner still, and is a hypocrite, inasmuch as he pretends to that faith by which he should be justified from all his other sins, while he hath it not.

Fourthly, How is it a consequent of our dying with Christ? There are two sorts of men that profess communion with Christ's death—(1.) Those that are visibly baptized into his name; (2.) Those that are really converted to God; the professed or penitent believer, or the nominal and real christian.

1. The visible professor. It is his duty to look after freedom from sin. All christians do visibly profess by virtue of Christ's death to die unto sin; they are dead by profession, they are dead by their baptismal vow and undertaking; but this is but in word, not in deed, in show, not in power, if they do not mind these things. The careless christian forgets the obligation of baptism, though he doth not renounce it: 2 Peter 1:9, 'He is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.' Christianity calleth him out of those pollutions that he walloweth in, and affordeth him great helps to avoid them; but he undervalueth all, and is little affected with that pardon and life which is offered in the new covenant, and which by his baptism he seemed and was esteemed to have a right unto; and, as a purblind man cannot see things at a distance, they are so intent upon things worldly and sensual, that they forget the purification of their souls, or due preparation for the world to come. Now we cannot say de facto that such a man is actually freed from sin, for he is not truly dead with Christ; but de jure, of right, he should mind this

dying to sin, that he may no longer serve sin: he cannot comfortably conclude himself to be pardoned or sanctified, or one who is made a partaker of this grace; it is not his privilege to be freed from sin, but because of his engagement to Christ it is his duty.

2. The next sort is the real convert, or penitent believer, who is indeed dead with Christ; it is both his duty and his privilege: he hath not only undertaken to die unto sin, and to renounce his former course of life, but hath seriously begun it, and by the power of the Spirit of Christ carrieth on this work daily; so that by virtue of Christ's dying he is dead, and so really is, and is also reckoned to be one that is freed from the dominion of sin. So the apostle's speech in the text is exactly parallel with that, 1 Peter 4:1, 'He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;' he that is dead, that is, spiritually dead here, is the same with him 'that hath suffered in the flesh;' freed from sin, that is, is absolved from sin, not in regard of guilt but power, is the same with 'hath ceased from sin' there; so that one place doth explain another. But let me prove—

[1.] It is his duty to be cleansed from sin, or freed from the dominion of sin; for it is brought to prove that he must no longer serve sin.

(1.) All our communion with Christ is by the Spirit of Christ. Now wherever the Spirit comes to dwell, he doth infuse a principle of grace, which doth not only strive against sin, but conquer sin, at least so far as to take away the dominion of it: Gal. 5:16, 17, 'Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh;' therefore they cannot serve sin as they did before. There are two principles in us, and accordingly there are two desires, the one proceeding from the flesh, the other from the spirit, which are so opposite one to another, that what the one liketh, the other disliketh, and whatsoever you do in compliance with the one, you do it in opposition to the other; but that which is in predominancy is the spirit, which rebuketh the carnal nature and principle in us.

(2.) In our conversion to Christ there is included an aversion from sin; and therefore it must not bear sway and command, and influence our actions, as it did formerly. It is called 'repentance from dead works,' Heb. 6:1; not for them only, but from them. It breedeth not only a sorrow, but a loathing and forsaking of the sin we repent of. Many will say they are sorry, and do repent for sin which they have committed; but all kinds of sorrow do not evidence true repentance: there is a sort of repenting and sorrow for sin in hell; all do repent and are sorry for sin at last. When a sinner hath sucked out all the carnal sweet that is in sin, and the sting only is left behind, no wonder if he be troubled: this is attrition, not contrition, not a sorrow that ariseth from love to God, a sorrow that doth not break the force of sin; they go on still, there is no change of heart or life.

(3.) There must be a difference between a man carnal and regenerate; and what is the difference, since sin remaineth in both? The one serveth sin, and the other serveth God. Though we cannot do all that we would and ought, yet something must be done to distinguish you from the carnal world. Wherein do you differ? Certainly if there be no difference, the godly would be ungodly, and as bad as others. But the difference is manifest; and what is that difference? 1 John 3:10, 'In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God.' He that doth sin is of the devil, and he that is born of God sinneth not, that is, not customarily, frequently, easily, as the carnal and ungodly do, who are carried away with every return of the temptation. In short, they conquer gross sin, and are always striving against infirmities, and that with some effect and success. A holy life is the proper and genuine product of this discriminating grace.

2. It is his privilege; being crucified with Christ, he hath a right, and not a right only, but his justification is executed and applied to him by the gift of the sanctifying Spirit, which is the surest token of God's love, and the true effect of his approbation, adopting us into his family: Gal. 4:6, 'Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' The mission or

sending down of the Holy Ghost was the visible pledge of Christ's making the atonement, and the sending him into our hearts, of our receiving the atonement.

The work being begun by converting grace, there is the less for confirming grace to do, and 'God, that hath begun a good work, will perform it to the day of Christ,' Phil. 1:6. He will not fail the serious and sincere christian, that doth still continue to make use of his grace. In short, they are dead, as they entered into a solemn covenant with God to die unto sin, which they make conscience of; they are dead, as they have a contrary principle of life within them, which they neglect not, but improve; they are dead, as they often and solemnly meditate on Christ's death, as the price of their blessings and pattern of their obedience; they are dead, as they seriously attend upon the ordinances of God, and all holy means which he hath appointed to communicate to them the fruits of Christ's death; and therefore the Lord vouchsafeth further grace, whereby they may be more and more freed from sin. Let a man be but serious in his Christianity, especially in this matter, that is, daily renew his repentance for his old sins, thankfulness for the pardon of them, watchfulness against the like for the future, and it will be no nice case to determine his condition; he will soon appear to be one freed from the reign of sin.

Use 1. To inform us of the intimate connection between all the parts and branches of the grace of the gospel. We are absolved and discharged from the power of sin as well as from the guilt of it. All will grant that justification respects the guilt of sin; but the apostle telleth us here, that justification respects the power of sin also. The penalty was the loss of God's image as well as of his favour; so that pardon is executed and applied when our natures are sanctified and healed. The privation of the Spirit being the great punishment, the gift of the Spirit is a great branch of our absolution, and so Christ's reconciling and renewing grace fairly accord and agree.

Use 2. Direction. What we should do to be freed from sin. Meditate upon and improve the death of Christ, that we may be planted into the likeness of it: 'For he that is dead is freed from sin.' When we commemorate his death, we do it not only to increase our confidence of deliverance from the flames of hell, but to encourage and engage ourselves to the mortifying of sin, and to make it more hateful to us. What can stand before the all-conquering Spirit of Christ? Certainly Christ came to renew the world, as well as to redeem it from the curse: Titus 3:5, 6, 'He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.'

Use 3. Exhortation.

1. To be dead with Christ. All that are baptized into Christ have undertaken to accompany him in his death, so far as to die unto sin and the world. To die unto sin is under our consideration. Once let it receive its death-wound, the privilege is great, freedom from the guilt and dominion of sin, from the curse of the law, the wrath of God and eternal death. Let the remembrance of Christ's death breed confidence in us; thence I expect all my strength. Oh! let us be dead to sin, let us never more have a favourable thought of sin, or slight thoughts of God's justice, or be fond and tender of the flesh (as if it were so great a matter to gratify it), or despair of mortifying sin more.

2. Let us demonstrate ourselves really to be freed from the power of sin, and never more permit ourselves to live in it, or be acted by it. Who are they that demonstrate themselves to be freed from sin?

[1.] Those whose settled purpose is not to sin: 1 John. 2:1, 'These things I write unto you that ye sin not.' A carnal man non proponit peccare, a renewed man proponit non peccare; a carnal man doth not purpose to sin, but he doth not purpose against sin; but the godly purpose not to sin in good earnest. Do you loathe yourselves for past

sins? Are you truly desirous to get rid of sin? Is it a benefit or burden Christ offereth to you?

[2.] They are watchful that they may not sin: Ps. 39:1, 'I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue;' Prov. 4:23, 'Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life,' especially to watch over those corruptions and inclinations which are the strongest in them.

[3.] They are striving and endeavouring to get more victory every day. You must not only strive against sin, but conquer the predominant love of every sin. Every man that hath a conscience may strive against evil before he yield to it, while he liveth in it; but if it be your daily endeavour to mortify the flesh, and master its opposition to the Spirit, and you so far prevail as to live, walk, and be led by the Spirit, so that the course and drift of your life is spiritual, then do you demonstrate yourselves to be freed from sin.

SERMON VII

Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.—ROM. 6:8.

THE apostle now proveth the second part, that we are planted into the likeness of his resurrection. He proveth it as a necessary consequent of the antecedent privilege, 'Now if we be dead with Christ,' &c.

In the words—(1.) A supposition; (2.) The truth thence inferred; (3.) The certainty of the inference.

1. The supposition, there—

[1.] The thing supposed, 'Being dead with Christ.' What that is we have explained already. All that I shall now add is, that in scripture it implieth two things—

(1.) Conformity with Christ in his sufferings. So we have a saying like that in the text: 2 Tim. 2:11, 'It is a faithful saying; for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him;' which presently is explained, ver. 12, 'If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.'

(2.) It implieth mortification of sin. So it is understood here, if we have communion and fellowship with his death, for the mortification of sin.

[2.] The term of proposal, conditionally, 'If we.' The particle if hath sometimes the notion of a caution: See that ye be dead with Christ; sometimes it is a note of relation, when one privilege is deduced from another; as here, if we partake of the effect and likeness of his death in dying to sin, we shall partake of the effect and likeness of his resurrection in being quickened to live in holiness and righteousness all our days. Dying to sin, and newness of life, are inseparable; if we have the first, we shall have the other also; they are branches of the same work of regeneration, and both proceed from the same cause, union with Christ.

2. The truth hence inferred, 'We shall also live with him.' This is meant both of the life of grace and of the life of glory, regeneration and resurrection; the one is to newness of life, the other is to everlasting bliss and happiness. Regeneration is the Spirit's begetting us to the image and nature of God our heavenly Father; and resurrection is for the perfecting of that likeness; which is, it is true, perfect in part here, in the soul: 2 Cor. 3:18, 'We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as even by the Spirit of the Lord.' Hereafter both in body and soul: Phil. 3:21, 'Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body, according to the wonderful working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.' As to degrees: 1 John 3:2, 'When he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' As to kinds, both in holiness and happiness: 1 Cor. 15:49, 'As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.' Now we

are conformed to his image in afflictions: Rom. 8:29, 'He hath predestinated us to be conformed to image of his Son.' We look like him in the form of a servant, then we shall be like him as the Lord from heaven heavenly. Therefore the life of glory in heaven must not be excluded.

3. The certainty of the inference, πιστεύομεν. It is not a matter of opinion and conjecture, but of faith; we are certainly persuaded of the truth of it. We must distinguish of this truth; for it may be considered two ways—

[1.] As a general maxim or proposition; so it is absolutely true, 'Those that are dead with Christ shall live with him.' This is an article of faith to be believed *fide divina*.

[2.] As it is applied to us, or as it is ground of our particular confidence; so it is true hypothetically or upon supposition, and our confidence can be no greater than the evidence of our qualification: 'If we be indeed dead with Christ, we in particular shall also live with him.' It is but a rational conclusion from two premises; one of which is of divine revelation, the other of inward experience, namely, that 'I am dead with Christ,' therefore 'I believe that I shall live with him.' It is an act both of faith and reason, an act of faith by participation, as it buildeth on a principle of faith.

Doct. Those that are dead with Christ have no reason to doubt but that they shall also live with him.

1. I shall speak of the condition, 'If we be dead with Christ.'
2. Of the benefit, 'They shall live,' spiritually and everlastingly.
3. Of our certain apprehension, 'We believe.'

First, of the presupposed condition, 'If we be dead with Christ.'

1. Who are dead with Christ.

2. How necessary this order is. The one will show us that it is not an over-strict, but a comfortable condition; the other, that it is a condition absolutely necessary to subsequent grace.

1. Who are dead with Christ?

[1.] Such as own the obligation which their baptism and profession puts upon them; that 'reckon themselves dead indeed unto sin,' Rom. 6:11; that make account they are under a vow and bond, wherewith they have bound their souls. The careless mind it not; but sincere christians acknowledge that the debt lieth upon them, they being solemnly engaged to Christ to do it. The apostle saith, Rom. 8:12, 'We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.' As the Jew by circumcision is bound to observe all the ritual of Moses, Gal. 6:3, so christians by baptism are bound to crucify the flesh and obey the Spirit. What say you? Are you at liberty to do what you list, or under a strict bond and obligation to die unto sin? Let your lives answer for you.

[2.] They make conscience of it, and seriously address themselves to perform it: Gal. 5:24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts;' they have begun to do it, and still go on to do it more and more; for this is a continued action, not the work of a day, but of our whole lives. They have not only retrenched the desires of the flesh, but seek to mortify and subdue them, and perform their promise so solemnly made to God.

[3.] They obtain the effect in such a degree that the reign of sin is broken, though sin itself be not utterly extinct in us. They do no longer live in their old slavery and bondage, as those do who obey every foolish and hurtful lust that bubbleth up in their hearts. A man's condition is determined by what is in the throne habitually, and governeth our lives and actions. There are two warring principles in us, full of enmity and repugnancy to each other—the flesh and the spirit; but one reigneth, which constituteth the difference between the carnal and the renewed. In the carnal, flesh

reigneth; but in the regenerate the Spirit hath the mastery, and is superior and most powerful; so that a christian showeth himself to be spirit rather than flesh; otherwise it could not be said, 'That which is born of the Spirit is spirit,' John 3:6. The acts of sin are disowned acts, and he may say with Paul, 'It is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me.' Sin is against the bent and habit of our wills.

[4.] They subtract the fuel of their lusts, as they wean themselves from earthly things, and show such contempt of the world that the good things which they enjoy by God's allowance are not a snare to them. For the apostle saith of those that set their affections on things above, and not on things on earth, 'Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ,' Col. 3:2, 3. It is the divine and heavenly life which they seek to live. Well, then, here is a brief and plain description of those who are dead with Christ in four things—(1.) They make conscience of their solemn vow in baptism, wherein they promised to put off the former lusts of their ignorance, and the corrupt conversation that flowed from them. (2.) They are busily at work in it, and it is their daily endeavour. (3.) They prevail so far that sin is a-dying, and grace groweth in strength and power. (4.) They continue faithful in that purpose; and their savour of earthly things is deadened, and their hearts are still working towards God and heaven.

2. It is a condition absolutely necessary to obtain subsequent grace. For—

[1.] The graces of the Spirit cannot thrive in an unmortified soul; therefore then we set about our duty in the right order when we begin with mortification in the first place, and thence proceed to the positive duties of the new life. Faith will not thrive in a proud, unhumiliated, impenitent heart: John 5:44, 'How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?' Nor will the love of God ever bear sway where sensual and worldly love is in such strength and prevalency: 1 John 2:15, 'If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' Vain pleasures divert us from our great hopes, or the pleasures that

are at God's right hand for evermore: 1 Peter 1:13, 'Be sober, and hope to the end.' Sobriety is a holy moderation or sparing use of worldly delights; they behave themselves as in their journey. Well, then, we must die before we can live in purity and holiness, and seek that glory which Christ now enjoyeth with God in heaven. We must put off our old rags before we can put on the garments of righteousness.

[2.] The longer corruption is spared it groweth the worse; for the more it venteth itself by inordinate and sinful desires, the more it acquireth strength, and secures its interest more firmly in the soul. Every act strengtheneth the habit, and then it groweth into an inveterate custom: Jer. 9:3, 'They bend their tongues for lies, but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord.' Therefore the apostle: 1 Peter 4:2, 3, 'That he should no longer live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in licentiousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings and abominable idolatries.' Alas! sin is too deeply rooted and ingrained in our natures already, and that hindereth the coming on of the divine life; either we never receive the grace of regeneration, being so stiffened and hardened in our sins, or else it hath more corruption to grapple with, so that all our days there is more to do to keep it alive in our souls.

[3.] Till sin be mortified, the good we pretend to is but a covering and hiding of our loathsome lusts: James 4:8, 'Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.' Many being taxed for their evil and inordinate life will say, they hope their hearts are good. If the heart were good, the life would be better; the sinner must cleanse his hands. Others are plausible in their carriage, but their fleshly and worldly lusts were never soundly mortified, therefore hypocrites must cleanse their hearts. Here the operation of the Spirit beginneth. Our Lord saith, Mat. 23:25, 26, 'Cleanse first that which is within the cup and the platter, that the outside may be

clean also.' Many external acts may be counterfeited, or overruled and influenced by by-ends; the purity of the outside is loathsome to God without the purity of the heart. Pharisees are compared to 'whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness; so ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within are full of hypocrisy and iniquity,' Mat. 23:27, 28. So Luke 11:44, 'Ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them;' not as a grave when new, but a grave when overgrown with grass. The Jews buried out of the city in the fields; they thought themselves defiled by coming too near the dead. Men may be fair in outward guise and show, but in heart the most noisome and polluted that can be. So that mortification is necessarily requisite to vivification; we must die before we can live.

Secondly, Let me open the benefit, 'We shall also live with him.' Here

1. Observe how grace is followed with grace, one part with another. God loveth to crown his own gifts, and we are endeared to him by his own mercies. So it is in the general: Zech. 3:2, 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?' But some mercies draw on other mercies, and are given in order to them, as mortification in order to vivification, grace in order to glory. God giveth the one that he may give the other; he maketh one degree of grace a step to the other.

2. Observe how grace is followed with glory, 'We shall also live with him.' One and the same word expresseth both; life spiritual and eternal is but one life. It is good to observe how many ways the scripture sets forth the connection between the life of grace and the life of glory. Sometimes by that of the seed and crop: Gal. 6:8, 'He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.' No seed no crop; now is our seed-time. Sometimes the first-fruits and the harvest, for the offering of the first-fruits dedicated the whole harvest: Rom. 8:23, 'We ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit,' &c. Sometimes to the fountain and the stream, or the river

losing itself in the ocean: John 4:14, 'He that shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.' Sometimes of the pledge and earnest with respect to full and actual possession: 2 Cor. 1:22, 'Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.' Sometimes to the beginning and accomplishment, or the degree with the top and height. Life is begun by the Spirit, and perfected in heaven. There is a mighty suitableness between life spiritual and eternal: John 17:3, 'This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.' The life of grace consisteth in knowing and loving God, and the life of glory is the everlasting vision and perfect love of God. Now we are changed by the sight of faith: 2 Cor. 3:18, 'We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord;' then we shall be changed by the beatifical vision: 1 John 3:2, 'When he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' Our life here and life there is but one life, begun here, and perfected there; here are manifold imperfections, but there is complete blessedness. Sometimes as the morning to high noon, or light of the perfect day: Prov. 4:18, 'The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more to the perfect day;' here the day breaks, but it is but a little. Sometimes to a man and a child: 1 Cor. 13:10–12, 'But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.' As it is in the change of ages, so is it between this and the other life. Now all these things show both the sameness of the life, and also the necessity of one degree of grace to another.

3. Observe how fitly this is mentioned as a help to mortification; we should sweeten the tediousness and trouble of the work by thinking of the life that will ensue.

[1.] The life of grace. Conscience calleth upon you for your duty to your creator; and lust hindereth it. Now is it not a great advantage to have a vital principle to incline us to God? By the life of grace we are enabled in some measure to do what is pleasing in his sight: Heb. 12:28, 'Let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.' Set about mortification, and you shall have this grace. This should be a great consolation to us, who are so often vexed with guilty fears because of the neglect of our duty.

[2.] The life of glory. Pleasures, honours, and profits seem great matters to a carnal heart, and can do much till you put heaven in the balance against them; as Moses did, Heb. 11:26, 'Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of reward;' he looked off from one object to another. Alas! when we think of this life, all that we enjoy here is nothing, and should do nothing upon us to gain us from God and our duty to him. We should have such thoughts within ourselves. Shall I take these pleasures instead of my birthright? For this preferment shall I sell my part in heaven? Shall I cast away my soul for this sensual delight? The devil usually prevaieth over men when heaven is forgotten and out of sight. Sure the baptismal vow and engagement hath little hold upon us: 2 Peter 1:9, 'He is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.' These things are fitly coupled.

[4.] Observe how we have all with Christ; we die with him, and we live with him. As we mortify sin by virtue of that grace which he purchased for us by his death, so we hold heaven by his gift, or the grant of that covenant which he hath confirmed by his blood. His dying is the pattern of our mortification, and his life of our happiness and glory. If by his example we first learn to die unto sin, according to his pattern and example we shall have a joyful resurrection to eternal life, for still we fare as Christ fared. He would not be a pattern to us only in his worst estate, but in his best also; we shall be partakers of the same glory which Christ hath at the right hand of the Father, and as we shall live eternally so we shall eternally praise our

Redeemer, who deriveth influence to us all along, both in dying and rising.

Thirdly, The certain apprehension we have of this, 'We believe.' Here I shall handle—(1.) The necessity of this faith; (2.) The grounds of it; (3.) The profit of believing this.

1. The necessity of believing.

[1.] This life is not matter of sense, but of faith, whether you take it for the life of grace, or the life of glory.

(1.) The life of grace. If you consider the nature of it, which is of the order of things spiritual, and men that judge according to things of sense see no glory in it: 1 Cor. 2:14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' Alas! the rich preparations of grace, which God hath made for us in the gospel, a carnal heart hath no savour for them nor value and esteem of them, is nothing moved with the tender and offer; we must have a higher light to see these things. Besides, the new nature is hidden under manifold infirmities and afflictions.: Col. 3:3, 'Your life is hid with Christ in God;' and 1 John 3:2, 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be.' Once more, it is God's gift, and a matter full of difficulty for them to apprehend that are sensible of their own vileness, and are daily conflicting with so many lusts; that they should be quickened and enabled to live to God is a matter which they cannot easily believe: 'shall these dead bones live? O Lord! thou knowest,' Ezek. 37:3. It is a hard matter to persuade them that have a great sense of the power of their bewitching lusts that they shall ever overcome.

(2.) For the life of glory, that is also a matter of faith, because it is a thing future, unseen, and to be enjoyed in another world: 'Now faith is the substance of things not seen, and the evidence of things hoped for,' Heb. 11:1.

[2.] The person, office, and power of our Redeemer are all mystical truths: John 11:25, 26, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die: believest thou this?' that Christ is able to raise the dead to life again now or hereafter.

[3.] The matter is difficult to be believed, that after worms have consumed this flesh it shall be raised again in glory, and at length reign with Christ for ever. Therefore Abraham's faith is so often propounded to the faithful, 'who considered not his own body now dead, nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb,' Rom. 4:19; and the apostle showeth us that such a kind of faith shall be 'imputed to us for righteousness,' ver. 24, who believe Christ's resurrection, and then ours. All this showeth the necessity of faith in this case.

2. The grounds of believing this blessed estate, which is reserved for the mortified.

[1.] The infinite love of God, which prepared these mercies for us: Luke 12:32, 'Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you a kingdom;' and 1 Cor. 2:9, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him;' Mat. 25:34, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit a kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' God prepared this glory for us, and by degrees traineth us up for it.

[2.] The everlasting merit of Christ: Heb. 9:15, 'For this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death for the redemption of transgressions that were under the first testament; they which are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.' It is by his means that we are redeemed from the guilt and power of sin, and have an eternal inheritance stated upon us. It behoved Christ, for the honour of the divine government, by the intervention of his merit and intercession, to satisfy God's justice,

and acquire unto us those things which love and mercy had prepared for us, and among other things that blessed and glorious estate which is to be enjoyed upon the resurrection. This is made sure to the heirs of promise by the death of Christ, which is of everlasting merit, called therefore, ver. 12, 'everlasting redemption.'

[3.] The almighty power of the sanctifying Spirit both to change the soul and raise the body. To change the soul, which is made an act of omnipotency: 2 Peter 1:3, 'According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.' Therefore it is often compared to creation which is a making things out of nothing. To raise the body, as he did Christ's: Rom. 1:4, 'And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead;' and will raise the bodies of the faithful, in whom he once dwelled: Rom. 8:11, 'He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you;' Phil. 3:21, 'Who shall also change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the wonderful working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.'

[4.] The immutable covenant or promises of the gospel, which always stand firm and stable: 2 Cor. 1:20, 'For all the promises of God in him are Yea, and in him Amen;' Heb. 6:18, 'That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope that is set before us.' Hope is put for the thing hoped for, that is, the glorious estate which is reserved in heaven to be enjoyed there; this hope 'is set before us' in the promises, as the prize which we must seek after and the blessedness we must aim at. We 'lay hold upon it' when we consent to God's offer, and we 'fly for refuge' to take hold of this hope; for it is our sanctuary and safety, as the city of refuge was to him that was pursued by the avenger of blood. This is ground of strong consolation in all fears, troubles, and sorrows, in the midst of the infelicities of this life. This consolation is secured by 'two

immutable things,' God's promise and oath, which are as unchangeable as his nature; these cannot fail or frustrate our hopes; these give us security of enjoying what we hope, or receiving the reward promised to us.

[5.] The unquestionable right of the mortified, or those that are dead with Christ. There is nothing wanting but the clearing up of our right and title. Now the christian faith proposeth and showeth much good to them as real members of Christ's mystical body: Rom. 8:13, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live;' and till this be done the whole design of grace is at a stand; we cannot upon other terms expect everlasting blessedness from Christ.

3. The profit of believing.

[1.] It strengthens our reason, and helps it to maintain its authority and government against sense and appetite. Reason is a middle faculty, that standeth between things above and things below, and it may be either debased by sense or elevated by faith. The one is easy, because corrupt nature carrieth us to things pleasing to sense, which are near at hand, and carry a great suitableness to our fancies and appetites. The other is difficult, because it dependeth on supernatural grace, for the Spirit's illumination is necessary to faith: 1 Cor. 2:12, 'Now we have received, not the spirit which is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.' Therefore here lieth the benefit we have by faith, to take us off from the life of sense, and to mortify the desires of the flesh, which the nearness of things sensible is apt to irritate and stir up in us.

[2.] The more we believe the stronger, and greater is our consolation; as, for instance, our comfort under crosses is more abounding: 2 Cor. 4:14, 'Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus;' 2 Cor. 4:18, 'While we look not to the things which are seen, but to the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.'

Our courage against death is more strong: 1 Thes. 4:18, 'We shall ever be with the Lord.' Our diligence in duties is more unwearied: 1 Cor. 15:58, 'Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.'

Use. Let us now improve these things that we have been delivering to you.

1. Let us make great conscience of the first part of our duty, 'If we be dead unto sin.' See that the work of regeneration be once begun. The first virtue we receive from Christ is 'the likeness of his death;' that will make way for other things. Christ is dead; let us be dead with him, that to us he may not die in vain. And when it is once begun, let it be carried on to a further increase; adhere still to Christ's dying, and persevere both in your diligence and your dependence. Diligence; do not give over your endeavours of mortifying sin till it be quite gone. Dependence; that you wait for the power of his Spirit, which his death merited for us.

2. As to life, let us encourage ourselves with the hope of it; the same grace that hath begun will also finish the work, when we are prepared by living the life spiritual in the midst of conflicts and temptations. Therefore, while you are studying to please God, wait for it—

[1.] With patience. Christ after his resurrection was not presently glorified; there must be a time to wean us from worldly happiness: 'To make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,' Col. 1:12; 'Vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory,' Rom. 9:23. In time you shall be delivered; see that you have the beginning and first-fruits, and that you daily grow in grace.

[2.] With earnest longing: Rom. 7:23, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?' 2 Cor. 5:2, 'In this we

groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.'

3. As to faith.

[1.] Fix it, and be at a greater certainty against all doubts and fears, not only as to your interest, but the truth of the promise of eternal life. These doubts may stand with a sincere faith, but not a confirmed faith; we have much of the unbeliever in our bosoms. Venture all your happiness temporal and spiritual upon this security.

[2.] Improve it; it is the work of faith to overcome the world and the flesh: 1 John 5:4, 5, 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?' to overrule our sense and appetite, and to teach us to make nothing of all that would dissuade us against our heavenly interest: Acts 20:24, 'But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.' This is the true mortification.

SERMON VIII

Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.—
ROM. 6:9, 10.

THAT I may the better explain the drift of these words, let us take the apostle's method along with us. His intent is to prevent an abuse of the doctrine of the gospel, which publisheth the free grace of God to sinners: 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.' From hence some did infer that therefore under the gospel they might take liberty to sin; the more their sins were, and the greater

they were, the more they should occasion God to manifest the abundance of his grace upon them. The apostle answereth this—

1. By way of detestation: 'Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid!'

2. By way of confutation. The argument by which he confuteth it is our baptismal vow and engagement: 'How shall they that are dead to sin live any longer therein?' To clear this, he explaineth our baptismal vow in the two branches of it, dying to sin, and living to righteousness; the one direct, and the other consequential. Directly, 'We are baptized into the death of Christ,' ver. 2, but so as that 'we also rise again to newness of life,' ver. 4, 5, for we are united to Christ as dying and rising, and we are by virtue of the union to express a conformity to both: ver. 5, 'For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.' He proveth the former part, ver. 6, 7, 'Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin, for he that is dead is freed from sin.' The latter he begins to prove, ver. 8, 'If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.' How live with him? As our spiritual death was answerable to the death of Christ, so our spiritual life must be answerable to his resurrection from the dead; as we have a copy and pattern for the mortifying sin in his death, so we have also a copy and pattern for newness of life in his resurrection; and therefore we do not in vain believe that we shall live spiritually and eternally with him: 'Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.'

The better to state the analogy and proportion between Christ's resurrection and our rising to the life of grace first and then of glory afterward, the life of Christ after his resurrection is set forth by two things—(1.) The perpetuity or immortality of it; (2.) The perfection and blessedness of it.

First, The perpetuity and immortality of it is delivered in three expressions—

1. Actual dying again is denied: 'Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more.' Christ's resurrection was not a return to a single act of life, or life for a while, to show himself to the world, and no more; but to an immortal endless estate.

2. His further liableness or subjection to death is denied: 'Death hath no more dominion over him.' That is thus expressed for two reasons —

[1.] Death had once dominion over Christ; when he gave up himself to die for us, he for a while permitted, yea, subjected himself to the power of it; but Christ overcame death, and put an end to its power by his resurrection: Acts 2:24, 'Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was impossible that he should be holden of it.'

[2.] To show that Christ died not only to expiate sin, but to take away the dominion and power of it in believers; therefore it is said, 'Death hath no more dominion over him,' he took away sin, by which death reigneth; he did enough both as to the satisfying God's justice and our deliverance.

3. Any further need of his dying again is denied: 'In that he died, he died unto sin once;' that is, he hath done his work; his death needeth not to be repeated; he died to sin once, not in regard of himself, for in him was no sin, but as charged with the sins of his people; he sufficiently took away sin, both as to guilt and power.

Secondly, The perfection and blessedness of his life is intimated: 'In that he liveth, he liveth unto God.' This expression may imply either the holiness of his life in heaven, or the blessedness of it.

1. The holiness. When Christ was raised from death to life again, he liveth to God wholly, seeketh to promote his glory in the world; he

liveth with God and to God; with God, as he is set down at the right hand of majesty, and administereth the mediatorial kingdom for his glory, as indeed God hath a great deal of honour from Christ as mediator: Phil. 2:11, 'That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'

2. The blessedness of it. Christ always lived to God, even before his death: John 8:29, 'And he that sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone, but I do always those things that please him.' Why, then, is he said after his resurrection to live to God? Ans.—As freed from our infirmities; he liveth a glorious life: Luke 20:28, 'He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live to him;' though they do not live to the world, they live to God. Those that are departed out of this world have another life; the souls of the just are already in the hands of God, and their bodies are sure to be raised up at the last day. So Christ liveth to God.

Doct. That the due consideration of Christ's being raised from the dead doth mightily promote the spiritual life in us.

This will be evident if we consider what advantage we have by Christ's resurrection.

1. It evidenceth the verity of christian religion, and that Christ was no deceiver, for his resurrection is a sufficient attestation to the dignity of his person and offices: Rom. 1:4, 'declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead;' Acts 17:31, 'He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.' This is a strong and undeniable argument that Christ is the Son of God, the saviour and judge of the world. Where lieth the force of the argument? Christ died in the judgment and repute of the world as a malefactor; but God justified him, when he would not leave him under the power of death, but raised him up, and assumed him unto glory, thereby visibly declaring

unto the world that the world was mistaken in him, that he was indeed what he gave out himself to be, the Son of God, and the judge of the world, to whom is given power over all flesh, either to save or destroy them, according to his covenant. This argument supposeth—

[1.] That there is a God, sufficiently represented to us by other means.

[2.] That whatsoever exceedeth the power of nature, or course of second causes, is done by this God.

[3.] Among all the miracles, this of raising a dead man to life is the greatest; the cure of a disease is not so much.

[4.] That if this be done to a person unjustly accused and condemned in the world, it is a justification of his cause before all the world, and a sure mark of divine testimony.

[5.] The cause between Jesus Christ and those that condemned him was, that he made himself to be the Son of God, and saviour and judge of the world; this he evidenceth himself, and this was preached by his disciples. Surely the supreme and just governor of the world would not justify a cheat and imposture, and so far permit the devil to deceive in his name as to change the course and order of nature, and so far directly to work against it as to raise a man from the dead. Now it is a mighty advantage to the advancement of the spiritual life to be sure of the religion that requireth it at our hands, much of it being against the inclination of corrupt nature; for then there is no tergiversation or excuse, as if our rule were uncertain, or that we did trouble ourselves more than needeth us of absolute necessity.

2. It showeth us the perfection of his satisfaction; there needeth no other sacrifice to abolish sin; for it is said in the text, 'In that he died, he died unto sin once,' and elsewhere the unity of the mediator and the sacrifice is pleaded to show the perfection of it. The unity of the mediator: 1 Tim. 2:5, 'There is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus;' and Heb. 10:14, 'By one offering he hath

perfected for ever them that are sanctified;' and Heb. 9:28, 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.' The ground of this argument standeth thus: That Christ came to take away sin, the benefit which the world needeth. Either he hath done it sufficiently, or not done it; if sufficiently, we have what we desire; if not, it must be either because other mediators were necessary to supply his defects. But where are they? Who can challenge this honour as authorised by God, and recommended to the world as Christ was? Or what can they do beyond what he hath done? No; there is but one mediator. Or else because another sacrifice or offering was necessary, because this could not attain its end, then Christ needed again to undergo death; for the single sacrifice did not the work, which was the taking away of sin. But this was enough to ransom all souls; no other propitiatory sacrifice was necessary. Why, how doth it appear? By the resurrection; for when Christ was raised from the dead, our surety and mediator (which were the qualities he took upon himself) was let out of prison, and dismissed, as having done what he undertook: Isa. 53:8, 'He shall be taken from prison and from judgment.' The debtor may have confidence the debt is cancelled when the surety is let out of prison and walketh freely abroad. When Christ is risen from the dead, and advanced to a glorious condition, surely his merit is full enough, and he hath a perfect release and discharge, as having done his work, and needeth no more to come under the power of death, which is a great encouragement to us to set about the destruction of sin. Christ hath paid a full ransom to purchase grace to make our endeavours effectual.

3. It is a visible demonstration of the truth of the resurrection and life to come. For Christ, who would be an example to us of all painful and self-denying obedience, would also be a pattern of the glory and felicity that should ensue. Therefore, after a life of holiness and sufferings, he died and rose again, and entered into the glory that he spake of, which is a great encouragement to us to follow his steps; for all this is a pledge of what shall be done in us. It is said, 1 Peter 1:21, 'That God raised him from the dead and gave him glory, that our

faith and hope might be in God.' The resurrection of Christ, and the consequent honour and glory put upon him, is the great prop and foundation of our faith and hope. Certainly it much concerneth us to believe the truth of the resurrection and the reality of the unseen glory, else all holiness, patience, self-denial, and practical godliness would fall to the ground. Now, when our teacher, who hath told us of these things, hath given sufficient evidence of the truth of them in his own person, by his own rising from the dead, and his own ascending into glory, it helpeth mightily to silence the objections of unbelief. The thing is not incredible nor impossible. Christ in our nature did arise from the dead, and ascend up into heaven; nay, it is not only possible, but certain; for Christ is risen and entered into glory as our forerunner, Heb. 6:20, to make the way accessible to us, and to seize upon it in the name and right of all true believers, and secure a landing-place for them after the storm of this world is over. Whenever they die, their place is ready for them, there is a friend on shore ready to receive them. So elsewhere: 1 Cor. 15:20, 'Christ is risen as the first-fruits.' His resurrection is a certain proof that other men shall have a resurrection also, as by a handful of the first-fruits the whole harvest was blessed and consecrated to God. The first-fruits did not bless the tares, the cockle or the darnel, or the filthy weeds that grew among the corn, these are not carried home into God's barn; but penitent believers may be confident of a joyful resurrection. If we be reconciled by his death, we may much more expect to be saved by his life.

4. Christ by his resurrection is the cause of our life; for Christ liveth in heaven as a quickening head, who will give the spirit of grace to all his members, to change their hearts, and to bring them into the life of God: John 14:19, 'Because I live, ye shall live also.' Christ is the fountain of all life. The life of believers is derived from the life of Christ, without which it could not subsist. If he had remained under a state of death, he were not in a capacity to convey life to others, and so had neither been a fountain of grace or glory to us; therefore his resurrection is the fountain-cause of our living to God; having first purchased grace for us, he is risen to apply it, and bring us into

possession of it. Therefore he sendeth his Spirit into the hearts of his people, even that same Spirit by which he was raised up to a new life: Rev. 1:18, 'I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.' He liveth for ever to make and keep us alive. Now this is a mighty encouragement to us, that we live by virtue of Christ's endless life. When the fountain faileth, the stream may be dried up, but that cannot be, and therefore we are encouraged to expect our supplies from him.

5. Christ's life after his resurrection is a pattern of ours, both as to the immortality and perfection of it.

[1.] The immortality. Christ, when he rose again, rose to an eternal immortal life. He shall die no more; he is no more obnoxious to death. The phrases that express the immortality of Christ's life are suited to our case, that he may the better be propounded as a pattern to us, both of what we ought to endeavour ourselves, and of what his Spirit doth work in us.

(1.) Being raised, he dieth no more. We should once so fix and settle our hearts to live to God that we should no more return to our old course and our old bondage. There are some who are always dying, and rising, and dying again, that return to their old sins, and lick up their vomit, and after they are washed wallow in the mire. These never died in good earnest, for then they would so die unto sin once as not to revert to it any more; but to be repenting of sin, and committing of sin, and then repenting and committing again, showeth our mortification is not sincere. A bone often broken in the same place is very hard to be set again. Relapses make our case to be more dangerous; if it be into open sinful courses, it showeth our repentance is not sincere. Men are sick of sin; but when that trouble is over, they presently are as bad as they were before: Prov. 24:11, 'As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.' Their hearts were never changed, their renounced sins and fleshly practices are as dear to them as ever. True repentance will produce a constant perseverance in well-doing; but if the unclean spirit

returneth, after it seemed to be cast out, Luke 11:24, we never parted in good earnest. Was your repentance sincere, and will you taste of the bitter waters again? Indeed we must distinguish of relapses.

(1st.) As to the degrees of sin, there are infirmities which we cannot avoid while we are in the body; and there are iniquities which we can and ought to avoid. A man that is troubled with vain and distracting thoughts in prayer may be troubled again, but of gross and wilful sins we never soundly repented if we cease not from them, *μιάσματα κόσμου*, the pollutions of the world,' spoken of 2 Peter 2:20. Doth a man repent of his uncleanness that often falleth into it, as often as the occasion returneth? So again—

(2d.) As to the seasons of sinning, we must distinguish between the acts repeated before any repentance, professed or after. An issue when it is new made, before the orifice of the wound be well closed, may bleed afresh after it is bound up. So before we are thoroughly recovered, sin will be breaking out; as in Lot's double incest; Samson's returning often to Delilah, when God had rebuked him for his sin; Peter's treble denials; his heart was not thoroughly touched and moulded as yet; this was as one continued sin.

(3d.) As to the manner of the return, if it be frequently, readily, easily, this will infer a habit; for a habit serveth ut quis facile, iucunde, constanter agat. Now though some sins solicit us more than others, yet uprightness requireth that we should keep ourselves from our iniquity: Ps. 18:23, 'I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from my iniquity.' So that repentance which consists only in sorrow for sin, and such trouble for it as doth not mortify it, is but like thawing a little in the sunshine, or giving weather, soft at top and hard at bottom. True repentance is a thorough change of heart and life; therefore to repent and go on still in our trespasses is no sound repentance.

(2.) Death hath no dominion over him; so should not sin have over us. After all our care sin will be troublesome, but it must be kept out

of the throne. If men forsake not known wilful sins, they are wicked men; sin reigneth, and the power of it is no way broken; therefore let it not have dominion, so as to draw you to a sensual life, or command your thoughts and affections, or ingross your time and strength: Ps. 19:13, 'Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me, so shall I be upright and free from the great transgression.' As to the merit, there needeth not another sacrifice; and to the conveyance and making over the blessings of the gospel, there needeth not another covenant. So as to the application, there needeth not another regeneration or total conversion unto God; as also our baptism, which is the sign of it, needeth not to be repeated or reiterated, though the acts of our faith and repentance need often to be repeated. For all known sins it is expressly required; for sins of ignorance and lesser escapes, they are pardoned of course, and as they are retracted in a general repentance. Well, then, let us so rise to newness of life as never to return to our old sins again, at least let them not have dominion over us. Baptism is the sacrament of our regeneration and implanting into Christ, and reception into God's family; and as we are born but once, so we are but once new-born. Being once received into God's family, we are never cast out thence: being once adopted into the number of his children, we are never disinherited. No; 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance,' Rom. 11:29.

[2.] As to the perfection and blessedness of it, 'In that he liveth, he liveth unto God.' This is—

(1.) A pattern and copy of the spiritual life here upon earth.

(2.) A pledge and assurance of our glorious life in heaven. The one is our duty, the other is our reward.

(1.) The spiritual life is a living to God, as Christ liveth with God and to God. As mediator he liveth with God, is set down at his right hand; so should we live in communion with God, be much and often in company with him; in our whole course we should always set him

before us, walking as in his eye and presence: Ps. 16:8, 'I have set the Lord always before me.' It is his law we live by, in his presence we stand, his work we do, his glory we seek; for our great end is the pleasing and glorifying of God: Gal. 2:19, 'For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God;' Rom. 14:7, 8, 'For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.' Christ gave us a pattern of a holy, obedient, and heavenly life in his conversation here on earth; and in heaven we must still write after his copy; we must be Christ's, as Christ is God's, and then all things are ours: 1 Cor. 3:23, 'All are yours, for you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' Wholly devote your time and strength and service to him. God must be your solace and your strength, and your beginning, end, way and all. When you awake, you should be still with him, Ps. 139:18; all the day long you should keep in his eye: Prov. 23:17, 'Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.' In all your actions, your intention must be to please and glorify him: 1 Cor. 10:31, 'Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.'

(2.) Our glorious life in heaven; that is a living unto God indeed, for there we have nothing else to mind but God. We are admitted before the throne of his glory, to be with him for evermore. Now, if Christ be there, we shall be there also; for if we follow him, we shall fare as he fared: John 12:26, 'Where I am, there shall my servant be;' John 17:24, 'Father, I will that those also whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am.' So John 14:3, 'If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.' Our Saviour desireth to have the faithful in heaven with himself; it is a thing which his heart is set upon; and he presents the efficacy of his merits and obedience to this end and purpose, that the great work of the restitution of lost man may obtain its end and effect, and his mystical body may be brought together to one place, that they may ever laud and praise and glorify God. Many in the world cannot endure the presence and company of the saints; Christ cannot be in heaven without them. Now the spiritual life

issuing itself into the heavenly is a great encouragement to us to go on in our duty and obedience.

Use. Let us often and seriously think of him 'who died for our offences, and rose again for our justification,' Rom. 4:25, and improve it—

1. For the destruction of sin. Christ died that he might destroy sin, and take away sin. If he had not fully done his work, he could not rise again, or, if risen, he needed to return once more to die. But Christ dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. By raising up Christ, God showeth that he received the death of his Son as a sufficient ransom for our sins, and all that believe in him shall have the comfort of it. If he had remained in death, or were still obnoxious to it, his satisfaction should not have been perfect, neither should he have been able to apply the virtue and comfort of it to us; but now, who shall condemn when God justifieth? when Christ is dead, 'yea, rather risen from the dead,' &c., Rom. 8:33, 34. If Christ hath paid our debt and borne our sorrows so far that no more is required of him, surely God will never reverse that pardon which was sealed with Christ's blood. The curse and condemnation are terrible indeed, but he hath taken them away, and given us a free discharge.

2. For the new life; Christ is both the cause and the pattern of it. His Spirit is the cause of it, and his life in heaven is the copy after which we must write.

[1.] His Spirit is the cause of it, who quickeneth our dead souls; therefore if you be entered into God's peace, have sued out your atonement, you may expect to be saved by his life: Rom. 5:10, 'If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life;' that is, by him who now liveth, and sitteth at the right hand of God, and there intercedeth for grace necessary, that we may live unto God. He that intercedeth wanteth no will; and he that saith that all things are put into his hands, wanteth no power.

[2.] Christ is the pattern of this new life which we are to live in-the world. Christ is the great agent to promote God's kingdom and glory; but his Spirit engageth us in the same design. As long as we live, we should live unto God; we are raised up from the grave of sin, that we should be to the praise of his glorious grace. The christian's life is a life whereby we glorify God. See this life be begun in you, and see it perfected more and more. Be Christ's, as Christ is God's: Heb. 7:25, 'He is able to save unto the uttermost all those that come unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.' Christ liveth; we need not doubt of a supply. He gives life as creator to the smallest worms: 'In him was life,' John 1:4. He can quicken us when dead and dull; he came into the world for this purpose: John 10:10, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly;' and he is gone out of the world to heaven for this purpose: Eph. 4:10, 'He ascended far above the heavens, that he might fill all things.' He is filled with the Spirit to communicate it to his members; he is not weak when we are weak, but able to do above what we can ask or think.

3. As concerning the life of glory, we have it by Christ also: 1 John 5:11, 'This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.' The door which is shut against us by our sins is opened by Christ Let us follow his precepts and example, and depend upon his grace, and you cannot miscarry. Christ hath brought life and immortality to light, assured us of an endless happiness after death. Heathens had but a doubtful conjecture of another life; we have an undoubted assurance, and that is some great stay to us.

4. Concerning the troubles and afflictions that we meet withal. As to the troubles of the church of God, he is alive and upon the throne; he can never cease to live and reign: Ps. 110:1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool.' The enemies of his kingdom must bend or break, first or last.

5. Against death. Christ hath broken the power of it; as it hath no dominion over him, so it cannot totally seize upon his members; in

their better part they still live to God as soon as they die; and as to their bodies, 'The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness,' Rom. 8:10, 15; 1 Cor. 15:55–57, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ;' Job 19:25, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand the last day upon the earth,' &c. But what is this to us? As it hath no dominion over him, so not over us; the power is broken, the sting is gone. If our flesh must rot in the grave, our nature is in heaven. Christ once died, and then rose again from the dead. Now this doth mightily secure and support us against the power and fears of death, that we have a saviour in possession of glory, to whom we may commend our departing souls at the time of death, and who will receive them to himself; one that hath himself been upon earth in flesh, then died and rose again, and is now in possession of endless blessedness. He is lord of that world we are going into. All creatures there do him homage, and we ere long are to be adjoined to that dutiful happy assembly, and partake in the same work and felicity.

SERMON IX

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.—ROM. 6:11.

THE protasis or foundation of the similitude was laid down ver. 9, 10; the apodosis or application of it to the case in hand in this verse. The foundation is Christ's example and pattern, dying and rising; now, after this double example of Christ's death and resurrection, we must account ourselves obliged both to die unto sin and rise again to newness of life: 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves,' &c. In which words—

1. Our duty, which is conformity or likeness to Christ dying and living.

2. Grace to perform this duty, ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, through or in Jesus Christ; by virtue of our union with him we are both to resemble his death and resurrection.

3. The means of enforcing this duty, λογίζετε, reckon; Vulgar, existimate; Erasmus out of Tertullian, reputate, consider with yourselves; others, colligite et statuite.

Doct. That all who are baptized and profess faith in Christ dying and rising from the dead are under a strong obligation of dying to sin and living to God through the grace of the Redeemer. Here—

1. I shall consider the nature of the duties of being dead to sin and alive to God.

2. The correspondency; how they do answer the two states of Christ; as Christ dieth to sin for the expiation of it, and after death reviveth and liveth to God, so we.

3. The order; first death, then the resurrection from the dead; so first dying to sin, then being alive to God.

4. The certain connection of these things; if we die we shall live, and we cannot live to God unless we be dead to sin; neither can we die to sin unless we live to God.

5. In the two branches the apostle opposeth God to sin.

First, The nature of the work. It consists of two branches, 'dying to sin,' and 'living to God,' mortification and vivification.

1. Mortification is the purifying and cleansing of the soul, or the freeing it from the slavery of the flesh, which detaineth it from God, and disableth it for all the duties of the holy and heavenly life. The reign of sin was the punishment of the first transgression, and is taken away by the gift of the Spirit upon account of the merit of Christ. However, it is our work to see that sin die. It dieth as our love

to it dieth; and our love to sin is not for its own sake, but because of some pleasure, contentment, and satisfaction that we hope to find in it; for no man would commit sin or transgress merely for his mind's sake; mere evil apprehended as evil, cannot be the object of our choice. Now, then, our love to sin dieth when our esteem of the advantages of the carnal life is abated, when we have no other value of the pleasures, honours, and profits of the world than is fully consistent with our duty to God, and may further us in it. Therefore we are dead to sin when we endeavour more to please God than to please the flesh, and mind more our eternal than our temporal interests: Rom. 8:5, 'They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.' What we mind and value most showeth the reign of either principle, the flesh or the Spirit.

2. Vivification, or living to God, is the changing of the heart by grace, and the acting of those graces we have received by the Spirit of regeneration. All that have received the gift of the spiritual life are bound to exercise it, and put it in act by loving, serving, and obeying God: 2 Peter 1:3–5, 'According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; and besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge,' &c. They that have received grace are not to sit down idle and satisfied, but to be more active and diligent in the exercise of grace; and whatever remaineth of their lives must be devoted to God. To live to God implieth two things—

[1.] To fulfil his commands with a ready mind, and so they are said to live to God who show themselves ready to obey him in all things: Ps. 112:1, 'Blessed is the man that feareth God, that delighteth greatly in his commandments;' not who is greedy to catch all opportunities of pleasure and profit and worldly preferment in the world, and careth

not how he cometh by them; but is most observant of God's will, and careful to follow it; he that delighteth to know, believe, and obey God's word.

[2.] To glorify his name; for as we receive power from the Spirit of Christ to live as in the sight of God, so also to the glory of God. Sin, till it be killed and mortified in us, as it disposeth us to a wrong way, so to a perverse end, to seek happiness in the satisfaction of our lusts; but grace wrought by God inclineth us to God: Phil. 1:11, 'Filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ Jesus, to the praise and glory of God.' As they do good, so to a good end, not for any by-respect, but to please and honour God.

Secondly, The correspondency; it is such a dying and living as doth answer Christ's dying and living. We must so die and forsake sin as, that we need not to die any more. We may never return to our sins again, so as that they may have any dominion over us; and that is done when sin hath its death-wound given it by a sincere conversion to God, then 'we put off the body of the sins of the flesh,' Col. 2:11. Though the final death be not by and by, yet, as a man is said to be killed when he hath received his death-wound, so he that, never reverts to his old slavery is said indeed to be dead unto sin. On the other side, for our new christian life, we are to take care that it may be eternal, carried on in such an uninterrupted course of holiness as may at length end in everlasting life. When we are first converted, we see that man was made for other things than he hath hitherto minded; therefore we resolve to seek after them, and so must persevere in living to God, till we come to live with him. God or none, heaven or nothing, must serve our turn: Ps. 73:25, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth I desire besides thee.' Nothing else will satisfy and content the soul. When we live from an everlasting principle to an everlasting end, then we live to God as Christ did.

Thirdly, The order is to be regarded also. We first die to sin, and then live to God; for till we die to sin we are disabled from the duties, and

incapable of the comforts of the new life.

1. We are disabled from the duties of it; for without mortification the duties will be unpleasant and unacceptable to you, as being against your carnal inclination and design: Rom. 8:7, 'Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' We may affect the repute of religion, but cannot endure the work of religion. And besides, sin allowed and indulged begets a trouble in the conscience, and then no wonder if we be loath seriously to exercise ourselves unto godliness; for when the bone is out of joint, and the wound unhealed, a man certainly hath no mind to his work. The apostle telleth us: Heb. 12:13, 'That which is lame is soon turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed.' A worldly carnal bias upon the heart will make us warp and decline from our duty. There can be no spiritual strength and vigour of heavenly motion whilst sin remaineth unmortified; for the love of ease and worldly enjoyments will soon pervert us. Well, then, sin must be mortified before we can live unto God. On the other side, grace cureth sin, as fire refresheth us against the cold, and health taketh away sickness: so far as God is admitted, Satan is shut out: Eph. 4:25, 'Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour;' and as Christ is valued, worldly things are neglected and become less in our eyes: Phil. 3:8, 'Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and I do count them but dung, that I may win Christ;' as heavenly things are prized, the world is undervalued. When grace hath recovered the heart to God, the world, that first stole it from God, is despised; but the first work of grace is to cast out the usurper, and then set up God. Darkness goeth out of the room when light comes in, so doth the love of the world depart as the love of God prevaieth in the soul.

2. While sin prevaieth and reigneth in the soul, we are incapable, of the comforts of the Spirit, and are full of bondage and guilty fears; afraid of God, that should be our joy and delight, deprived of any

sweet sense of his love; for the Spirit of adoption is given to those that obey him: Rom. 8:13–16, 'If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby ye cry Abba, Father. The Spirit itself also beareth witness with our spirits, that we are children of God.' Others are tormented between their corruptions and convictions, and can have no boldness in their access to God, nor freedom in their commerce with him.

Fourthly, The certain connection of these things; this 'dying to sin,' and this 'living to God,' must be both evident in us, for they are intimately conjoined. A man cannot remain in his sins, and be a christian or a believer, or accounted one that is in Christ, and hath right to the privileges of the new covenant; these, 'have but a name to live, and are dead,' Rev. 3:1. Again, on the other side, some never break out into shameful disorders, but yet love not God, nor do they make it their business to obey him; they never felt the power of the heavenly mind, or make conscience of living godly in Christ Jesus; as the Pharisees' religion ran upon negatives: Luke 18:11, 'God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.' These seem to be dead to sin, but are alive, whilst worldly things sit nearest their hearts.

Fifthly, The apostle opposeth God to sin, that by the consideration of both masters we may return to our rightful Lord. It is otherwise expressed elsewhere: 1 Peter 1:24, 'That we might die unto sin, and live unto righteousness;' but here it is, die to sin and live to God; and this for two reasons—

1. That Christ came to restore us to our rightful Lord and master. Sin and the devil and the world are usurpers, and therefore are exauctorated; we are no longer bound to serve them; but God hath a right to require love and service at our hands: Acts 27:23, 'The God whose I am, and whom I serve.' He hath a title by creation, as our proper owner: Ps. 100:3, 'Know ye that the Lord he is God, it is he

that hath made us, and not we ourselves;' by redemption: 1 Cor. 6:19, 20, 'Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.' Christ came to recover us from our slavery.

2. To show the disadvantage between having sin and God for our master. What is more filthy than sin, and more mischievous than sin, and more holy and beneficial than God? To serve sin is a brutish captivity, and will prove our bane in the issue; but to serve God is true liberty, and it will be our present and eternal happiness: Rom. 6:22, 'But now being made free from sin, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.'

Secondly, The grace to perform this duty: 'Through our Lord Jesus Christ.' We are to die to sin and live to God, not only *ex præscripto Christi*, according to the precepts of Christ, which everywhere run strongly against sin, and pleading God's right with us; nor only *ex imitatione Christi*, to imitate our pattern and example, that we may be like Christ in these things, and express his dying and rising in our conversations; but *virtute Christi*, by the power of Christ's grace, as by the force of his example. This power of Christ may be considered as purchased, or as applied, or as our interest in it is professed in baptism.

1. As it is purchased. He died and rose again to represent the merit of his death to God, that he might obtain grace for us to kill sin and live unto God, and that in such a continued course of obedience, till we live with God: 1 Thes. 5:10, 'He died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him;' i.e., to redeem us from all iniquity, and to preserve us in our obedience to eternal life. While we wake, or are alive, we live with him, and when we sleep, after we are dead, we still live with him; we live a spiritual life here, and afterward an eternal life in glory. So that place, which otherwise hath some difficulty in it, may be expounded by Rom. 14:8, 9, 'Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the

Lord; whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's.' For this Christ died.

2. As it is applied. It is applied by the Spirit of Christ, by virtue of our union with him. Jesus Christ is the root and foundation of this life, in whom we do subsist; for it is in the text, ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, and in the context it is said, ver. 5, 'We are planted into his likeness;' so that this conformity is the fruit of our union, and wrought in us by his Spirit, which is the sap we derive from our root.

3. As our interest in him is professed in baptism; for then we are visibly grafted into Christ: Gal. 3:27, 'As many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ.' Thence an obligation resulteth; we ought to be like him. So that in short, the sum of the whole is this: the precepts and example of Christ do show us our duty; the grace whereby we perform it is wrought in us by the Spirit, by virtue of our union with Christ; and our baptismal engagement bindeth it on our hearts. Or thus; it is purchased by Christ, effected by the Spirit, sealed and professed in baptism, which partly bindeth us to our duty, and assureth us we shall not want grace, but have help and strength from Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, The means of improvement, λογίζετε, 'reckon yourselves.' It may be inquired why the apostle saith not simply, 'we are dead,' or 'be ye dead indeed,' but 'reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin,' &c. Shall our reckoning ourselves dead or alive make it so? Ans. (1.) Let us consider the import of the word; (2.) Why it is used.

1. For the import of the word. It is equivalent with γινώσκοντες, ver. 6, πιστεύομεν, ver. 8, εἰδότες, ver. 9; what they signify this signifieth. It is an act of judgment; the power of the mind is put forth in it.

2. The use of it here.

[1.] It is actus mentis cogitantis; it is an act of the mind considering or meditating upon this matter, and the effect here mentioned doth much depend upon meditation as the means. The weightiest things

work not if they be not thought of; therefore we must not slightly pass over this mystery of Christ's dying and rising, but consider how they concern us, and what we were before regeneration, and what we are now to be, who profess to follow our Redeemer unto glory.

[2.] It is *actus rationis concludentis*, an act of reason concluding from due premises, and inferring that this is our duty. Because the heart is averse from God, we need positively to determine upon rational deductions that it is our unquestionable duty; for we must certainly know a thing to be our duty before we will address ourselves to perform it; and herein reason is a good handmaid to faith, for sanctified reason ever concludeth for God; whilst it improveth principles discovered by faith, it is our light to discover many things evident by natural light; it is our instrument to improve other things which it cannot discover, but depend on God's revelation. We ponder and weigh things in our minds, then determine what is our duty. So that reckon is by reason collect; as often in scripture: 1 Cor. 10:15, 'I speak as to wise men;' ye have reason, 'Judge ye what I say.'

[3.] It is *actus fidei assentientis*; it is the syllogism of faith. It is not the bare knowledge, nor the bare discourse of these things doth make them operative and effectual; but as faith is mingled with them: Heb. 4:2, 'The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.' This is not matter of conjecture or opinion only, but of faith, to own the obligation which dependeth on the authority of Christ, which is a supernatural truth; to believe the power which doth assist us, which is also a matter of pure faith, and seemingly contradicted by sense. For though mortification and vivification be begun in us, yet because of the troublesome relics of corruption, to reckon ourselves with any degree of confidence and trust to be dead unto sin and alive unto God is an act of faith; the thing is not liable to external sense, and internal sense contradicts it, we being oppressed with so many remaining corruptions.

[4.] It is *actus fidei applicantis*. We must not only know and discourse of these things, but apply them to ourselves. The best and the most profitable knowledge is in applying general truths to a man's own case: 'Likewise reckon ye yourselves also to be dead unto sin,' &c. This is a truth which concerneth us in mortification: I profess faith in Christ, am baptized with Christ, I must die unto sin. *Omnis operatio est per contactum*—the closer the truth, the more effectual the operation: Rom 8:31, 'What shall we say to these things?'

[5.] It is *actus judicis decernentis*; we do determine, This we must do or be undone: 2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 'We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.'

[6.] It is *actus voluntatis consentientis*; this death and life is much promoted by the firm purpose and resolution of our minds: 1 Peter 4:1, 'Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.' The sum of the whole is—

(1.) That we should think of it seriously; and here many are defective, who little think of dying to sin or living to God; all their thoughts are how they may please the flesh: Rom. 13:14, 'To make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof;' or thrive in the world: Luke 12:17, 18, καὶ διελογίζετο, 'And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.' Or as those, James 4:13, 'To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain;' and so their great work lieth neglected.

(2.) That by reason we should so evidence it to ourselves to be our duty that we should make conscience of it. A sluggish heart needs to

be awakened by plain and evident conclusions; for wherefore was reason given us? to lie asleep? No; we must argue and conclude for God, that we may bring it to this issue, that either we are flat rebels, or must do those things he hath given us in charge.

(3.) We must assent to those principles of faith from whence this conclusion is deduced by necessary consequence, as namely—

(1st.) That Christ is set up as a pattern, to whom all the heirs of promise must be conformed.

(2d.) That our conformity is mainly seen in resembling his two estates, his dying to sin and living to God.

(3d.) That our baptism obligeth us both by way of dependence and obedience. By way of dependence, waiting for his grace, whereby this conformity and likeness may be accomplished. By way of obedience, using all those holy means and endeavours that conduce to this end and purpose; faith assenteth, reason concludeth.

(4.) We must resolve upon it as an unquestionable duty, that we may not play fast and loose with God. For the judgment determining and the will consenting make up the strength of resolution, which in this case is very necessary, because we are likely to be assaulted with many enemies; and seeing we are too often secure, and forgetful of our work and welfare, therefore we must stand fast in the purpose of our own hearts still to pursue this work till it be finished. Those who are regenerated by the Spirit surely will have such reasonings in themselves, and are not only in profession, but indeed (as the word is in the text) dying to sin and living to God. And it is ordinary in scripture to exhort by affirming, that is, to speak of the duty of believers as already done by them, thereby to assure them it shall be done, and to oblige them the more strongly to the endeavour of it.

Use. To press us to two things—(1.) To regard your duty; (2.) To own the grace of Christ.

1. To regard your duty of dying to sin and living to God. The arguments to press it are these—

[1.] From the work itself, which is so noble and excellent, that if there were no benefit to ensue, it were enough to engage us. It consists in these four branches and parts—

(1.) To have the sensitive appetite subject to reason, which is nothing else but to have the order of nature preserved, or that man should carry himself rather like a man than a beast, not serve divers lusts and pleasures, but be governed by his reason and conscience. Now, it should not be a hard precept to us to persuade us to walk upon our feet rather than our heads; let the head guide the body, and the feet obey its direction; put reason in the throne.

(2.) To have reason illuminated and rectified by faith, which discovereth things to us out of the ken and view of reason: Heb. 11:1, 'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.' The heathens had the highest opinion of those who were admitted into secrecy with their gods, and had things revealed to them which other mortals could never have known. This honour have all his saints: 'They shall be all taught of God,' John 6:45; higher mysteries than nature could discover.

(3.) That this faith should make us alive to God, or enable and incline us to persevere in our duty to him. Faith is our life as begun: Gal. 2:20, 'The life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' As consummated: Heb. 10:38, 'Now the just shall live by faith;' the Spirit working in us a practical fiducial assent to the saving truths of the gospel, or affianced on God according to the promises, doth beget life in us, or a resolution to obey God, whatever it cost us.

(4.) That this faith working by love doth incline and enable us to live accordingly. The property of faith is 'to work by love,' Gal. 5:6. Now see what these two graces do. The property of love is to incline us to

God, it is the bent and bias of the soul; and the property of faith is to enable us by presenting greater encouragements to the holy and heavenly life than the world and the flesh can produce to the contrary. Now, is this a toilsome and tedious life, to have appetite governed by reason, reason elevated by faith to the sight of God and the other world, and faith acting by love and hope, which incline us to God and heaven, and fortify and strengthen us against all the delights and terrors of sense? This is nothing but dying to sin and living to God.

[2.] From the consequent benefits, which are—

(1.) Pardon of all their sins; these have an interest in Christ, a pardon sealed by his blood. They that die to sin and live to righteousness have passed from death to life, not only as death to sin implieth corruption, but condemnation, or the righteous sentence of the law dooming it to death: Rom. 8:1. 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh;' there is dying to sin: 'but after the Spirit;' there is living to God.

(2.) These are adopted into God's family, and have the privileges and right of children; for adoption followeth regeneration: John 1:12, 13, 'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.'

(3.) These have communion with the Father, by the Son, through the Spirit: 1 John 1:7, 'But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.' For God's children have the Spirit of adoption: Gal. 4:6, 'Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.'

(4.) That Spirit dwelling in us worketh us to further holiness and joy; for he is both a sanctifier and a comforter. As a sanctifier, he doth

further enable us to die to sin, and 'mortify the deeds of the body,' Rom. 8:13; and to live to God: Gal. 5:25, 'If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit;' and so the duty is a reward in itself. As a comforter, he doth assure us of our interest in God's love: Rom. 8:16, 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God;' and it causeth us to live in the foresight of everlasting happiness: 2 Cor. 5:5, 'Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.'

(5.) Entrance and actual admission into glory: John 3:3, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,' compared with ver. 5, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;' Mat. 5:8, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;' Heb. 12:12, 'Without holiness no man shall see God.'

2. Own the grace of Christ, without whom we can do nothing acceptable to God. Lapsed man is unable not only to redeem himself, but unable to live unto God without the grace of the Redeemer; he doth sanctify us by his Spirit, and change our hearts, and is a Saviour to us, not only by merit, but efficacy. To be a sanctifier is his office, which he hath undertaken; and it is his glory to perform it; we only work under him. Which teacheth us—

[1.] Humility. Whatever good things believers have which concern spiritual and heavenly life, they are beholden only to Christ for it. We can never die to sin, nor live to God, but only through Christ, and Christ not only enlightening, but sanctifying. A speculative error vanisheth as soon as truth appeareth; but lust is a brutish inclination, bare reason cannot master it.

[2.] Thankfulness and love to Christ, by whom we have all our grace and look for all our glory.

[3.] Dependence; he is ready to give us grace: Phil. 4:19, 'But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.'

SERMON X

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.—ROM. 6:12.

THE apostle having undeniably proved that the justified are dead to sin, he now beginneth his exhortation that we should not obey sin by indulging bodily lusts. The exhortation is short, but of great weight, 'Let not sin therefore reign,' &c.

In the words take notice—

1. Of the illative particle, therefore, which leadeth us to the principles from whence the duty is inferred, namely, the tenor of Christianity, which is considered—(1.) As professed by them, for they have submitted to baptism, and so are obliged to die unto sin and live unto God; (2.) As having obtained its effect in them, as in charity he presumeth them to be regenerated or real believers, and therefore chargeth them with this duty; for Christ's grace must not lie idle in the soul.

2. The duty to which they are exhorted is to take care to prevent the reign of sin, which is described and represented—

1. By the seat of it, 'In your mortal body.'

2. The nature of it, 'That you should obey it in the lusts thereof.' To obey bodily lusts is the reign of sin.

Doct. That christians are strictly obliged to take care that sin get not dominion over them by the desires and interests of the mortal body.

1. Let me explain this point.
2. Give you the reasons of it.

First, In explaining this doctrine, I shall handle three questions—

1. Why is sin said to reign in our bodies rather than our souls?
2. Why doth the apostle call it our mortal body? the use of this term; and—
3. When is sin said to reign?

First, Why is sin said to reign in our bodies rather than in our souls? And again 'lusts thereof,' αὐτοῦ, as agreeing to σώματι, not αὐτῆς, as relating to ἁμαρτία.

1. Negatively, it is not to be understood that sinful lusts are only in the body, or have their original only from the body, and not from the soul; for that is repugnant to what Christ saith: Mat. 15:18, 19, 'Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man; for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.'
2. But positively, he saith 'In your body.'

[1.] Because these lusts mostly manifest themselves in the body, and belong to the body and the flesh. Therefore the apostle saith, 'Mortify your members which are upon the earth,' Col. 3:5; and Rom. 7:23, 'I see a law in my members warring against the law of my mind;' James 4:1, 'Lusts that war in your body.' When the devil would set up a kingdom in the hearts of men, he doth it by the body; for what is nearer and dearer to us than our bodies? And things present and grateful to the bodily senses promote his designs; these blind our minds and corrupt our hearts, and entice our affections, so that we follow after them earnestly, with the neglect of God and our precious immortal souls. There are various desires, according to the variety of

objects which tend to please and gratify the flesh, by occasion of which sin doth insinuate itself into us.

[2.] Because they are acted and executed by the body or outward man, and therefore are called 'the deeds of the body,' Rom. 8:13. Now, though some sins are seated in the mind, as heresies, yet they are works of the flesh: Gal. 5:19, 20, 'Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies;' because usually they begin at falseness of the heart, and are bred in us by some corrupt affections, such as pride, vainglory, self-seeking, &c.: Gal. 2:18, 'Puffed up with his fleshly mind.' And for sins of omission, they arise in us from some inordinate sensual affection to the creature, which causeth us to omit our duty to God. But generally most sins are acted by the body. Therefore, as in grace, or in the dedication of ourselves to God, the soul is included when the body only is mentioned: Rom. 12:1, 'Present your body as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' All the service we perform to God is acted by the body; so in the destruction of sin: 'Let it not reign in your body.'

[3.] Because the disorder of the sensual appetite, which inclineth us to the interests and conveniences of the bodily life, is the great cause of all sin; and therefore man corrupted and fallen is represented as wholly governed by his sensual inclinations: Gen. 6:3, 'For that man also is flesh;' and John 3:6, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh;' as if he had nothing in him but what is earthly and carnal. Our souls do so cleave to the earth, and are addicted to the body, that they have lost their primitive excellency; our understandings, will, and affections are distempered by our senses, and enslaved to serve the flesh, which is a matter well to be regarded, that we may understand why the scripture so often calleth sin by the name of flesh, and sometimes a body; or it is said 'to dwell in the body,' not as if the understanding and will were not corrupted and tainted, but to show how they are tainted and corrupted, that this corruption which hath

invaded human nature cometh chiefly, though not only, from the inordinancy of our sensual appetite. I will prove it by two considerations—

(1.) One is a supposition. Suppose that original sin, so far as it concerneth the understanding and will, consisted in a bare privation of that rectitude that should be in these faculties (I do not say it is so, but suppose it were so), yet as long as our senses and appetites are disordered, which wholly incline us to terrene and earthly things, this were enough to cause us to sin; as a chariot must needs miscarry where the driver is weak, sleepy, negligent, and the horses unruly and disorderly. So here, we have not so much light and love to higher things as will restrain the sensual appetite. The understanding hath no light: 2 Peter 1:9, 'But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off;' Eph. 1:18, 'The eyes of your understandings being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling,' &c. The will hath no love: 1 Cor. 2:14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' And therefore, man, that obeyeth his bodily lusts and desires, must needs be corrupt and sinful.

(2.) The other is an assertion; that there are habitual, positive, inordinate inclinations to sensual things both in the understanding and will; for φρόνημα σαρκος, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God,' Rom. 8:7. The mind doth not only befriend the lusts of the flesh, and seek to palliate and excuse them, but opposeth whatever would reduce us from the love of them. And the will is biassed by such sensual inclinations: 1 Tim. 6:10, 'For the love of money is the root of all evil.' Our reason doth often contrive and approve sin, and the will embraceth it. So that you see the reason why sin is said to reign in our bodies, because of the strong inclination of our souls to present things, or things conducing to the contenting of the flesh, or gratifying the bodily life.

Secondly, Why doth the apostle say, 'In your mortal bodies'? I answer—For sundry reasons.

1. To put us in mind of the first rise of sin; for sin brought in death: Rom. 5:12, 'As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' And so while we live this mortal bodily life, we are subject to these desires, swarms of sinful motions and inclinations to evil remain within us, we are prone to them, and give way to them, and are too slack in the resistance of them, and through the ignorance and inattentiveness of our minds cannot discern or distinguish between what regular nature desireth and lust craveth. There are lawful desires of the body, and prohibited desires of the body; through the crafty conveyance between the understanding and the false heart, we easily give way to what is inordinate, under the pretence of what is lawful and convenient, and so insensibly slide into compliance with the plain prohibited desires of the body. Lust is headstrong, and the empire and government of the will feeble, and so we are led on to obey them; that is, we become servants and slaves to sin. And though the regenerate be delivered from the power of sin, yet much of this corruption remaineth in them for their exercise and humiliation; and if they be not watchful, and obey not the motions of the Spirit, it will soon recover its power, and men will be brought into their old slavery and captivity: Gal. 5:16, 17, 'Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit lusteth against the flesh.' So that this mortal body giveth sin many advantages.

2. This term, mortal body, puts us in mind of its punishment; it tendeth to death and destruction. We considered it before as it pointed at the rise, now at the fruit itself. The apostle telleth us, Rom. 8:10, 'The body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.' He speaketh there of believers, or those who have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, who, being once sinners, the punishment of sin, death, befalleth them, and so their bodies must die and return to dust, yet they shall live a happy and blessed life

both in body and soul. If they labour to mortify and suppress sin, and return sincerely to newness of life, though they are still mortal and subject to corporal death because of sin, yet it shall not be eternal death. The renewed soul is a partaker of eternal life, and shall always live with God in glory, and though the body be put off for a time, yet in time it shall be partaker of this life also.

3. To show us the transitoriness of these delights. You gratify a mortal body with the neglect of a precious and immortal soul; now the mortal body should not be pampered with so great a loss and inconvenience to our souls. All the good things which the flesh aimeth at, they perish with the mortal body, but the guilt and punishment of this disorderly life remaineth for ever. All fleshly pleasure ceaseth at the grave's mouth, and wealth, pleasure, carnal rest, worldly honour, are no longer of use to us when we are to be laid in the dust. One would think this should cure the mad desires of all mortal creatures: 1 John 2:17, 'The world passeth away, and the lusts thereof; but he that doeth the will of God shall endure for ever.' When we come to die, neither can the thing do us good, and the very lust and desire is gone, and is bitter in the remembrance of it. Pray, how little can all the world then do for you? When you have most need of comfort, the taste of these things is gone, and the sting remaineth; the pampered flesh must then be cast into the dust, and all its pleasure will then be at an end; which will be a doleful day to those that had their good things here, and all their portion in this life. When that is gone which is so much valued and sought after, and the true felicity forfeited because it was undervalued and contemned, how will they be ashamed of the folly of their perverse choice! Therefore, if we would joyfully bear, or contentedly yield to the dissolution of our bodies, we should now master and mortify the desires of the flesh.

4. To show that in this state of mortality and frailty we may prevent the reign of sin. Many will say, We are frail creatures, we are not glorified saints; the desires of nature are impetuous. Ay! but you may resist them, and that with success. The mortality of the body doth not

excuse sin, but aggravate it, that for a little brutish pleasure, that is, but for a while, we will forfeit eternal joys, and run the hazard of eternal pains. But can we avoid the pleasing of desires so natural? Yes; many that live in the flesh do not live after the flesh; their reason is not enslaved by sense, but illuminated and directed by faith to higher things. The apostle produceth himself as an instance: Gal. 2:20, 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' And he speaketh no more of himself than what is common to all believers. Surely they may or can, if they be not wanting to themselves, 'crucify the flesh with the affections and passions thereof;' yea, they have, if they are true believers: Gal. 5:24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.' Indeed, nothing seemeth harder and harsher than for men to get such a victory over their own flesh, and to contradict motions that are so pleasing. They are not stocks and stones, they say; how is it possible to be so dead to the interests of the animal life as not to be moved, and sometimes greatly moved, with these things, which either gratify or displease the flesh? I answer, in Christ's words, Mat. 19:26, 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.' There is the Spirit of Christ to change our natures, and the Spirit of Christ to direct and influence our motions, and ordinances and means appointed to convey this Spirit to us, as the word, which revealeth better things, sacraments which assure to us our great hopes, and oblige us to live answerably; there are many providences to deaden the taste of the flesh, and train us up for better things in another world, and we are to be watchful, serious, heavenly.

5. To show that the tediousness of our conflict and this troublesome resistance shall endure but for a little while. All our business is that sin may not reign in our mortal body; there will a time come when 'this mortal shall put on immortality,' 1 Cor. 15:53; and long before that 'our spirits must return to God that gave them,' Eccles. 12:7. Now, the more we think of another life, the stronger we are against sin; the troublesome part of our duty is but while we are in the flesh

or in the world; and if we can but escape the corruption that is in the world through lust, we shall be happy for ever.

Thirdly, When is sin said to reign? I answer—In general, that is said to reign which attaineth the chief power in the soul, and particularly sin is said to reign—

1. Negatively, when it is not opposed, or but slightly opposed. We must take in this part of the description, because there are contrary principles in us. There is no question but fleshly lusts will solicit you; but your business is to inquire whether you oppose them. It may be you do; for it cannot be imagined that whilst a spark of conscience remaineth alive in us, a man can apparently be tempted from his duty, but his heart will give back a little; but an ineffectual striving will not acquit us; even the unregenerate have a remnant of natural knowledge and conscience, which in its measure resisteth sin as light resisteth darkness, as is seen in the Gentiles: Rom. 2:14, 15, 'For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another.' And where supernatural revelation is added, it may do more; for christians know what is evil more than heathens do, and so 'may escape through the knowledge of Christ the common pollutions of the world,' 2 Peter 2:20, or be much troubled if they fall into them; and God may give unto many some common internal grace of the Spirit, Heb. 6:4, 5, which may occasion many convictions of the evil way they walk in. But the business is, whether there be such a principle of resistance set up in the soul, that 'you walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit'? Rom. 8:1, so that your hearts are habitually bent to God, and your course of life is altered, you dare not wittingly nor willingly give way to any known sin, or live in the neglect of any known duty (as they do that live in any customary practice of sin, or constant neglect of God), or ordinarily break out into enormous offences. It may be, after all your care, caution, watchfulness, resistance, you may be

overtaken or overcome by some violent temptation, and may feel in yourselves some infirmities; you find you are guilty of many idle thoughts, passionate words, unwary practices; but what is this to iniquities? So those that say they relent, and strive, and have many wishes to be better, but still continue in a carnal and ungodly life, these do but sin against conscience, and never conquer the sin which they strive to resist; till the opposite principle be the ruling principle for the main bent of your hearts and course of your lives, the opposition and striving is but ineffectual. If there be no sin but what you are truly desirous to know, and no sin but what you are truly desirous to get rid of, so that the chiefest care of your hearts and endeavour of your lives be to serve and please God, and it is your daily desire and endeavour to please God, and master its rebellious opposition to the Spirit, and you so far prevail that for your drift and course you are not led by the flesh, but the Spirit, then you are sincere and upright with God; otherwise you must not think every striving will excuse you, if it be such a striving as may consist with the dominion and customary practice of sin. There are few wretches so bad but they may have some wishes that they could leave sin, especially when they think of the inconveniences that attend it, and conscience may strive a little before they yield, but they live in it still. A christian striveth, but cannot be perfect; there are infirmities: but the convinced sinner striveth, but cannot live holily; there are iniquities. This striving hindereth not the dominion of sin, because he doth not conquer and master it so far but that it breaketh out in a gross manner; his striving cometh not from the renovation of the Spirit, but the conviction of his conscience, which is ever condemning his practices.

2. Positively, when we obey it and follow it, and do that to which sin enticeth us. For the end of sin's reign and empire is our obedience; the commands and urgings of it are in vain if you obey them not, but rather rebuke and suppress them. Now we may obey bodily lusts two ways—

[1.] By the inward consent of the mind; for what sins you would do you have done in God's account, though the outward act follow not: Mat. 5:28, 'He that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart,' though you be impeded and hindered in the action. The life and reign of sin is in the heart, in the love of the heart, though it may be it may not appear in outward deeds. Restraint is not sanctification. Practices may be restrained by by-ends; but if you like the sin in your hearts, you let it reign, and do not oppose it by gracious motives. Your hearts are false with God if his empire be not set up there. Therefore obey not the lusts of the body, that is, consent not to them; if they arise and bubble up in your hearts, let them be disowned and disliked. We are to 'abstain from fleshly lusts,' 1 Peter 2:11, before they break out into our conversation. For the governing of the heart, and the regulating of the life are two distinct acts of our obedience to God; they are required indeed, the one in order to the other, but you must be careful of both. Your love to God and his law must be showed by abominating the motions that would draw you to the contrary: Ps. 119:113, 'I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love.' The first motions are sins, for they proceed from corrupt nature; we had none such in innocency; and the consent is a further sin, because then you begin to give way to its reign. The delightful stay of the mind showeth our love to it; these pauses of the mind come from sin, are sin, and tend to further sin: James 1:15, 'Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.'

[2.] The execution of these motions by the body, when sin is brought to her consummate effect: Micah 2:1, 'Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds; when the morning is light they practise it, because it is in the power of their hands.' This is a sign of the reign of sin; too much room being given to sin in the heart, that it obtains a mastery there; it violently and effectually commands our practice, which, if it be a scandalous enormity, it makes sin to reign for the present. Lesser evils steal into the throne by degrees, and leaven us with a proud, worldly, or carnal frame of heart; but gross sins invade the throne in an instant, at least for the

present, making fearful havoc and waste of the conscience, and the repeated acts show our state.

Secondly, That christians are strictly obliged to take heed that sin get not dominion over them.

1. By the light of nature, which is in part sensible of this disorder which hath invaded all mankind, namely, an inclination to seek the happiness and good of the body above that of the soul. The very make and constitution of man showeth his duty. Man is composed of a body and a soul, both which parts are to be regarded according to the dignity of each. The body was subordinated to the soul, and both soul and body unto God; his flesh was a servant unto his spirit, and both flesh and spirit unto the Lord; but sin entering, defaced the beauty, and disturbed the harmony and order of God's creation and workmanship. Man withdrew from subordination to God his maker, seeking his happiness without God, and apart from him, in earthly and worldly things; and also the body and flesh is preferred before the soul, and reason and conscience enslaved to sense and appetite; understanding and will are made bond-slaves to the lusts of the flesh, which govern and influence all his actions; his wisdom, mind, and spirit as it were sunk into the flesh, and transformed into a brutish quality and nature. This many of the wiser heathens saw, and sought to rectify. Maximus Tyrius calls our passions and appetites τὸν δῆμον, the tumultuous populacy or common people of the soul, which must not be left to their own boisterous violence, but be kept under the law and empire of the mind. Philo the Jew calleth them τὸ θῆλυ, the woman part in man, in opposition to reason, which he maketh to be the masculine part; Simplicius, τὸν παῖδα, the child in us, which needeth more staid heads to govern it; and some, περιπέζιον ψυχῆς μέρος, the foot part of the soul; as it is a monstrous disorder if the feet be there where the head should be, so it is for us to serve divers lusts and pleasures, when we should be governed by reason. The stoics generally, τὸ θῆριον, the bestial part in us, which they counted the man, as if the beast should ride the man, as Socrates expressly calls reason ἡνίοχον, the rider or chariot-driver,

as the body and bodily inclinations the horses. Now if the light of nature taught the heathens, who knew little of the cause and malignity of this vitiosity and disorder, to observe this, and labour under it, surely christians are more strictly bound to curb the flesh, and moderate the lusts and passions of it. We know more clearly what an evil it is to love the creature above God, the body more than the soul, the world above heaven, riches, honours, and pleasures more than grace and holiness; as the light of Christianity befriendeth the light of nature in this point, we may see clearly how great a disorder it is to obey or fulfil these bodily lusts to the wrong of God and the soul, and that the true honour and dignity of a man consists in the victory which he hath over himself; and that to pamper the flesh is not our honour, but our disgrace; and that these irregular desires should not be gratified, but mortified.

2. Christian piety, or the tenor of our religion, requireth it of us. The drift of this religion is to recover men out of their apostasy, and to promote true genuine holiness in the world; to dispossess us of the beast, and that man, being restored to man, might be also brought back again to God; or, in short, to draw us off from the animal life to life spiritual and eternal. As appeareth—

[1.] By the precepts of it, which mainly tend to enforce self-denial, mortification, recess from the world, that we may not miscarry in our obedience to God by our bodily lusts: Mat. 16:24, 'If any will come after me, let him deny himself;' Col. 3:5, 'Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.' The whole drift and business of this religion is to drive out the spirit of the world, and to introduce a divine and heavenly Spirit: 1 Cor. 2:12, 'Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God.' That part of the world which is mad and brutish is enslaved to lower things; but the other part, which hath submitted to the healing institution of Christ, should be wise and heavenly. The cure which Christ intended was of the great disease of

mankind, which was that the immortal soul, being depressed and tainted by the objects of sense, doth wholly crook and writhe itself to carnal things, and instead of likeness to God, the image of a beast was impressed upon man's nature, and the divine part enslaved and embondaged to the brutish.

[2.] By its promises: 2 Peter 1:4, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust,' 2 Cor. 4:18. That man may seek his happiness in some higher and more transcending good than the beasts are capable of, something that suits with his immortal spirit. In short, to draw us off from things we see and inordinately love to a glory and blessedness wholly unseen and future.

[3.] By the grace provided for us, namely, the Spirit of Christ, whose great design is to free man from a state of subjection to the flesh, and by overcoming the lusts thereof to make him ready for all the graces and duties of the spiritual life: Rom. 8:5, 'They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit' He is first renewed by this Spirit: John 3:6, 'That which is born of the Spirit is spirit;' and then acted and assisted by him: Rom. 8:13, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live;' Gal. 5:25, 'If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.'

[4.] By being baptized into this religion we are bound to this strict care; for in our baptism we did solemnly renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, as the usurpers must be thrust out before the rightful lord can take possession: Josh. 24:23, 'Put away the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel;' and we are dedicated to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as our creator, redeemer, and sanctifier; as before, 'We are to count ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God,' ver. 11. Now, it is the greatest hypocrisy that can be to be under this solemn obligation to God, and let sin reign in us. Baptism is a sign and seal

of grace on God's part, and on ours a bond of duty; on God's part, that he will cleanse and wash away sin: Acts 22:16, 'Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.' On our part, it obligeth us to do what in us lieth to destroy sin, a bond never to be forgotten by us: 2 Peter 1:9, 'He hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.'

Use 1. To humble us, that we have so much forgotten our solemn covenant, so much cared for the body, and so little cared for the soul; that time and heart hath been so much taken up about those things which belong to the present life. The mortal body is minded at every turn, and how much may the immortal but neglected soul complain of hard usage I We profess subjection to the gospel, and therefore should 'seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added to us,' Mat. 6:33; but we walk too much according to the course of the carnal careless world: Eph. 2:2, 3, 'Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that ruleth in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.'

2. Strengthen the bonds, and anew devote yourselves to obedience: ver. 13, 'Neither yield you your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.' Bind yourselves for time to come, to make it your work not to indulge the flesh, but save your souls: Heb. 10:39, 'For we are not of them that draw back to perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.'

3. Take great heed that sin reign not by bodily lusts.

[1.] The necessity of this. These lusts are represented as deceitful: Eph. 4:22, 'That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.' And as violent and imperious: Rom. 7:20, 'Now if I do that I would not, it is

no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me;' both together: James 1:14, 'Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.' We are by subtlety blinded by the delusions of the flesh, and it is always endeavouring to get the throne, and hurry us to destruction, and seeking to divert us from the love of God; the more we indulge them the more imperious they are, the more caution and resolution therefore is necessary.

[2.] The danger of not doing it.

(1.) They do not only unfit us for God, but for human society: James 4:1, 'From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?' They make you disquiet all others near you, as dogs snarling at one another for a bone or piece of carrion.

(2.) They destroy the welfare of our bodies; the part gratified is depressed by them: Prov. 14:30, 'A sound heart is the life of the flesh, but envy is the rottenness of the bones;' Prov. 5:11, 'Thou shalt mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.'

(3.) These lusts war against the soul. The perfection of the soul consists in the image of God, which is defaced by these lusts; yea, against the graces and motions of the Spirit: Gal. 5:17, 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit;' against the comfort of the soul, which dependeth on the holy sanctifying Spirit; he is grieved when his work is hindered in us.

(4.) These lusts oppose our everlasting felicity and happiness, when to gratify the flesh we run the hazard of losing soul and body for ever.

(1st.) By efficiency: they steal away our hearts from God, take up our time, turn our thoughts from the one thing necessary. The great end of faith is the saving of the soul; they make it the great end of their living to pamper the body. They put heaven away from them, sell it for a trifle; in effect, bid God keep his heaven to himself: Heb. 12:16, 'Profane Esau for one morsel of bread sold his birthright.'

(2d.) By desert: Gal. 6:8, 'He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption;' Rom. 6:13, 'Neither yield ye your bodies as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.' God is provoked, and so our damnation is sure. They spend their strength, time, estates on the service of fleshly lusts; surely these can look for nothing but everlasting perdition.

SERMON XI

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God—ROM. 6:13.

HERE is the second branch of the exhortation, which concerneth vivification; for expressly the apostle speaketh to them as those that are alive from the dead. This part of the exhortation is propounded negatively, 'yield not,' &c.; positively, 'but yield,' &c.

1. The negative is necessary. For further declaring the sense of which, he had said before, 'Let not sin reign in your mortal body.' The body is mentioned as the seat of sin for two reasons—

[1.] Because these lusts gratify the body and bodily life, and so pervert the soul; that is spoken to there.

[2.] Because they are executed by the body; this is spoken to here If they gain the consent of your minds, yet 'yield not your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin;' let them not be acted by your bodies.

2. Positively it is expressed, 'But yield yourselves unto God.' There observe the order set down. First, 'Yield yourselves unto God;' then, 'your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.' The general dedication is the ground of the particular. First, I am God's, then I bestow my time and strength for God; first, we give ourselves to him, not in part, but in whole, to serve him with all our heart and all our might and strength; then sometimes the outward or inward man, as the nature of the business calleth for.

3. In both take notice—

(1.) Of the two opposite masters, 'sin and God.'

(2.) The opposite employments are 'righteousness,' and 'unrighteousness.'

(3.) The instrument used by both, and that is 'the body,' or 'the members of the body.'

[1.] The two masters, sin and God; the one is a usurper, the other is our rightful and most gracious Lord. God is our proper Lord, for he is our creator, and therefore our owner and governor; and he is our most gracious Lord *jure beneficiario*; he hath obliged us to him by many benefits; so that a christian should say, as Paul did: Acts 27:23, 'His I am, and him I serve.'

[2.] The two employments, unrighteousness and righteousness. Unrighteousness is put for all evil works and actions; for all sin is unrighteousness, whether committed against God or man. By sin we deal unrighteously with God, whom we disobey and dishonour: Mal. 1:6, 'If I be a father, where is mine honour? If I be a master, where is my fear?' We deny God his due. We deal unrighteously with ourselves, whom we defile and destroy: 1 Cor. 6:18, 'He that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body;' and Prov. 8:36, 'He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul.' And also in many sins we hurt our neighbour, either in soul, body, goods, or good name, as is evident. On the other side, holiness is righteousness, or giving God his due. Righteousness is sometimes taken strictly for that grace which inclineth us to perform our duty to man; as 1 Tim. 6:11, 'Follow after righteousness, godliness,' &c.; Rom. 1:18, 'The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.' Sometimes largely, for newness of life, for all those holy actions which are required of a christian: 1 John 2:29, 'If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.'

[3.] The instrument used in both is the body, or the members of the body; for our body is of a middle nature, which may be used well or ill; and the members of the body are weapons with which the soul is armed to do well or ill; and it is notable that the word used by the apostle is not ὄργανα, instrumenta, as we render it in the text, but ὄπλα, weapons or arms, as we translate it in the margin. The work on both sides is a kind of warfare.

(1.) They that serve sin or indulge bodily lusts, fight for sin and the devil against God and their own salvation: 1 Peter 2:11, 'Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;' Rom. 7:23, 'I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind.' While ye suffer the body to be thus employed, ye wage war against God, whether ye know it, or own it, yea or no.

(2.) The other work is also a warfare; our graces are called, 'Armour of light,' Rom. 13:12. Though you fight for your duty, you must perform it.

Doct. That sincere christians should not suffer themselves to be employed by sin, but offer up and present themselves to God to do his will.

1. Let us explain the duty.

2. Show you the necessity of it.

First, In explaining the duty here enforced, let me observe to you—

1. That there are two masters which divide the world between them—sin and God. Every man doth serve one of these, but no man can serve both. Every man serveth one of these—sin or righteousness, God or Satan; for there is no neutral or middle state; either their time and strength is spent in the service of the flesh, or in the service of God: Rom. 8:5, 'They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit; Gal. 6:8, 'They that sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption;

but they that sow to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.' Now it concerneth us to consider what or who it is that employeth us. Our bodies are worn out, and the vigour of nature is daily spent; but in what? In pleasing the flesh in that which it craveth, or in serving, pleasing, and glorifying God? The prophet saith, Isa. 55:2, 'Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?' Every man is at the cost and expense of his time and labour, and bestoweth it on something or other; but in what? Do not think of compounding the matter; for as every man serveth one of these masters, so no man serveth both: Mat. 6:24, 'No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other; ye cannot serve God and mammon.' They both require our full strength, and both command contrary things; therefore, as a man cannot go two contrary ways at once, so he cannot obey these two masters. If sin reign in our souls, it draweth all things into obedience; the consent of your minds is not enough to satisfy it, but it will employ the body to fulfil its cravings, and especially those two adjuncts of the bodily life, time and strength. And grace doth the like; the faculties and powers of the soul and body must be employed one way or another; they cannot lie idle in such an active, restless creature as man is.

[2.] Both these services are entered into by consent, μηδὲ παριστάνετε, ἀλλὰ παραστήσατε. (1.) Some men pronely yield up themselves to do what sin would have to be done; therefore they are said 'to give themselves to work wickedness;' and where sin is vehement and obstinate, they are said 'to sell themselves to work wickedness;' and in other phrases: Eccles. 8:11, 'The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil;' Eph. 4:19, 'They have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.' When they have cast off all remorse of conscience and fear of God's judgments, with full consent they abandon themselves to their brutish lusts and filthy desires, there is no check nor restraint can hold them. But this is when sin is grown to a height, ἐξεχύθησαν: Jude 11, 'They have ran greedily,' &c., as water is poured

out of a bucket. But generally in all sin there is a voluntariness, if not a wilfulness in it, as a stone runneth down hill because it is its own proper motion. (2.) To God we consecrate ourselves with a thorough consent of will: Rom. 12:1, 'I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service;' and 2 Cor. 8:5, 'And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their ownelves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.' Παραστήσατε, the word either alludeth to servants, who stand before or in the presence of their lord and master, to show their readiness to be commanded or employed by him; so present yourselves to show your readiness to obey all the commands of God; or in allusion to the sacrifice, which was presented before the altar, in token that the party did design it, and with it himself, to God; so do we yield up ourselves to God; bodies and souls, all that we are and have, we resign it to him. There is this difference in both these resignations—the devil's servants do not what they do in love to him, but to their own flesh; but Christ's servants do what they do in love to him as well as to themselves; they know him, and love him; he is not a master to be ashamed of. The giving up ourselves to sin is a concealed act; we would not be seen in it; for there is somewhat in their own hearts to check it and condemn it, some conscience of good and evil, as also a fear of blame from God and the world; and so men do it covertly; but do we give up ourselves solemnly and professedly.

[3.] The service of sin should not be allowed by us. (1.) Partly because sin is a usurper, whereas God hath a full and clear right both to our bodies and our souls, for he made them both. Sinners, so far as they own a God and their obligations to him, cannot but look upon sin as a disorder, for it alienateth our subjection from him to whom it is due. All sinners are not atheists, and therefore can never get off this conviction that God is their owner, for he is their maker, and framed them for such a use and end, namely, to keep his laws; therefore, to lend or give their bodies to sin is disloyalty and rebellion against the great and just sovereign of the world; 1 John 3:4, 'Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the

transgression of the law.' Men do not only say, but notionally know, that God is their owner; but if they did practically improve it, the reformation of the world would not be so desperate a cure as it is; but alas! 'professing to know God, in their works they deny him,' Titus 1:16. Their lives are quite contrary to their notional acknowledgment of God. What could they do more or worse if there were no God? Reason will tell us that it is impossible for us to be our own, for we neither made ourselves, nor can we subsist of ourselves for one moment. All wicked men are God's, whether they will or no; yea, the devils themselves not excepted; they are his against their wills, and therefore do not live as his. (2.) Sin is God's enemy, and ours too; it destroyeth us while it seemeth to gratify us: 'The end of these things is death,' Rom. 6:21. Now he is a traitor to his country that supplieth the enemy with arms: you wrong God, and wrong your own bodies and souls; therefore, 'yield not your members as weapons of unrighteousness unto sin.' It is a miserable thing to be traitors to God and ourselves: 'Thy destruction is of thyself, Hosea 13:9; our misery is of our own procuring. God is not to be blamed, but our own perverse choice; we cherish a serpent in our bosoms, that will sting us to death.

[4.] Since sin cannot challenge any just title to us, it is unquestionably our duty to yield up ourselves to the Lord. Let us see in what manner it is to be done.

[1.] It must be done with hearty and full consent of will. In the covenant of grace God demandeth his right to be given him by your consent: it is indeed a due debt, but it is called a gift: 'My son, give me thy heart,' Prov. 23:20; because you become his people not by constraint, but by consent: Ps. 110:3, 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power;' and therefore it is resembled to marriage, than which nothing should be more free and voluntary: Cant. 2:16, 'I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.' Thus freely and willingly should we resign ourselves to him.

[2] It must be out of a deep sense of his love and mercy: Rom. 12:1, 'I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice,' &c.; and especially his great love in Christ: 2 Cor. 5:14, 'For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge,' &c. There must be thankfulness in the resolution to become the Lord's, for no bands will so strongly hold us to our duty as the bands of love; when the soul is filled with admirations of his grace, and the ravishing sense of the wonders of his love in Christ, we do most kindly, heartily, and thoroughly surrender ourselves to God.

[3.] It must be with grief and shame, that his right hath been so long detained from him, and that we have wasted so much of our time and strength in the service of sin: 1 Peter 4:1–3, 'Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries.' Therefore we should the more earnestly make restitution. Oh! how sad a thing is it to grow old and grey-headed in the devil's service, and to spend the fresh and flower of our time so vainly and unprofitably! Alas! how hath our time, strength, and parts been wasted and unprofitably employed! Let us at length seek to do as much for God as ever we have done for sin.

[4.] This resolution must be full and entire, of all that you are and have. All your faculties: 1 Cor. 6:19, 20, 'Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God with your bodies and souls, which are God's.' All that the soul can do and the body can do, it is all due to God, and all to be devoted to him. In every state: Rom. 14:7, 8, 'For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.' Whatever you are and have, you must have that and be that

to God; living, dying, sickness, health, in prosperity, in adversity, in every action: Zech. 14:20, 21, 'In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses HOLINESS TO THE LORD, and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar, yea, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts.' There must be God's impress on all we do, our civil and sacred actions. All reserves are hypocritical. What one faculty you keep back from God, you do what you can to cut it off from his blessing. Would you be contented if God should take the soul to heaven and leave the body in hell, or the contrary? What estate is not given to God is not sanctified; what action is not ordered towards him as our last end is not rewarded, so that you give all, or none rightly.

[5.] The end why we give up ourselves to God is to be governed, disposed, and ordered by him, to be what he would have us to be, and to do what he will have us to do, to submit ourselves to his disposing will, and subject ourselves to his commanding will.

(1.) To submit ourselves to his disposing will, or the dominion of his providence. Let God carry you to heaven in what way soever he pleaseth; if by many afflictions, or sharp pains, and infirmities of body, you dare not prescribe to God. You must say, as Christ, Heb. 10:5, 6, 'A body hast thou prepared for me; lo, I come to do thy will.' God is wise, and knoweth that if we had a more healthy body, we might be in danger of neglecting the soul; or if we had more of the world, we should neglect heaven. Therefore you must except nothing out of your resignation; better the body be pained than the soul lost; the thorn that sticketh in the flesh may occasion rich experiences of grace. It may be God will have you to glorify him by martyrdom: Phil. 1:20, 'Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death;' that is, either by living in the body to preach the gospel longer, or signing the truth with his blood, if he died. So see David's resignation: 2 Sam. 15:26, 'Let the Lord do unto me what seemeth good to him.' So we should humbly submit to the good-will of God: Dan. 3:18, 'But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image that thou hast set up.'

They yielded their bodies to be burned, that they might not serve any gods but the Lord.

(2.) To subject ourselves to his commanding will, or to do what he will have us to do. This is principally considered here; we give up ourselves to God, that our bodies may be employed as instruments of righteousness. All external duties, or fruits of our love to God in Christ, are acted by the body; therefore we resign up ourselves to him to obey him in these things. Surely it is meet that God should rule the creatures that he hath made; therefore we should be able to say, as the psalmist, Ps. 119:94, 'I am thine, save me, for I have sought thy precepts.' One that maketh conscience of his resignation to God will be careful both to know and do his will. Paul, as soon as he was smitten with conviction, cries out, Acts 9:6, 'Lord! what wilt thou have me to do?'

[6.] When you have thus dedicated yourselves to God, you must use yourselves for him; for the sincerity of our dedication is known by our use. Many give up themselves to God, but in the use of themselves there appeareth no such matter. They use their tongues as their own to talk what they please, their hearts as their own to think and desire what they please, their bodies, their wealth, their time, their strength, as if it were all their own, and the hand of consecration had never been upon them: Ps. 12:4, 'Our tongues are our own; who is lord over us?' This is the language not of their mouths, but of their lives; these reassume the possession of that which they had surrendered to the Lord. No; you have, as to disposal, lost all property in yourselves, and must look upon yourselves ever after not as your own, but God's; they are 'vessels set apart for the master's use,' 2 Tim. 2:21; and accordingly we must 'live not to ourselves, but to God;' 2 Cor. 5:15, 'And that he died for all, that they that live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again.' Nothing must be alienated from him, but used as he shall direct and appoint. All your powers and faculties are his, and to be employed for him.

Secondly, Let me show you the reasons of it. They are taken from the right God hath in you and to you. Justice requireth that we should give every one his own, to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, to God the things that are God's. We do but restore to God that which is his before when we give up ourselves to him. Now we are God's—

1. By his creating us out of nothing: 'It is he that hath made us, not we ourselves,' Ps. 100:3. Surely God hath a propriety in all that we have; for we have all by his creating bounty, as the potter hath power over his own clay. So hath God in all the vessels which he hath formed, 'he formed them for himself.' If the husbandman may call the vine his own which he hath planted in his own ground and soil, God may much more call the creature his own, which he hath made. The husbandman cannot make the vine, but only set it and dress it: but we are wholly and solely of him and from him, and from nothing else, and therefore we should be wholly and solely for him, and nothing else.

2. By preservation. God is Lord of all, because he preserveth all: Neh. 9:6, 'Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all, and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.' Preservation is the continuance of our being by his providential influence and supportation: Acts 17:28, 'For in him we live, and move, and have our being;' Heb. 11:3, 'Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.' If we could any moment exempt ourselves from the dominion and influence of his providence, we might be supposed to be exempted in that moment from his jurisdiction and government; but man wholly depending on God for being and preservation, we cannot lay claim to our time and strength, not for one minute or moment; for we can hold neither body nor soul, nor anything that we have, a minute longer than God pleaseth. If you will serve yourselves and please yourselves, live of yourselves if you can.

3. By redemption. That right is pleaded, 1 Cor. 6:20, 'Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God with your bodies and souls, which are God's.' By creation and preservation we are God's; but redemption constituteth such a new right and title as doth not only strengthen the former, but also is comfortable to us. If a slave were not killed outright, but continued a day or two, though he died by the stripes given him by his master, there was no plea or accusation could be commenced against the master for the life of his slave, Exod. 21:21; he was his money, that is, purchased by his money. God hath bought us at a higher rate than money: 1 Peter 1:18, 'For ye are redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversations, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of the Son of God, as of a lamb without spot and blemish.' Therefore the redeemed are bound to serve him that ransomed them. All our time and strength belongeth to the Redeemer, who hath ransomed us from the worst slavery, the bondage of sin and Satan, and with the greatest price, his own blood. This was Christ's end: Rom. 14:9, 'For to this end Christ both died, and rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.'

4. Christians have owned this right by their covenant-consent. Our bodies and souls were consecrated to Christ when we gave up our names to him in baptism: 'Thou enteredst into covenant with me, and becamest mine,' Ezek. 16:8; then were we enrolled in God's cense-book: Isa. 44:5, 'One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with the hand to the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.' By voluntary contract and resignation we gave up ourselves and all that is ours to God. Baptism is our sacramentum militare, our military oath; we were then listed in his warfare and service. When Christ was baptized he was consecrated as the captain of our salvation, and then presently after his baptism he entered into the lists with Satan. We are entered as private soldiers; now it is treachery and breach of covenant if, after we have owned and

acknowledged God's right in us, we shall alienate ourselves from him, and use ourselves for ourselves at our own list and pleasure.

5. By regeneration, whereby we are actually taken into Christ's possession, and fitted for his use. This right is pleaded in the text, 'As those that are alive from the dead, yield up yourselves to God.' There is a double argument in it.

[1.] As it puts an obligation upon us. It is by the tender mercies of the Lord that you are recovered out of the death of sin to the life of grace: Eph. 4:4, 5, 'God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.' We that were once wretched and miserable, liable to death, utterly disabled for the service of our creator, that he of his grace hath called us and quickened us, and made us alive, who were formerly dead, we have this spiritual life from him and for him; this should be an everlasting obligation upon us, while we have a day to live, to remember God hath renewed you for himself.

[2.] As it puts an inclination into us. Men that are raised to a new life are fitted to do him service; they are delivered from the power and death of sin, have received grace to serve him acceptably; the new creature is fitted for the operations that belong to it: Eph. 2:10, 'For we are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus to good works, that we might walk therein. The withered branch is planted into the good vine-stock, that it may live again, and bring forth fruit unto God; so that if we have been made partakers of this mercy, we are bound, and we are inclined; this shows God's propriety in us, that he expecteth to be honoured by us.'

Use 1. Information.

1. It shows how vain the plea was of those libertines in Calvin's time (against whom he is justly severe) and their adherents, who thought they might serve sin with their bodies, as long as they did dislike and

disallow it with their souls, they were safe enough. They were wont to say, *Non ego sed asinus meus*—it was their drudge the body that sinned, not they. No; the apostle saith, 'Give not up your members as weapons of unrighteousness,' &c., and elsewhere, 'Glorify God in your bodies and souls, which are God's.' And the apostle pleadeth the dignity of the body, and how it is defiled by fornication and other inordinances, 1 Cor. 6, per totum.

2. That it is not enough to abstain from evil, but we must do good; for the apostle saith, 'yield not,' and then 'yield.' So the apostle saith, 2 Tim. 2:21, 'If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel of honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.' So 2 Cor. 5:15, 'And that he died for all, that they that live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.' They are sinners that hide their talent in a napkin, though they live not in apparent gross sins; all that time and strength that is bestowed on sin is used against God; but what is idly and impertinently lost is not used for him. Both deprive God of his right; the one alienate their time and strength, the other mis-spend it. Some do not run into gluttony, drunkenness, oppression, adultery (these apparently use their bodies as weapons of unrighteousness), but they do not live to God, and so are defective in the other part.

3. It showeth what care we should take how we employ our bodies; for the members of the body are instruments of the soul, to execute that which it willeth and desireth, and sin without the body is unfurnished with arms. But chiefly two things should we take care of in the body, the senses by which we let in sin, and the tongue by which we let out sin, for it is the interpreter of the heart.

[1.] For the senses, a christian should not be guided by his senses, but by his reason and conscience as sanctified by grace. Our Lord would teach us that it were better to want senses than gratify them with an offence and wrong to God, against them that cannot deny the pleasures of senses: Mat. 5:29, 30, 'If thy right eye offend thee, pluck

it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.' Better be blind than by wanton gazing run the hazard of damnation; not that we should maim ourselves, but, of the two, count it the less evil. Therefore, to want the sinful pleasure should not be so grievous, when we should be content to want the sense itself. The far greatest part of the world are merely guided by their senses, because the far greatest part of the world are unconverted and unsanctified, and the world is full of allurements to the flesh, and the more we enjoy the good things thereof, the more is corruption strengthened within us: and as the heart stands affected, sensitive objects make a deeper or slighter impression on us. Some temptations, which are nothing to another, may be great matters to some, who cannot deny themselves without great difficulty. Therefore when such temptations as suit with our fancies and appetites assault us with more than ordinary potency, we must remember sense is not to be the ruling power in our souls, but grace. Sometimes sin is brought to our hands, and the bait is played to our mouths; as Josh. 7:21, Achan saw, coveted, and purloined the wedge of gold; Prov. 6:25, 'Lust not after her beauty in thy heart, neither let her take thee with her eyelids;' 2 Sam. 11:2. David saw Bathsheba, and so his heart was fired. In short, sense is an ill and dangerous guide; it was never given for a judge or counsellor to determine or direct, but an informer to represent the outward forms of things; partly natural, to inform us of things profitable or hurtful to the outward man; partly spiritual, to transmit the objects of God's wisdom, power, and goodness to our minds, or to be the ordinary passage by which the daily effects of God's love and mercy are conveyed to our hearts. God instituted them for helps, but we make them snares. Well, then, better want senses than gratify them with the displeasure of God: to lose an eye is a far less evil than to lose a soul.

[2.] For the tongue. The apostle saith it produceth a world of evil. It hath a great use in religion, to vent the conceptions of our minds to the praise and glory of God: James 3:9, 'Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.' In the general, think of this; every member must be an instrument of righteousness: is my tongue now employed for God or for Satan? when you are apt to run into censuring, detraction, vain and frivolous talk.

Use 2. To press you to this solemn dedication of yourselves to God, entirely, unreservedly, irrevocably.

1. God giveth himself to you in covenant, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all their infinite goodness, wisdom, power, &c.; and will not you give yourselves wholly to God?

2. You are already absolutely, wholly his, and will not you consent that he shall be your God, and you his people? That is all that is wanting: Jer. 24:7, 'And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.' This God worketh by his renewing grace.

3. You are never so much your own as when you are God's, not as to disposal, but as to enjoyment: 1 Cor. 3:23, 'All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' There lieth your safety, glory, and happiness; it is the foundation of all obedience, and of all comfort. (1.) Of obedience, you will not easily yield to temptations; a christian hath this answer ready, I am dedicated to God: 1 Cor. 6:15, 'Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid!' Nor will you stick at interest: 2 Cor. 8:5, 'They first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.' (2.) Then for comfort: John 14:1, 'Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me;' 1 Tim. 6:8, 'Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content;' 1 Peter 5:7, 'Casting all your care upon him, for

he careth for you.' This easeth you of all your cares and fears, you are God's; nay, it secureth you against eternal miseries: John 12:20, 'Where I am, there shall my servant be.'

Use 3. To put us upon self-reflection. Is your dedication to God sincere? If so—

1. In the whole course of your conversation you will prefer his interest before your own, and when any interest of your own riseth up against the interest of God, you will set light by it, as if it were nothing worth, and then no self-respects will tempt you to disobey God, though never so powerful; no hire draw you to the smallest sin, nor danger fright you from your duty: Dan. 3:17, 18, 'Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship thy golden image that thou hast set up;' Acts 20:24, 'But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy.' If we can but forget ourselves and remember God, he will remember us better than if we had remembered ourselves. We secure whatever we put into God's hands, and venture in his service.

2. You will make conscience how you spend your time and strength; God keepeth account: Luke 19:23, 'Wherefore gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?' So you will keep a faithful reckoning, how you lay out yourselves for God, what share he hath in all things we have and do. God observeth, so must we, whether God have his own, and we do not defraud him. Whose work are you a-doing?

3. You will have a liberal heart; you will think no service too much, or loss too great for God: Phil. 1:21, 'For me to live is Christ;' all other things come from God. Certainly you must not put him off with what the flesh will spare.

SERMON XII

For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.—ROM. 6:14.

THE apostle had exhorted them to mortification, ver. 12; to vivification, ver. 13; in both to caution that sin may not usurp the power and place of God, who alone should command and govern both our souls and bodies. To fight for sin is to fight against God, which should be a horrid thing to christians, who should employ all their powers and faculties to keep up God's interest in their souls, by maintaining that new life that is given them by God. If we have any weapons or instruments, they should be employed for God, and not for sin, because sin was not their lord now as heretofore; it neither had, nor shall have dominion over you. If a man should speak to any city (suppose in Hungary, or other frontier of Christendom), newly freed from Turkish slavery, Care not for the commands and threatenings of the Turks any more, they do not lord it over you as they were wont to do; the very same is the argument of the apostle; sin hath not the same strength against you which before it had, now you are regenerate and alive from the dead. Nay, he speaketh with more advantage of expression than any can in an outward case. Sin hath not, sin shall not have, dominion, &c., if you keep striving and fighting against it; this tyrant shall not recover the kingdom in you which he hath lost, but you shall become victorious by Christ. There are two things which encourage us to fight—(1.) The goodness of the cause; (2.) The assurance and hope of victory. The cause is good; for the business in debate is, to whom we should yield up ourselves? to sin, or to God? or in whose warfare we shall employ the faculties and powers of body and soul? If we take to God's side, the victory is clear, that grace which hath freed us from the tyranny of sin is able to free us still, that we shall no more come under that bondage. Strive we must, for unless we fight and make good our resignation, sin will reign; but let not the sense of our weakness discourage us in our endeavours against sin: though there be some relics of the flesh, yet

the sanctification of the Spirit shall prevail, and therefore it is laziness and cowardice if we do not strive duly against sin: 'For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace.'

In the words observe—

1. The privilege of the renewed and striving christian, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you.'

2. The reason of the certainty of it, 'For ye are not under the law, but under grace.' This reason is both negatively and affirmatively expressed.

[1.] Negatively, 'For ye are not under the law.'

[2.] Positively, 'But under grace.' Both expressions have their proper emphasis, as you will see by and by.

1. The privilege of the renewed and striving christian.

[1.] That the renewed christian is here considered is plain from all the foregoing context. He speaketh of those that were 'dead unto sin,' ver. 2, not only in profession and baptismal vow, but really by virtue of their union to Christ, ver. 5. But how is a christian dead unto sin? Not so as that it should be wholly extinguished in us, but so as that it is a-dying, and the victory is sure to those that strive against it. Again, he speaketh of those 'that are alive from the dead,' ver. 13, had a new life begun in them, and have renounced sin, and effectually presented and resigned up themselves to God's use and service.

[2.] That the renewed christian is here considered as striving, because they are the same persons who were exhorted, ver. 12, 'not to let sin reign;' what is here a promise is there an exhortation. Again, they were such as had presented their members and faculties to the Lord as ὄπλα δικαιοσύνης, 'weapons or instruments of righteousness.' Now, what are weapons but for warfare? They had

undertaken in their covenant resignation not only to work, but fight for God. Rom. 13:12, the graces of the Spirit are called 'armour of light.' Christ doth array us non ad pompam, sed ad pugnam—not for show, but use. A christian can do no good, but he must fight first. Again, carnal inferences are rejected with indignation: ver. 15, 'What then, shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid!' and therefore the christian here is not considered as loose and lazy, but as warring and fighting against sin. Once more, the argument here implieth it, 'Ye are under grace,' which impelleth and urgeth us to resist sin and the lusts thereof. God giveth power to overcome it. So then the apostle's purpose is to exhort the renewed christian strongly to resist sin, because through grace he is sure to carry away the victory; whilst we work and concur with our wills and endeavours, 'God worketh in us both to will and to do,' Phil. 2:12.

2. The reason of it—

[1.] Negatively expressed, 'Ye are not under the law.' By the law is meant the covenant of works, which requireth exact obedience, but giveth no strength to obey; the law requireth what we must do, but giveth no power to do what it commandeth; it forbiddeth sin, and denounceth judgment; it terrifieth by its threatenings, and raiseth a tempest in the conscience; but it doth not afford us any help and relief, and so rather irritateth and provoketh the power of sin than suppresseth it: Rom. 7:8, 'Sin taking occasion, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; for without the law sin was dead.' As a river swelleth the more it is restrained by any let or dam, so is corruption stirred, and then a man is discouraged, giveth over all endeavour of repressing it. So 2 Cor. 3:6, 'The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.' The first covenant did only denounce and aggravate our condemnation, and put us in despair.

[2.] Affirmatively and positively expressed: 'But under grace,' under the new covenant, or under the grace of Jesus Christ, who hath not only redeemed us from the guilt of sin, but also from the power of

sin. The grace of remission is our encouragement, and the grace of sanctification our help and relief.

(1.) The grace of remission is a great encouragement, freeth us from the bondage of despairing thoughts, which weaken our endeavours; therefore the apostle opposeth the spirit of power to the spirit of fear. Christ offering a pardon upon repentance, doth strengthen our hands in our work.

(2.) The grace of sanctification is our help. God, by his Spirit, giveth life and strength to do what he requires of us, and power to resist sin, that we may overcome it: Rom. 8:2, 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death;' 1 John 5:4, 'Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith.' Lux jubet, gratia juvat—the law commandeth, but grace helpeth.

Doct. That sin should not, and shall not, reign over those who are under the sacred power and influence of Jesus Christ.

1. De jure, it should not reign over them; it hath no right to rule, it is a usurper. They who are redeemed by Christ should bind this duty upon their hearts, charge themselves with it, to take heed that sin doth not reign. It was once our lord and master, but we have changed masters, and profess ourselves now to be dead to sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord; therefore we should strive against it, lest it recover its old dominion over us.

2. De facto, it is not fully obeyed; it doth not absolutely get the victory, and bear rule in our hearts, but is weakened more and more in them who have given up themselves to the regimen and government of grace. Here—

[1.] What is the dominion of sin?

[2.] What need the children of God to take heed it be not set up in their hearts?

[3.] What hopes and encouragements they have by the gospel or grace of Jesus Christ whilst they are striving against it?

First, What is the dominion of sin? That will be best known by some distinctions and propositions.

1. We must distinguish between the being and reign of sin. The apostle doth not say, 'Ye shall not sin any more, because ye are not under the law, but under grace;' but 'sin shall not have dominion over you,' it shall not get the better. Sin doth remain and dwell in the saints, though not reign over them; as the beasts in Dan. 7:12, their dominion was taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. It is cast down in regard of regency, but not cast out in regard of inherency; grace doth not wholly extinguish it, but only repel the motions of it. Sin will rebel, but it shall not reign; they do not give way to it, nor actually obey and embrace the commands of it; they do not do all that sin would have them to do. If the apostle had said, Let not sin be in your mortal bodies, as long as we carry flesh about us, he would not have expected the exhortation to have been fully answered; but he saith, Let it not reign, which as well can as it ought to be complied with.

2. Sin doth reign when either it is not opposed, or when it is opposed weakly and with a faint resistance. Where it is not opposed, there it remaineth in its full strength; and where it is opposed weakly, and without any victory and success, it argueth only a sense of duty, but no effect of grace.

[1.] Sin reigneth when it is not opposed, when a man doth yield up himself to execute all the commands thereof, and doth fulfil and obey its lusts; as the ambitious, the worldly, and the voluptuous do whatsoever their lusts command them, with a miserable bondage, yea, they willingly walk after it: Prov. 7:22, 'He goeth after her straightway as an ox to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks.' Sin is as a guest to evil men, but as a thief and robber to the godly, welcome to the one, but the other would not have it come

into their hearts. It is one thing to wear a chain as an ornament, another as a bond and fetter; to give way to sin, or to have it break in upon us; to put it on willingly, or to have it put and forced upon us. It may be they may be sensible of it, they may purpose not to do it, or may complain of it; but this is a constant truth, that we oftener complain of sin than we do resist it, and oftener resist it than prevail against it. It is not enough for men to see their sins, or blame them in themselves, or to purpose to amend them and forsake them, but they must strive to overcome them, and in striving, prevail. But we speak now of the first complaining of sin. There is a double deceit of heart, whereby men harden themselves in complaining of sin without resistance of it. (1.) Either men complain of other sins, and not the main, as if a man should complain of an aching tooth when the disease hath seized upon the vitals; or of a cut finger when at the same time he is wounded at the heart; of wandering thoughts in prayer when at the same time the heart is habitually averse or estranged from God, through some idols which are set up there: Ezek. 14:3, 5, 'Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face; should I be inquired of at all by them?' and ver. 5, 'That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.' They complain of want of quickening grace, when it may be they want converting grace, as if we would have the Spirit of God to blow to a dead coal. So when we pray for strengthening grace, when we should ask renewing grace, and confess only the infirmities of the saints, when we should bewail the misery of an unregenerate carnal estate; and we cry out of some incident weaknesses, when we should first see that our habitual aversion from God is cured. As Moses pleaded many things why he should not be sent to Egypt, he was not eloquent, and the like: Exod. 4:19, 'Go return into Egypt, for all the men are dead which sought thy life;' he had never pleaded this, but God knew where the pinch was, and that was the main ground of his tergiversation, and therefore gently toucheth his privy sore. So some complain of other things, this and that is amiss, but the main thing is neglected and lightly passed over. (2.) We rather complain than give over sinning; resistance is

certainly a greater evidence of a sincere heart than complaining. We should not be so haunted with temptations if we did resist more: James 4:7, 'Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you.' Satan only hath weapons offensive, as fiery darts; he hath none defensive, as a christian hath, namely, sword and shield; and we should not be so much troubled with the ill consequents of sin. Who will pity that man that complains of soreness and pain, and doth not take the gravel out of his shoe? If you wound and gore yourselves, no question but your smart and trouble is real, you do not complain in hypocrisy; but who is to be blamed? your business is to remove the cause. We read of the young man, Mat. 10:22, 'He was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions.' His grief was a real grief, but the cause was in himself; he would have Christ, and yet keep his love to the world still; so many complain of their lusts, not as a burden, for they indulge them, but because of their inconvenience; they cannot reconcile their sense of duty with those corrupt affections which it apparently disproveth.

[2.] When it is opposed weakly, and with a faint resistance. It is not enough for men to see their sins, and blame them in themselves, or purpose to amend and forsake them, but they must strive to overcome them, and in striving prevail, for otherwise sensuality carrieth it, because our reason and will make too weak an opposition. Jesus Christ our head and chief resisted Satan's motions with indignation, 'Get thee behind me, Satan;' so must we. When we speak faintly and coldly, the devil reneweth the assault with the more violence; therefore our resistance must be valid and strong. Many purposes there are that come to nothing, because they are not deep and serious: Pharaoh in his qualms proposed to let the children of Israel go; and yet, when it came to it, he would not let them go: Saul purposed in his heart not to kill David, yea, bound it by an oath; yet afterwards he attempted it, 1 Sam. 19:6, compared with 10 and 11. So many times they purpose to avoid the sin by which they have been foiled; but when the temptation returneth, they are overborne with it, as marsh ground is drowned with the return of every tide. Many are persuaded that sin is evil, as contrary to God and hurtful to

themselves; hereupon they have some mind to let it go, yea, some wishes and weak desires, that Christ would save them from it; yet still have a love that is greater than their dislike, the bent of their hearts is more for it than against it, and their habitual inclination is more to keep it than leave it. Therefore we must look not only to our endeavour, but to the success that we have against sin; for if our will were more strong, and our endeavour more serious, we should have more success; if there were a firm ratified resolution of mortifying and crucifying every sin, and an endeavouring against sin with all speed and diligence, the old man would more decay in us, and the life of grace be set up with greater power and efficacy. I would not leave this point without distinct information.

(1.) Then, there are certain unavoidable infirmities which the saints cannot get rid of, though they fain would; such as the apostle speaketh of, Rom. 7:19, 'When I would do good, evil is present with me.' As those swarms of noisome and unsavoury thoughts, which are injected on a sudden, and do hinder us and distract us in the best employment, wandering thoughts in the time of prayer, never distinctly consented to, rash words spoken of a sudden, sudden unpremeditated actions. In these cases watching and striving is conquering, for you do prevail in part, though not in whole; it preventeth many of them. Of this nature are want of degrees of love to God, and that liberty and purity in his service which the holy soul aimeth at, and the first stirrings and risings of corruption in the heart.

(2.) There are a smaller sort of sins, as the sins of daily incursion: James 3:2, 'In many things we offend all of us.' There is no man so exact but his watch is intermitted, and then he will be sinning; other cannot be looked for in this state of frailty wherein we now are. We bewray too much dulness, weariness, formality in our duties to God, our domestic crosses put us into fits of anger and discontent; in our public actions some intermixture of hypocrisy and vainglory, some high-mindedness in our prosperity, some distrust and uncomely disquiet of spirit in our adversity. Our Lord telleth us, John 13:10,

'He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet.' They that are in a holy state, by walking up and down in the world, in the several businesses and employments thereof, contract some filth, which must be washed off every day by a renewed application of the blood of Christ, which is the fountain God hath opened for uncleanness. Though the saints do not (like swine) voluntarily wallow in the puddle, yet in a polluted world they contract some filth. In this case, every failing must make us more wary and watchful, and teach us wisdom, that we do not lapse another time.

(3.) By the sway of great and headstrong passions, some that make conscience of their ways in the general may fall into sins more heinous, but they do not make a trade of it, or settle in such an evil way. To lapse ordinarily, frequently, easily into these sins, will not stand with grace. The saints may fail in their duty strangely on occasions, as David, Peter, Lot, &c.; as a man sailing into France, a tempest may drive him into Spain, or some other country. Their face is towards heaven, but a sudden passion may drive them another way; as the wicked are good by fits, but evil by constitution. So the children of God, the constitution and bent of their hearts is towards God; for a fit or so they may do things misbecoming the new nature, but as soon as awakened, they retract their sins by a special repentance: Ps. 51:3, 4, 'For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.'

[3.] As sin in general should not bear sway in our hearts, so no one sin should have dominion over us: Ps. 119:133, 'Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me;' neither this nor that. One sin allowed may keep God out of the throne, and may keep afoot Satan's interest in the soul. Certainly he that is in the state of grace lieth in no known sin. Every known sin sets up another god and lord, and all his actions will have an evil tincture from that sin; every action will be levelled with the main thing which he affects, be it what it will be; therefore it is dangerous to know anything to be sin, and yet to go on still to commit it, though it be not in materia gravi,

in a heinous case; as for instance, vain speeches, wanton gestures, &c.; he knoweth it is a sin to be idle; it cometh into his mind; his conscience telleth him that he should not, yet he will: so for immoderate gaming, as to the expense of time or money, if one convinced that he should not yet will use it; these lesser failings persisted in, and kept up constantly against the light and checks of conscience, may amount to a dangerous evil. Surely all that fear and love God should be very tender of displeasing and dishonouring him. The domination of acts of sin is dangerous; though they be not settled so as to damn him, yet they may cause God to afflict you, hide his face from you, and humble you with a sense of his displeasure. Small sins continued in against checks of conscience may do us a great deal of harm, and get the upper hand of the sinner, and bring him under in time; after, if habituated by long custom, so as he cannot easily shake off the yoke, or redeem himself from the tyranny thereof, they steal into the soul insensibly, and get strength, as multiplied acts; but gross presumptuous sins by one single act bring a mighty advantage to the flesh, weaken the spirit, advance themselves suddenly.

[4.] As particular sins get into the throne by turns, sometimes one sometimes another, so there are evil frames of spirit that do more directly oppose the esteem and sovereignty and power of God in the heart; as those three mentioned: 1 John 2:16, 'The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life;' either voluptuousness or the inordinate love of pleasures, when men make it their business to gratify their senses, and glut and throng their hearts with all manner of delights; or else are surprised with an immeasurable desire of heaping up riches, or affectation of credit and honour. Now these evil frames of heart should be the more watched and striven against, because these sins rise up against God, as he is the last end and chief good; they set up idols instead of God, mammon instead of God. All that are carnal and unsanctified are under the power of these: Luke 8:14, 'That which fell among thorns are they, which when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring forth no fruit to perfection;' they never carry on

religion to any good effect and purpose. And there are none of God's children but need constantly to be mortifying and subduing them. As in a garden the weeds will grow, because the roots are not quite plucked up, so there must be a constant mortification, because they are natural to us, and the back bias of corruption is not wholly taken off, even in the most mortified of God's children.

[5.] There is a dominion of sin, which is more gross and sensible, or more secret and close. More open; for though sin doth reign in every one by nature, yet this dominion doth more sensibly appear in some than others, who are judicially given up to be under the visible dominion of sin, as the just fruit of their voluntary living under that yoke, and are set forth as warnings to the rest of the world, as men hung up in chains of darkness; they are apparently and in conspectu hominum instances of this woful slavery; every man that seeth them, and is acquainted with their course of life, may without breach of charity say, There goeth one who declareth himself to be a servant to sin. This may be either as to sin in general, or to some particular sin.

(1.) To sin in general. Whosoever he be that, instead of trembling at God's word, scoffeth at it, and maketh more account of the course of this world than of the will of God, of the fashions of men than of God's word, and thinketh the scorn of a base worm, that would deride him for godliness, a greater terror than the wrath of the eternal God, and the love of his carnal companions is prized as a greater happiness than communion with Christ, and, instead of working out his salvation with fear and trembling, runneth into all excess of riot, or carelessly neglects his precious soul while he pampereth his vile body, and doth voluntarily and ordinarily leave the boat to the stream, and give up himself to serve his corruptions without resistance or seeking out for help; this man is without dispute, and in the eye of all the world, a slave to sin: Rom. 6:16, 'Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?' It is an apparent case; a man that giveth up himself to go on in the way of his own heart, restraineth himself in nothing

which it affects, is one of sin's slaves. So our Lord Jesus: John 8:34, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin;' there needeth no further doubt nor debate about the matter. He that goeth on in a trade of sin, and maketh that his work and business in the world, never seriously looking after the saving of his soul, this soul is one in whom sin reigneth.

(2.) To some particular sin. As we have instances of carnal wretches in the general, so of some poor captive souls that remain under the full power and tyranny of this or that lust, and are so remarkable for their slavery and bondage under it that the world will point at them, and say, There goeth a glutton, a drunkard, an adulterer, a covetous worldling and muckworm, a proud envious person; their sin is broken out in some filthy sore and scab, that is visible to every common eye and view, either their covetousness or gluttony, or ambitious affectation of greatness, &c. Observers may truly say, There is one whose god is his belly, a slave to appetite: 2 Peter 2:19, 'While they promise themselves liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.' They grow proverbial for giving up themselves wholly to such a conquering and prevailing lust. As in natural things, several men have their distinct excellences, some are famous for a strong sight, some for an exquisite ear, some for a nimble tongue, some for agility of body; so these have some notable excess in this or that sort of sin. Or as the saints of God are eminent for some special graces, Abraham for faith, Moses for meekness, Job for patience, Joseph for chastity, Timothy for temperance; so these have their notorious and contrary blemishes.

2. There is a more secret and close dominion of sin, that is varnished over with a fair appearance. Men have many good qualities, no notorious blemishes, but yet some sensitive good or other lieth nearest the heart, and occupieth the room and place of God; that is, it is loved, respected, and served instead of God, or more than God. That which is our chiefest good or last end is our god, or occupieth the room of God: Mat. 6:24, 'No man can serve two masters; for

either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and mammon;' John 5:44, 'How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?' Luke 14:26, 'If any come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.' We must be dead not only to carnal pleasures, but to relations, estate, yea, life and all; nothing on this side God must sit nearest the heart, nor bring us under its command and power: 1 Cor. 6:12, 'I will not be brought under the power of anything.' We are besotted and bewitched with some temporal thing, cannot part with it, or leave it for God's sake, or notwithstanding all the mischief it doth to his interest in the soul: though a man serve it cunningly, closely, and by a cleanly conveyance, yet all his religion is to hide and feed this lust.

[6.] There is a predominancy of one sin over another, and the predominancy of sin over grace. In the first sense renewed men may be said to have some reigning corruption or predominant sin, namely, in comparison of other sins. That such predominant sins they have appeareth by the great sway and power they bear in commanding other evils to be committed or foreborne accordingly as they contribute to the advancement or hindrance of this sin; as in the body, a wen or strain draweth all the noxious humours to itself, and thereby groweth more great and monstrous. It appeareth also by the frequent relapses of the saints into them, and their unwillingness to admit admonition and reproof for them, and sometimes their falling into them out of an inward propensity, when outward temptations are none, or weak, or very few. Well, then, there are some sins which are less mortified than others, or unto which they are naturally carried by constitution, or education, natural inclination, or course of life. Thus David had his iniquity: Ps. 18:23, 'I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity;' whether it were hastiness or distrust of the promise, or also an inclination to revenge himself, some sins that men savour, or withstand less, or which are more urgent and importunate upon them, and steal away their hearts most

from God, the great pond into which other rivulets or streams of sin do empty themselves, or that bough or limb which taketh away the nourishment from all the under-shrubs, that which is loved and delighted in above other sins, and when other sins will not prevail, the devil sets this a-work, as the disciples looked on the disciple whom Jesus loved: John 13:23, 24, 'Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of the disciples whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned unto him that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.' Well, then, in regard of other sins, one may reign and sit in the throne of the heart, or be loved more than another; but not in regard of predominancy over grace, for that is contrary to the new nature, that sin should have the upper hand constantly and universally in the soul. For any one thing, though never so lawful in itself, habitually loved more than God, will not stand with sincerity: Luke 14:33, 'Whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.' If we must not keep our natural comforts, certainly not our carnal lusts. To love anything apart from Christ, or against Christ, or above Christ, is a dispossessing of Christ, or a casting him out of the throne.

[7.] There is a twofold prevalency and dominion—actual or habitual. Actual is only for a time, habitual for a constancy; though a regenerate man be not one that lets sin reign over him habitually, yet too often doth sin reign over him actually, as to some particular acts of sin.

(1.) The habitual reign of sin may be known by the general frame and state of the heart and life, where it is constantly yielded unto, and not controlled and opposed, but beareth sway with the contentment and delight of the party sinning. Men give the bridle to sin, and let it lead them whither it will, and generally walk after the flesh, and not after the Spirit. No doubt that is *peccatum regnans, cui homo nec vult, nec potest resistere*; the sinner hath neither will nor power, because usually after many lapses into heinous sin, God giveth up men to penal or judicial hardness of heart; they first voluntarily take on these bonds and chains upon themselves; these are said 'to walk after

their own lusts,' 2 Peter 3:3; 'to continue or live in sin,' Rom. 6:2; 'to be dead in trespasses and sins,' Eph. 2:1; 'to serve divers lusts and pleasures,' Titus 3:3; 'to draw on iniquity with cart-ropes,' Isa. 5:18; to addict and give up themselves to a trade of sin with delight and consent. But, more closely, the reign of sin is never broken till the flesh be made subject to the Spirit; that will be found by examining every day what advantage the Spirit hath gotten against the flesh, or the flesh against the Spirit, how providences and ordinances are blessed for that end, or for the weakening of sin; for every day the one or the other gets ground. Dough once soured with leaven, will never lose the taste and smatch, but the sweetness of the corn may prevail above it. Sin dwelleth in the heart, but doth it decay? Gal. 5:16, 'This I say, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.'

(2.) Actual sin may now and then get a victory over the faithful, but not a full quiet reign. Sin actually prevaieth when we do that which is evil against our consciences, or yield pro hic et nunc to obey sin in the lusts thereof. It gaineth our consent for the time, but the general frame and bent of the heart is against it. In short, when sin is perfected into some evil action, or 'lust hath conceived and brought forth sin,' James 1:15, that is, some heinous offence, for that time no question it hath the upper hand, and carrieth it from grace, and the flesh doth show itself in them more than the Spirit. A man may please a lesser friend before a greater in an act or two, but every presumptuous act of sin puts the sceptre into his hands. Note, that the predominancy spoken of in the former distinction and this do much prejudice a christian, waste his conscience, hinder his joy of faith; and if not broken in time, or we sin often, we cannot be excused from the habitual reign of sin. Note again, every dislike doth not hinder the reign of sin; it doth constantly govern our lives, though there may be some resistance.

SERMON XIII

For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.—ROM. 6:14.

SECONDLY, I now come to handle the second general. There is a necessity incumbent upon them—

1. From their own proneness and proclivity to fall into sin.
2. From the mischiefs arising from reigning sin.
3. From the unsuitableness of it to their renewed state.
4. They cannot otherwise maintain their hopes of glory.

First, Because of their own proneness and proclivity to this evil. That appeareth—

1. Because there is sin still in us, a bosom enemy which is born and bred with us, and therefore will soon get the advantage of grace, if it be not well watched and resisted, as nettles and weeds, which are kindly to the soil, and grow of their own accord, will soon choke flowers and better herbs, which are planted by care and industry, when they are neglected and not continually rooted out. We cannot get rid of this cursed inmate till this outward tabernacle be dissolved, and this house of clay be crumbled into dust, like ivy gotten into a wall, that will not be destroyed till the wall be pulled down; the Israelites could not wholly expel the Canaanites; and therefore we are the more obliged to keep them under. Our nature is so inclinable to this slavery, that if God subtract his grace, and we be altogether negligent, we shall soon rue the sad effects of it.

2. It is not only in us, but it is always working in us, and striving for the mastery. Sin is not as other things, which, as they grow in age, they grow more quiet and tame. No; it is every day more active and stirring: James 4:5, 'The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy.' It is not a sleepy, but a working stirring principle: Rom. 7:8, 'Sin wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.' If it were a dull and an

inactive habit, the danger were not so great; but it is always working, and putting forth itself, and seeking to gain an interest in our affections, and a command over all our motions and actions. Therefore, unless we do our part to keep it under, we shall soon revert to our old slavery. It is like a living fountain, that poureth out waters, though nobody cometh to drink of it; though there be nothing to irritate it but God's law and the motions of his Spirit, there is a continual fermentation of the corrupt humours in our souls.

3. It is always warring, as well as working: Rom. 7:23, 'I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.' Sin seeketh to deface all these impressions of God which are upon the heart, which bind the conscience to holiness, and to stifle all these motions that tend to it. That it may alone reign in the heart without control, it sets itself in direct opposition against all those dictates of conscience, and holy motions and inspirations, that the sinner may be fully captivated to do what the flesh requireth to be done by him; therefore it must be kept under as a slave, or it will get up as a tyrant and domineer. One sin that we least suspect may bring us under this slavery. It doth not only make us flexible and yielding to temptations, but it doth urge and impel us thereunto. We think and speak too gently of corruption when we think and speak of it as a tame thing, that worketh not till it be irritated by the suggestions of Satan. No; it riseth up in arms against everything of God in the heart.

4. The more it acteth, the more it getteth strength, as all habits are increased by multiplied acts; and when we have once yielded, we are ready to yield again, as a brand that hath been once burned is more apt to take fire a second time: Deut. 29:19, 'And it come to pass, when he heareth to words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst.' After men have once committed a sin, they are more vehement to venture on it again; at first we cannot get down sin so easily, till a habit and custom hath

smoothed it to our throats. Well, then, this bondage is daily increasing, and more hard to be prevented. By multiplied acts a custom creepeth on us, which is as another nature, and that which might be easily remedied at first groweth more difficult to be subdued. As diseases looked to at first are easy to be cured, but when once they become inveterate the cure is more desperate, so are sins before we are hardened into a custom: Jer. 13:23, 'Can an Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good who are accustomed to do evil.' No means will then prevail to work it out of them, or bring them to any good; the more we sin, the more are we enthralled to sin, as a nail, the more it is knocked, the more it is fastened into the wood. A sinner is often compared to a slave or servant; now there were two sorts of servants or slaves—such as were so by covenant and by their own consent, or such as were so by conquest or surprisal in war. The first similitude is used, Rom. 6:16, 'Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.' The other servant by conquest is spoken of, 2 Peter 2:19, 'For of whom a man is overcome, of the same also is he brought into bondage.' Now these notions I would rank thus: every carnal man at his first entrance into a course of vanity and sin is a servant by consent, hire, or contract, for he doth consecrate his life and his love, his time and his care, his actions and his employments to please his lusts; we first willingly and by our own default give up ourselves to this course. But the customary sinner by conquest, that hath so crippled and maimed his faculties that he cannot be at liberty if he would, then they grow complete slaves to their lusts, as captives in war are servants to their conquerors; for whilst they do voluntarily and ordinarily give up themselves to serve the devil and their own corruptions without resistance, or crying to Christ for help, they are very bond-slaves and held in chains of darkness, till the supreme judge execute deserved wrath upon them. Augustine complaineth, *Ligatus eram, non ferro alieno, sed mea ferrea voluntate, velle meum tenebat inimicus, et me mihi catenam fecerat et constrinxerat me*—Lord, I am bound, not with iron, but with an obstinate will; I gave my will to mine enemy, and he made a

chain of it to bind me, and keep me from thee; quippe ex voluntate perversa facta est libido; et dum servitur libidini, facta est consuetudo; et dum consuetudini non resistitur, facta est necessitas—a perverse will gave way to lustings, and lusting made way for a custom, and custom let alone brought a necessity upon me, that I can do nothing but sin against thee. Thus are we by little and little enslaved, and brought under the power of every carnal vanity. Well, now, put all together; are these things spoken of ourselves or of another? Is it so indeed, that there is such a warring? and are we not obliged to be watchful and careful?

Secondly, From the mischievous influence and heinous nature of reigning sin.

1. When sin reigneth, it plucketh the sceptre out of God's hands, and giveth it to some vile and base thing which is set up in God's stead; as the setting up of a usurper is the rejection of the lawful king. The throne belonging to God must be kept for him alone; therefore every degree of service done to sin includeth a like degree of treason and infidelity to Christ. Our Lord telleth us, Mat. 6:24, 'No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and mammon.' As no man can serve two masters, God and mammon, so every one serveth one of these, God or mammon, for the throne is never empty; but between both of them you cannot divide your heart. Neither dominion nor wedlock can endure partners; so that by cleaving to the one, you refuse and renounce the other. To serve God is to give up a man's mind, and heart, and whole man, to know and do what God requireth, whatever be the consequences. Now this doth necessarily imply a renunciation of all those things which cross and contradict the will of God, be it devil, world, or flesh. So to serve mammon is to give up a man's mind, heart, endeavour to find out and follow after the riches, honours, and pleasures of the world, whatever may come of it. He that would serve God must do nothing but what God alloweth him in the matter of pleasure, profit, or preferment, or any other thing; for God is not well

served unless he be served as a master commanding and governing all our actions. On the other side, he that serveth the world giveth God only what the world and flesh can spare, so much religion, strictness, and good conscience as will stand with his carnal ends and affections; for then the world is served as a master when men dispose of themselves and all their concernments, and rule themselves and please themselves, according to that fleshly and worldly appetite and fancy that governeth them; and God is no further loved, obeyed, pleased, than that love of honour, profit, or pleasure will give leave. Well, then, by this you may plainly see that the setting up of any lust to reign is a laying aside and a deposing of God; for if a man be bound absolutely to resign up himself to the will and disposal of God, and to obey him, and love and serve him with all his powers, and this man on the contrary giveth up himself into the hands of some carnal affection of his, be it pride, sensuality, or love of worldly things, and this ruleth him, and this governeth him, and this he studieth to please and gratify, certainly these pleasures, or profits, or honours are set up in God's stead; it is a plain refusing one, and a cleaving to the other, a despising God and Christ, and a preferring the world and Satan. And it will not help the matter, though we profess Christ to be the Lord: all formal titles are a mockage: Mat. 7:21, 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven;' Luke 6:46, 'And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?' Many who profess Christ to be their Lord, are as true bondmen to Satan as the heathen who offered sacrifice to him; and a drunken and unclean christian is as true a servant to the devil as the votaries and worshippers of Priapus, or Bacchus, or Venus; for he doth as absolutely command your affections as he did theirs; and though you are Christ's by profession, yet you are Satan's by possession and occupation, and the bond of your servitude is altogether as firm and as strong, though it be more inward and secret, than their rites of worship. Neither will it help the matter, that as you do not profess, so you do not intend so; though we do not formally intend this, yet virtually we do, and so God will account it; it is *finis operis*, though not *operantis*. If a wife be false to her

husband's bed, will it be excuse enough to say she did not intend to wrong him? or will such a saying excuse a subject that is disloyal to his prince, and sets up a usurper? Well, then, what horror should this beget in our minds! and what care should we take that sin may not reign!

2. The reign of sin is mischievous to us. Sin, when it once gets the throne, it groweth outrageous, and involveth us in so many inconveniences, that we cannot easily disentangle ourselves, and get out again.

[1.] This is one, that it turneth the man upside down, and degradeth and depresseth him to the rank of beasts. A brutish worldling, that once gratifieth his carnal affections, is but a nobler kind of beast; he employeth his reason to gratify his appetite, and puts conscience under the dominion of sense, and so inverteth the whole nature of a man: Titus 3:3, 'Serving divers lusts and pleasures.' The worldly bait taketh advantage of the brutish part, when reason is asleep, and then the beast rideth and ruleth the man, and reason becometh a slave to sensuality.

[2.] This servitude is so burdensome as well as base, and attended with so much pain and shame, that those that know the service of sin (as we all do by sad experience) should use all caution that it never bring them into bondage. Again the apostle dissuadeth from the reign of sin by this argument: Rom. 6:21, 'When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness; what fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?' As if he had said, You have full experience of the service of sin, and the fruits of it; what fruit then? Before you had a contrary principle set up in your hearts, you are ashamed now; that is, now ye know better things, but what fruit then? Nothing but toils, and gripes, and fears, and sad twinges of conscience; for what other thing can be expected of him that every day liveth within a step of hell? The devil hath one bad property, which no other master hath, how cruel soever, and that is, to plague and torment them most who have done him most continual and

faithful service. Those that have sinned most have most horror, and every degree of carnal indulgence hath a proportionable degree of fear and shame and punishment. I speak nothing all this while of the wasting of estate and health, of the loss of credit and interest, of the cost and pains which the drudgery of sin puts men upon; many suffer more hardship in Satan's service than any man in God's; their sin costs them dearer than any martyr ever endured to go to heaven. Lastly, the reward of all is everlasting destruction: Rom. 6:21, 'For the end of these things is death; but being made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.' After all your time and strength hath been spent in the pursuit of vanity, what is the issue but everlasting horror and punishment? Oh! then, when you see the bait, remember the hook; when you hear the serpent hiss, see its sting; and reckon that everlasting death is attending the eating of forbidden fruit. When it seemeth most pleasant to the eye, let not the pomps and vanities of the world entice you into a forgetfulness of God, before whom you must appear as your judge; nor of your immortal souls, which must one day be rent from the embraces of the body, and will survive them, and be commanded into the everlasting regions of light or darkness, ease or sorrow. Hell and heaven are not matters to be trifled with, nor should we easily hazard the feeling of the one, or the loss of the other.

3. The mischievous influence and heinous nature of reigning sin appeareth in this, that it rendereth your sincerity questionable; yea, rather it is a sure note of a carnal state, where it is habitual. There will be pride, earthliness, and sensuality dwelling, stirring and working in the best of God's children; but it hath not its wonted power over them. Christ will not reckon men slaves by their having sin, nor yet by their daily failings and infirmities, nor by their falling now and then into foul faults by the violence of a temptation, unless they settle in a constant trade of sin, and set up no course of mortification against it. Though there be not a good man upon earth that sinneth not, yet surely there is a difference between the regenerate and unregenerate. There are some 'whose spot is not as

the spot of God's children,' Deut. 32:5. There is a difference between sins. God gave the priest under the law direction how to put a difference between leprous persons, some of which were unclean, others clean, Lev. 13:38, 39; there was some leprosy that spoiled the skin, but did not fret the flesh, which the priest was to pronounce clean. God showeth himself hereby merciful to the infirmities of his people, not esteeming every spot and deformity in them as malignant sin; so ver. 23, 'If the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not, it is a burning boil, and the priest shall pronounce him clean;' to wit, from the contagion of leprosy; which signified, that though the signs and marks of sin which God hath healed by forgiveness remain still, yet, if they spread not, that is, reign not in our mortal bodies, they shall not be imputed to us, but forgiven: 'Because we are not under the law, but under grace.' On the other side, if the spot were turned bright, and deeper than the skin, the priest was to pronounce him unclean; ver. 25, 'And if it did spread much abroad, the priest was to pronounce him unclean; it was the plague of leprosy,' ver. 27. And again we read in ver. 44, 'When the priest was to pronounce him utterly unclean, his plague was in his head.' If to infirmity there be added malignity and presumption, it maketh the sinner a spiritual leper in the sight of God; and 'he did rend his clothes, and make bare his head, and cry out, Unclean, unclean,' ver. 45, importing thereby humble and penitent acknowledgment, or broken-hearted representing of our sin and misery, or sense of our own plague and grief: and he was to dwell alone till he was healed, ver. 46; that is, he was deprived of communion with God till a thorough cure was wrought in him. As it was in the ordinances of the law, so it is true also in the gospel. There is a difference between sins and sins, and sinners and sinners; there is a difference between dimness of sight and blindness, between numbness and death, between want of sense and want of life, between slumbering and sleeping, between slipping into a ditch and tumbling ourselves headlong into the mire; so there is a difference between infirmities and iniquities, a failing out of ignorance and weakness and some powerful temptation, and a running headlong unto all ungodliness. God's children have their failings, but a burning and earnest desire to be freed from them; in

others there is a wallowing in sin without any care of remedy; in the one it is a failing in point of particular duty, in the other a rebellion. Judas and Peter both sinned against their master; the one denied him, the other betrayed him; the one was overcome by fear, the other inclined by covetousness of a little money; the one plotted, the other was surprised. A purpose and a surprise are two different things; the one went out and wept bitterly, the other was given up to raging despair. David did not make a trade of adultery, nor bathe himself in filthy lusts. Noah was drunk by not knowing the force of the juice of the grape. They do not lie in this state, but seek to get out of it by repentance. Closer discoveries I reserve to the use.

Thirdly, My next argument is the unsuitableness and uncomeliness that sin should reign in christians, who are Christ's, and should live to him, and for him. It misbecometh them as they profess themselves to be Christ's. We have no power to dispose of ourselves, being wholly his by purchase and covenant.

1. By purchase: 1 Cor. 6:19, 20, 'Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price.' *Quod venditur transit in potestatem ementis*—the buyer hath a power over what he hath bought. We were lost, sold away, had sold ourselves against all right and justice; but Christ was pleased to redeem us, and that with no slight thing, but his own blood. Now how can you look your Redeemer in the face at the last day? If you have any sense and belief of christian mysteries, you should be afraid to rob Christ of his purchase: 1 Cor. 6:15, 'Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid!' He hath bought us to this very end, that you may be no longer under the slavery of sin, but under his blessed government, and the sceptre of his Spirit: Titus 2:14, 'He hath redeemed us from all iniquity;' that was his end, to set us at liberty, and free us from our sins; and therefore, for us to despise the benefit, and to count our bondage to be a delight and privilege, this is to build up again that which he came to destroy, to put our Redeemer to shame, to tie those cords the faster which he came to unloose; and so

it is as great an affront and disparagement of his undertaking as possibly can be. Therefore let not sin live and reign.

2. We are his not only by purchase, but by covenant: Ezek. 16:8, 'I entered into covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine.' We wholly gave over ourselves to his use and service. This covenant was ratified in baptism, wherein 'we were planted into the likeness of his death,' Rom. 6:3–5. How into the likeness of his death? To die unto sin, as he died for sin; that is explained by the apostle, ver. 9, 'Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him.' His resurrection instated him in an eternal life, never to come under the power of death again; so are we to rise to a new life, never to return to our sins again. Now shall we rescind our baptismal vows, and after we have resigned ourselves to Christ, give the sovereignty to another? The hands of consecration have been upon us, and therefore to allow ourselves in any course and way of sinning is to alienate ourselves, and to employ ourselves not only to a common, but a vile and base use. When Ananias had dedicated that that was in his power, and kept back part for private use, God struck him dead in the place, Acts 5; and if we alienate ourselves, who were not in our own power, and were Christ's before the consecration, of how much severer vengeance shall we be worthy! God complaineth of the wrong of parents, Ezek. 16:20, that they took sons and daughters born to him, and sacrificed them to be devoured by Moloch. Children born during the marriage covenant were his; they were circumcised, and so dedicated to him; yet they gave them to Moloch; as many parents dedicate their children to God by baptism, and bring them up for the world and the flesh. This is verily a great sin in parents; but we are more answerable for our own souls, when we have owned the dedication, and ratified it by our own professed consent; and if we shall willingly yield to the world and the flesh, and suffer them to have a full power and dominion over us, how do we defy Christ, whom yet in words we profess to be our Lord! It is said, Gal. 5:24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof.' How shall we interpret this scripture, and reconcile it with the carriage of most christians? De jure all will

grant that they should crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof; but the apostle seemeth to speak de facto, 'they have,' and that maketh the difficulty. All true christians indeed have done so. Christians in the letter are bound to do so; and let them look to it how they will answer it to Christ another day. All in their baptism have renounced the desires of the flesh, and the passions of it also; they are engaged to do it; and all that are serious and real have begun to do this act of mortifying sin, and must go on yet more and more to smother the endeavours and effects of it. Because this is a momentous business, and it is charged on us 'as we are Christ's,' as we profess ourselves to be so, and take ourselves to be so, let us see what it importeth. They must; all are bound; they really have crucified the flesh, mortified and deadened the root of corruption, that it shall not easily sprout and put forth its lustings. Carnal nature in them is weakened, it is not so vigorous and stirring as it was wont to be; there is some preventing of the first risings, though sin dwell in them, and work in them. So far all that are Christ's have put to death their fleshly corruption. But now, as to the several ways of venting of it, expressed by πάθη and ἐπιθυμίαι, either by sinful passions, as malice, envy, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, they do in a great measure and considerable degree get above these; or by lust is meant all fleshly and worldly desires, which carry us out of the pleasures, and profits, and honours of the world, the pleasing baits and enticements of sense; they are dead to these also; all motions to uncleanness, intemperance, ambition, love of riches and vain pleasures: all the children of God have actually begun this work, and are still suppressing these things; for they have resigned their hearts for Christ to dwell in, and they are advancing his sceptre and rule continually, for they have given up themselves to be guided by him. Whether they be pleasant sins or vexatious evils, the heart of a christian is set against them; and therefore you see how unsuitable it is for those that are Christ's, his redeemed ones, and his covenanted ones, to give way to the reign of sin.

Fourthly, My last argument to evince this necessity that is incumbent on the people of God, that this dominion of sin be not set up in their

hearts, is because otherwise they cannot maintain and keep up any lively hope of glory. That I shall evidence by some scriptures: Rom. 6:8, 'If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.' If we die to sin so as never to allow it, or to return to the love and practice of it any more, then the christian faith promiseth some good to us, we have hopes of living with Christ, or a joyful resurrection to eternal life; for the christian life is an entrance and introduction into the life of glory. So Rom. 8:13, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' The scripture is plain in setting down the characters of those that shall go to heaven or to hell, and very decisive and peremptory: 'If we live after the flesh, we shall die.' It doth not say, if we have lived after the flesh; for that would cut off the hope of all the living. One man was first good, and after bad, as Adam; another never bad, always good, as Christ; of all the rest, none ever proved good who was not sometimes bad; we all live after the flesh before we come to live after the Spirit. But if we do still accommodate ourselves to obey and fulfil the motions of the flesh, Christ speaketh no good to such. But now, see the promise of God to those that keep mortifying of sin, striving against sin; 'they shall live,' not only the life of grace, for surely by their progress in mortification vivification is furthered and increased; as we grow dead to sin, we are more alive to righteousness; but the life of glory is a greater boon than we can deserve, as much as we can desire, more than we can make any part of requital for. There is scarce any one scripture by which a man may sooner come to a decision of his spiritual estate than this, for it puts it to a short issue; prevent the reign of sin, and your title to everlasting glory will not be so dark and litigious; make conscience of subduing and suppressing the secret inclinations and desires of the flesh by the Spirit, and you have by warrant of scripture a full and sufficient evidence. All the deeds of the flesh must be mortified before we can see our interest; though not universally and totally, yet still we must go on with it. Sin is mortal if it be not mortified; so that a necessity is laid upon us of killing our lusts, or being killed by them. The apostle doth not say, 'If the deeds of the flesh be mortified in you through the Spirit;' but 'if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body.' We must not

dream of a mortification to be wrought in us without our consent or endeavours, as well whilst we are asleep as whilst we are waking, as if it were wrought in our cradles, whilst we are passing our time in childish play and pastime, or should be done in our riper age, without any careful watch over our works and thoughts; or it may be by a sluggish wish or slight prayer, as if this would master sin. No; all renewed ones must seriously address themselves to the work; the flesh must be mortified, and mortified it must be by us through the Spirit, if we would cherish the hopes of eternal life. The Spirit alone giveth victory, but we must be active in it; for his grace and powerful victorious work doth not license us to be idle, but rather calleth for an assiduous, diligent, and faithful use of means. The less earnest the conflict is between the flesh and the Spirit, the longer will the old man live in us, and our peace and hope will be the more doubtful; but the more serious our endeavours are, the sooner shall we come to a determination in the great affairs and interests of our precious and immortal souls.

SERMON XIV

For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, hut under grace. Romans 6:14.

Thirdly, The hopes of victory and success through the grace of Jesus Christ. Now many things there are which give us hopeful encouragement in our conflicts with sin.

1. The undertaking of our blessed Redeemer. Freedom from sin {Page 275} was a part of that salvation which he purchased for us: Matthew 1:21, 'He shall save his people from their sins;' Titus 2:14, 'Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.' It is not; only an evidence, but apart, yea, a principal part, as those means which have a more immediate connection with the end are more noble than others which are more remote. The last end is the glory of God. Now our conformity to God, and the holiness and

subjection of the creature, is a nearer means to it than our comfort and pardon. Christ's end was to fit us for God's use, and therefore his business was to sanctify and free us from sin: 1 John 3:8, 'For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil,' ἵνα λύσῃ, which signifies to dissolve, untie, unloose a knot. This was the end of his coming; and will he come in vain, and miss of his end? The work of the devil is to bring us into sin and misery, and the Lord knoweth we are miserably entangled in the corruptions of our own hearts; we know not how to loose these knots. Christ came for this purpose to untie them for us, and surely he cannot miss of his purpose if we consider the merit of his humiliation, what a price hath be paid for sanctifying grace! 1 Peter 1:18, 19, 'Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' So great a price was given, not only to heighten our esteem of the privilege, but also to increase our confidence while we are endeavouring and striving against sin. Christ wanted not any merit to make the purchase sufficient and effectual. Or if we consider the power of his exaltation; having paid our ransom, he is let out of the prison of the grave, gone into heaven, and is fully commissioned and empowered to instate us in this blessing of freedom from sin: Ephesians 3:20, 'Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.' Now what an encouragement is this to keep under that enemy which Christ hath done so much to slay and destroy! What is his business now in heaven, but to sit at the right hand of God, and see the fruits of his mediation accomplished? Those indeed that cherish that which Christ came to dissolve, as much as in them lies they seek to frustrate the undertaking of Christ. But now, whilst we are striving and warring upon sin, and seek the destruction of it, we are engaged in the same design Christ is, and therefore may have the more confidence of his help, and receiving the fruits of his purchase; his great intent was to bring us back unto God, and saving us from sin, not in sin; and your heart is upon the same thing.

2. The new nature put into us; you have an opposite principle to check it: 1 John 3:9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' Since Christ hath intrusted us with such a talent as the new nature, and hath put grace into our hearts to resist sin, it is our duty not to suffer it to be idle and unfruitful. Though there be in the regenerate a seed of corruption, yet that is or should be mortified; there is also in them a seed of grace, and that is to be cherished. Now surely where this is, sin cannot carry a full sway, and break out without stop and interruption; for the new nature will appear by way of check {Page 276} and dislike; one that hath a new nature cannot make sin his trade, custom, and delight. Why? Because his seed a-hideth in him, which is the principle of grace wrought in him by the Spirit of God. There is a settled, fixed frame and bent of heart towards God, and so by consequence against sin, for it is irreconcilable with the motions and tendencies of the new nature to live in sin; and therefore it is as natural to the new nature to hate sin as to love God: Psalm xcvi. 18, 'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.' There is an irreconcilable hatred and enmity against sin. There is a twofold hatred -- odium abominationis and odium inimicitie. The hatred of abomination or offence is a turning away of the soul from what is apprehended as repugnant and prejudicial to us: so to sin is repugnant and contrary to the renewed will; it is agreeable and suitable to the unregenerate, as draff to the appetite of a swine, or grass and hay to a bullock or horse. Now, there being in all those that are born of God this kind of hatred, it must needs weaken sin; for the mortification of sin standeth principally in the hatred of it. Sin dieth when it dieth in the affections, when it is an offence to us, and we have an antipathy against it, as some creatures have one against another. The new nature is a divine nature, 2 Peter 1:4; in some measure it hath the same aversations and affections which God hath; we hate what he hateth, love what he loveth: Proverbs 8:13, 'The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.' There is another kind of hatred, odium inimicitie. Now this hatred is nothing else but a willing evil or mischief to the thing or person hated, out of that dislike, offence,

and distaste we take against them: Psalm 18:37, 'I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them; neither did I turn again till they were consumed.' This is different from the former, for there may be an aversation or an offence from some things, which yet I do not malign or pursue to the death. But by this hatred also do the regenerate hate their sins; they hate sin so as to mortify and subdue it, and get it destroyed in themselves: Romans 6:6, 'Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin;' Galatians 5:24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof.' Grace within will not let a man alone in his sins, but rouseth up the soul against it, non cessat in Ioesione peccati, sed exterminio; it is still taking away somewhat from sin, its damning power, its reigning power, its being: Romans 7:24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' They would be free from all sin, groan under the relics of it as a sore burden; therefore certainly the new nature, which hath such a lively hatred against sin, must needs give us a great advantage against it. I would not flatter you with the show of an argument, nor put you off with a half truth; therefore I must needs tell you, that though the former things alleged be true, yet --

[1.] You must not forget the back-bias of corruption and the flesh, which still remaineth with us, and is importunate to be pleased; and though it be not superior in the soul, yet it hath a great deal of strength, that still we need even to the very last to keep watching and striving: the best of God's children must resolve to be deaf to its entreaties and {Page 277} solicitations, and not accommodate themselves to please the flesh: 'Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance,' 1 Peter 1:14; that is, they must take heed they do not cast their conversations into a carnal mould, and suffer their choices and actions to be directed and governed by their lusts. 'In your ignorance,' when you knew not the terror of the Lord, nor sweetness of the Lord, you could not be deterred from delighting in this slavery; your lusts influenced all your actions, and you wholly gave yourselves to the satisfaction of your sinful desires,

shaping and moulding all your actions and undertakings by this scope and aim, The apostle's word is very emphatical, μὴ συσχηματιζόμενοι ταῖς πρότερον ἐπιθυμίαις, though now you have more knowledge, more grace to incline your hearts to God, and so by consequence against sin, yet former lusts are but in part subdued, and therefore our old love to them is soon kindled, and the gates of the senses are always open to let in such objects as take part with the flesh; and there is a hazard in the best of complying with the sinful motions of corrupt nature, and therefore you must not so take it as if there were no need of diligence, and watching, and striving, and constant progress in mortification. Even holy Paul, mortified Paul, saw a continual need of beating down the body, lest after he had preached to others he himself should be a castaway, 1 Corinthians 9:27. This great champion, after so many years' service in the cause of Christ, was not secure of the adversary which he carried about with him; and therefore, though we speak of the advantage of the new nature, it is only for our encouragement in the conflict; there is still need of caution, that we do not revert into our old slavery. And though it be troublesome to resist the pleasing motions of the flesh, yet there is great hopes of success; we do not fight as those that are uncertain; the grace given us is a fixed rooted principle, and the lusts we contend with are but the relics of an enemy routed and foiled, though not utterly and totally subdued. Though there be a contrary principle in us, that retaineth some life and vigour, yet surely in the regenerate it is much abated; there is not such a connaturality and agreement between the heart and sin as there was before; grace is a real, active, working thing, and where the new nature doth prevail, certainly 'old things are passed away,' 2 Corinthians 5:17. Every creature acteth according to its kind, the lamb according to the nature of a lamb, and a toad according to the nature of a toad; as a thorn cannot send forth grapes, nor a thistle produce figs, so, on the contrary, vines do not yield haws, nor the fig-tree thistles. Men, now they have renewed principles, cannot be at the power Satan, nor at the command of every lust, as they were before. How are all things become new, how are old things passed away, if it should be so, if they had the old thoughts and designs still, the old affections still, the

old passions they used to have, the old discourses, the old conversation? Surely grace will not let a man alone, nor give him any rest and quiet, if he should act and walk according to the old tenor and manner. Certainly the grace given serveth for some use, and giveth some strength.

[2.] I must interpose one consideration more for the full understanding of this truth. That grace is operative indeed, a real, active, working thing; but yet it doth not work necessarily, as fire burneth, or {Page 278} light bodies move upward, but voluntarily; therefore it must be excited and stirred up, both by the Spirit of God, 'who worketh in us both to will and to do,' Philippians 2:13, and by ourselves; we must ἀναζωπυρεῖν, 'stir up the grace of God that is in us,' 2 Timothy 1:6; we must still be blowing up this holy fire, as the priests do the fire of the altar, still keep it burning; and its motions must be hearkened to and complied withal: Galatians 6:16, 'Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' Cherish and obey the directions of the renewed part, and this will keep the carnal part under; so that though the motions of it be not totally suppressed, yet they shall not be completed and fulfilled, not so easily consented unto, nor so often break out into shameful acts; but as these are slighted, sin reigneth.

3. The Spirit of sanctification still dwelling and working in us. Herein the law was a dead letter; it only afforded us bare instruction, without the help and power of grace; but the gospel is 'the ministration of the Spirit,' 2 Corinthians 3:8. There is a life and power which goeth along with every gospel truth, to enable us to do what it requireth of us. The renewed certainly feel this benefit by it; and the truths of the gospel, which to others' taste are like ordinary running water, cold and spiritless, are to them like strong water, comfortable and full of virtue: strong water and running water are alike for colour and show, but not for virtue and taste. All that repent and believe in Christ have the gift of the Holy Ghost: Acts 2:38, 'Repent and be baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the

Holy Ghost.' He dwelleth and resideth in their hearts, and is the great cause of the mortifying of sin: Romans 8:13, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' The Spirit will not without us, and we cannot without the Spirit, subdue our sinful inclinations. At first indeed he worketh upon us as objects, as a Spirit only moving upon us, but afterwards he worketh by us as instruments, as a Spirit indwelling. At first he regenerateth us and converteth us, when we were dead and wholly senseless. Man at first was a passive subject, when the Holy Ghost infused life, and made him partaker of a divine nature. We were by nature all dead in trespasses and sins, did not only deserve death by original sin, but did also deserve to be denied the grace of Jesus Christ by some following actual sins; but when we were all equally involved in misery, the secret working of divine grace did begin the difference: Ephesians 2:4, 5, 'God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: by grace ye are saved.' This saving grace is not given to all, though all have many both external and internal helps sufficient to make them better; that any have his special efficacy and converting grace is the mere favour and bounty of God; if any want it, it is long of themselves, because by their neglect and abuse of common grace they deserve that want. Well, then, at first God giveth the Spirit, and all his purifying and sanctifying works upon the soul are by his mere grace, which the gospel offereth to all, till they exclude themselves; but then, after we are converted, we shall have more sins to remove by further sanctification, now the Spirit dwelleth in us to give us his special assistance.

{Page 279} But more closely consider -- (1.) The necessity of the Spirit's concurrence; (2.) The encouragement we have thereby.

[1.] The necessity of the Spirit's concurrence; we cannot begin, carry on, and accomplish the work of mortification, without the operation, help, and power of the Spirit.

(1.) That we cannot begin it is evident, because before conversion we were 'dead in trespasses and sins,' Ephesians 2:1, had only a life of resistance and enmity against God and the work of his grace left in us: Romans 8:7, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;' and we were under the power of the devil, who holdeth the fallen creature in bondage till he be dispossessed: Luke 11:21, 22, 'When a strong man armed keepeth the house, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.' There is no faculty in man that can work the cure. The understanding is dark, and blind, and weak; if it warn us of our duty, it cannot break the force of sin, Romans 1:18. The will is enslaved to corruption. Now nothing will seek to destroy itself, but rather to preserve that life that it hath; therefore the heart of man, which is by nature corrupt, wedded to the interests and concernments of the flesh, will never seek to mortify and subdue the flesh; for a thing will never be opposite to itself. The scripture saith, John 3:6, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh.' A man wholly addicts himself to sin while under the power of corrupt nature, and a sensual carnal heart cannot make itself holy and heavenly. But --

(2.) After conversion, when grace and the principles of a new life are put into us to weaken sin, yet still we need the help of the Spirit, partly because habitual grace is a creature, and therefore in itself mutable; for all creatures depend, in esse, conservari, et operari, upon him that made them: Acts 17:26, 'In him we live, and move, and have our beings.' If God suspend the influence, the fire, which is a natural agent, burneth not, as in the instance of the three children - who were cast into the fiery furnace; if necessary agents, much more voluntary agents; and if there be this dependence in natural things, much more in supernatural. Therefore grace still dependeth on God's influence, and there must be a concurrence of the Spirit to maintain what he hath wrought: Philippians 1:6, 'Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.' Partly because it doth not totally

prevail in the heart, but there is opposition against it, there is flesh still: Galatians 5:17, 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that you cannot do the things that you would.' Habitual grace non totaliter sanat, it worketh not a perfect but a partial cure upon the soul. Therefore there needeth new grace to act, and guide, and quicken us still, and to stir up the principles of grace in us. Partly because this grace, as it meeteth with opposition from within, so it is exposed to temptations from without, from Satan, who watcheth all advantages against us. Now when temptation cometh with new strength, we must have new grace to oppose it: Hebrews 4:16, 'Let us come boldly to the throne of {Page 280} grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,' χάριν εἰς εὐκαιρον βοήθειαν. Adam had habitual grace, but he gave out at the first assault. When a city is besieged, the prince who would defend it doth not leave it to its ordinary strength, and the standing provisions which it had before, but sendeth in fresh supplies of soldiers, victuals, and ammunition, and such things as their present exigence calleth for. So doth God deal with his people; his Spirit cometh in with a new supply, that they may the better avoid sin, and stand out in an hour of trial. So from the world, which is continually obtruding itself upon our embraces, and it is hard to 'escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.' 2 Peter 1:4. The new nature was given us for that end, and also the Spirit of God is necessary: 1 John 4:4, 'Ye are of God, and have overcome the world; for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.' The Spirit is necessary, as against the terrors, so the delights of it: 1 Corinthians 2:12, 'We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God,' that so the world may not corrupt us, nor entice us to affect its riches, honours, and pleasures above God and the conscience of our duty to him.

[2.] There is great encouragement to us to set upon the work of mortification, because it is carried on by the help and power of the Spirit. If we were to grapple with sin in our own strength, then we

might sit down and despair and die; but the Spirit is appointed for this end, and purchased for us by Jesus Christ, for all that come to him with broken hearts, and do not by their carelessness, negligence, or other sin, provoke the Lord to withdraw his exciting grace. If you do humbly implore his assistance, wait for his approaches, attend and obey his motions, you shall find what the Spirit is able and willing to do for you. He is able surely, though you are ready to say, I shall never get rid of this naughty heart, renounce these bewitching lusts. There are none so carnal but he can change them, and bend and incline their hearts to God and heavenly things: 1 Corinthians 6:11, 'Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' He can turn swine into saints, a dunghill into a bed of spices. None should give way to sottish despair; God never made a creature too hard for himself. And when he hath begun an interest for God in our souls, he can maintain it, notwithstanding oppositions and temptations: Philippians 1:6, 'He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.' God is willing to give the Spirit to them that ask it, as a father is to give a child what is necessary for him: Luke 11:13, 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' Be careful you do not grieve the Spirit, and make yourselves incapable of his help: Ephesians 4:30, 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption.' The Spirit of God will not forsake us unless we forsake him first. The Spirit is grieved when lust is obeyed before him, when his counsels and holy inspirations are smothered, and we yield easily to the requests of sin, but are wholly deaf to his motions. If {Page 281} so indeed, he ceaseth to give us warning, and to renew and continue the excitations of his grace. Water once heated congealeth the sooner; so they are most hardened who have been notably touched with his sacred inspirations, but go a quite contrary way. But the renewed need not doubt of his help; for God hath promised the Spirit to them, to cause them to walk in his ways: John 14:16, 17, 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for

ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.' Well, then, do not complain, but up and be doing against sin. Laziness pretendeth want of power; but is anything too hard for the Spirit of the Lord? It is a lamentable thing to see what a cowardly spirit there is in most Christians, how soon they are captivated, and discouraged with every slender assault or petty temptation, and their resolutions are shaken with the appearance of every difficulty. This is affected weakness, not so much want of strength, as sluggishness and cowardice and want of care. Men spare their pains, and then cry they are impotent, like lazy beggars, who personate and act a disease, because they would not work. Surely 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,' 2 Corinthians 3:17. Many are not able to stand before the slightest motion of sin, because they do not stir up themselves, and awaken that strength which they have, or improve that which God continually vouchsafeth to them by the motions of his Spirit. It would be more for your comfort to try what you can do in resistance of sin, than idly to complain for want of strength. The two extremes are pride and sloth. Pride is seen in self-confidence, or depending upon our endeavours and resolutions; and sloth in a neglect of the grace given, or help afforded to you. Christians should improve present strength against sin, and still labour to get more. Every conquest will increase your strength against the next assault, and one limb of the body of death mortified is a means to cause the rest to languish by consent.

4. The next encouragement is the promises of the gospel, which secure this benefit to us; and surely the watching and the striving person may take comfort in them. There are two sorts of promises, some that do assure of necessary assistance, some that speak of arbitrary assistance; as Ezekiel 36:26, 27, 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.' Now such

promises must be improved, for the covenant of God is the ground of our stability. Adam had a seed of grace, but it was not secured by promise, and therefore he sinned it away. The victory is assured to us by promise: Romans 16:20, 'The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.' In ordinary conflicts it is a good rule, Non ceque gloriatur accinctus ac discinctus; but a Christian may triumph before the victory, for all those who are really and earnestly striving against sin are sure to conquer. These promises may be pleaded to God, as his own words by which he hath invited our hope; and to ourselves in case of fainting and discouragement, that we may not {Page 282} coldly set upon the practice of Christianity. Let us depend upon God's promise, as Paul, 2 Timothy 4:18, 'And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom, to whom be glory for ever and ever, amen.'

5. There are certain ordinances whereby this grace is conveyed to us. The Spirit joineth his power and efficacy with the proper instituted means for the subduing of sin. The word is a powerful instrument, which the Holy Ghost useth for the cleansing of the soul from sin: John 15:3, 'Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you;' yea, for the killing of sin, therefore it is called 'The sword of the Spirit.' When we come to hear, some new consideration is still given out for the further sanctifying of the heart: John 17:17, 'Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.' In prayer we come to act faith and repentance, looking up to God for help; and with brokenness of heart mourning over our corruptions: Zechariah 12:10, 'I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.' By every prayer offered in the brokenness of our hearts sin receiveth a new wound. So the sacraments; as in the Old Testament, circumcision signified a sanctifying of the heart: Deuteronomy 10:6, 'And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest

live;' and the paschal lamb was a type of Christ, 'Who taketh away the sins of the world,' John 1:29. So baptism and the Lord's supper. Baptism signifieth the washing away of sin: Acts 22:16, 'Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins;' and he that liveth in sin forgetteth, that is, neglecteth his baptism: 2 Peter 1:9, 'He hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins;' as forgetting the law is neglecting the duty of it: Psalm cxix. 153, 'I do not forget thy law;' he carrieth himself as if he were never baptised, for baptism is a vowed death to sin. So for the Lord's supper. Every serious remembrance or meditation of Christ's death should quicken us anew to crucify sin, and to make it hateful to our souls. (1.) As it represented the great act of Christ's condescending love, which is a moving forcible argument to persuade us to deny our inordinate self-love, 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15, 'For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.' (2.) It is a viewing the heinousness and odiousness of sin there represented to us in the agonies and sufferings of Christ; the more we consider of them, the greater apprehensions should we have of the evil of sin, the exactness of God's justice, the terror of his wrath: Romans 8:3, 'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.' Christ was made sin for us, and then endured these things, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 'He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we {Page 283} might be made the righteousness of God in him.' When we look upon sin through Satan's spectacles, or the cloud of our own passions or carnal affections, we make nothing of it; but it is a terrible spectacle to see the fruit of sin in the agonies and sufferings of Jesus Christ, which are there represented to us, 'as if he were crucified before our eyes,' Galatians 3:1. Oh! never have slight thoughts of sin more. (3.) As it implieth a solemn mutual surrendry between Christ and us: Solomon's Song 2:16, 'I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.' Christ giveth himself and his grace to us, as our redeemer and saviour. We accept Christ and his benefits upon his own terms, and

surrender ourselves to him, as his redeemed ones, with thankfulness for so great a favour and benefit. Romans 12:1, 'I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.' Now all this must needs be a great weakening of sin, both the remembrance of Christ's love, the representation of his great sufferings necessary for the expiation of it, and our solemn renewed dedication of ourselves to God and his service, and doing this in a holy duty instituted by God for this end and purpose; for the Spirit of God works by the appointed means, and the use of instituted duties is no fruitless labour, for God would not set us a-work in a duty that should yield no profit and benefit to us.

6. Providences are sanctified to this use, as helps and occasions of subduing sin; as afflictions, which do remove the occasions and subtract the fuel of sin, and awaken seriousness for the future: Isaiah 27:9, 'By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin;' 2 Corinthians 12:7, 'Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.' The thorn in the flesh was given to mortify his pride. By these kind of dispensations the Spirit worketh serious humiliation, and brokenness of heart maketh sin odious to us. These are ordered with exact wisdom and faithfulness: Psalm 119:75, 'O Lord, I know that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me;' and they are accompanied by the Spirit; therefore God is said to teach us out of his law when he chastiseth us: Psalm 94:12, 'Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law;' Job 36:10, 'He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity;' the rod is made effectual by the Spirit's motion.

Object. Some have frequently resolved to forsake their sins, but their resolutions have come to nothing; they have striven against it, but as a great stone that is rolled up hill, it hath returned upon them with

the more violence, or as a man rowing against the stream, the tide hath been strong against them, and they have been forced the more back; yea, they have prayed against sin, yet found no success, and therefore think it is in vain to try any more.

Ans. 1. If all the premises are true, yet the inference and conclusion is wrong and false; for we are not to measure our duty by the success, but God's injunction. God may do what he pleaseth, but we must do what lie commandeth. Abraham obeyed God, 'not knowing {Page 284} whither he went,' Hebrews 11:8. Peter obeyed Christ's word: Luke 5:5, 'We have toiled all the night, and caught nothing; howbeit at thy command we will let down the net.'

Though the first attempt succeed not, yet afterwards sin may be subdued and broken. In natural things we do not sit down with one trial or one endeavour: 'A man that will be rich pierceth himself through with many sorrows,' 1 Timothy 6:10; and after many miscarriages and disappointments, men pursue their designs till they complete them. And shall we give over our conflict with fleshly and worldly lusts, because we cannot presently subdue them? That showeth our will is not fixedly bent against them. Therefore let no man excuse himself, and sit down in despair, and say, 'I am not able to master these temptations or corruptions. This is like those, Jeremiah 18:12, 'They said, There is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart' Do not throw up all; thy condition is not hopeless.

God's grace is free, and his holy leisure must be waited; for it was long ere God got us at this pass, to be sensible and anxiously solicitous about our soul-distempers. Grace is not at our beck: 'The Spirit bloweth when and where he listeth,' John 3:7. We must still lie at the pool for cure, nor pettishly fret against the Lord, or cast off our duty, because he blesseth not our first essay.

Grace is ready, as it is free. He that begun this work, to make us serious and sensible, will carry it on to a farther degree, if we be not

impatient. Surely 'the bruised reed will he not break, and smoking flax will he not quench,' Matthew 12:20. Bemoan thyself to God; as Ephraim: Jeremiah 31:18, 'I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus, Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God.' He is not wont to forsake the soul that waiteth on him, and referreth all to the power and good pleasure of his grace: Isaiah 40:30, 31, 'Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.'

Examine whether you seek the Lord with your whole heart, and you have done your endeavour. You say, you purpose, you strive, you pray, but yet sin increases; there is a defect usually in these purposes, in these strivings, in these prayers.

[1.1 Let us examine these purposes.

(1.) These purposes are not hearty and real, and then no wonder they do not prevail. There is a slight wavering purpose, and there is 'a full purpose of heart,' Acts 11:23. If thy purposes were more full and strong, and thoroughly bent against sin, they would sooner succeed. Is it the fixed decree and determination of thy will? When you are firmly resolved, your affections will be sincere and steadfast, you will pursue this work close, not be off and on, hot and cold, and unstable in all your ways. If the habitual bent of your hearts doth appear by the constant drift of your lives, then is it a full purpose.

(2.) This purpose may be extorted, not the effect of thy judgment and will, as inclined to God, but only of thy present fear, awakened in {Page 285} thee on some special occasion. Many are frightened into a little religiousness, but the humour lasts not long: Psalm 78:36, 'Nevertheless they did natter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues; for their heart was not right with him,

neither were they steadfast in his covenant.' Ahab in his fears had some relentings, so had Pharaoh; the Israelites turned to the Lord in their distress, but they turned as fast from him afterwards; they were resolved not from love, but fear; so these resolutions are wrested from you by some present terrors, which when they cease, no wonder that you are where you were before. Violent things will never hold long; they will hold as long as the principle of their violence lasteth.

(3.) It may be thou retest in the strength of thine own resolutions. Now God will be owned as the author of all grace: 1 Peter 5:10, 11, 'But the God of all grace, who hath called us into his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory for ever and ever, amen.' Still we must have a sense of our own insufficiency, and resolve more in the strength and power of God; the grace of Jesus Christ you must rely upon, both for confirming and performing your resolutions, as knowing that without him you can do nothing. Men fall again as often as they think to rise and stand by their own power: there is such guile and falsehood in our hearts, that we cannot trust them. The saints still resolve, God assisting: Psalm 119:8, 'I will keep thy statutes; O forsake me not utterly;' and Psalm 119:32, 'I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.'

[2.] As to striving, let us examine that a little, if it be so serious, so diligent, so circumspect as it should be.

(1.) That is no effectual striving when you are disheartened with every difficulty, for difficulties do but inflame a resolved spirit, as stirring doth the fire. No question but it will be hard to enter in at the strait gate, or to walk in the narrow way. God hath made the way to heaven so narrow and strait that we may the more 'strive to enter in thereat,' Luke 13:24. Now, shall we sit clown and complain when we succeed not upon every faint attempt? Who then can be saved? This is to cry out with the sluggard, 'There is a lion in the way.' Should a mariner, as soon as the waves arise, and strong gusts of wind blow,

give over all guiding of the ship? No; this is against all the experience and the wont of mankind.

(2.) This striving and opposing is but slight, if not accompanied with that watchfulness and resolution which is necessary. Many pretend to strive against sin, yet abstain not from all occasions of sin. If we play about the cockatrice's hole, no wonder we are bitten. Never think to turn from thy sins if thou dost not turn from the occasion of them. If thou hast not strength to avoid the occasion, which is less, how canst thou avoid the sin, which is greater? He that resolveth not to be burnt in the fire must not come near the flames. Job made a covenant with his eyes that he would not look upon a maid, Job 31:1. 'Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away,' Proverbs 4:14, 15. Evil company is a snare. Our Saviour taught us to pray, 'Lead us not into temptation;' he doth not say, into sin; the temptation openeth the gate.

{Page 286} [3.] For praying, we oftener pray from our memories than from our consciences, or from our consciences as enlightened rather than hearts renewed by grace. Prayer, as it is the fruit of memory and invention, is but slight and formal, words said of course, a body without a soul; as dictated by conscience, it may be retracted by the will; *timebam ne me exaudiret Deus*. Or at best they are but half desires, faint wishes, like Balaam's wishing, which will never do good: 'The soul of the sluggard desireth, but hath nothing.' God never made promise that-such wishes should be satisfied.

SERMON XV

For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Romans 6:14.

Use 1. Of reproof, to reprove --

1. The security and carelessness of many, that never look to the state of their hearts, nor regard whether Christ reigneth or sin reigneth, or at least do not take good heed which way things tend to the greatening or increasing of God's interest or Satan's in their souls. Many count a holy jealousy or heedful watchfulness to be but preciseness, and that we make more ado than needeth, and make the lives of Christians burdensome, when we press them to a constant watchfulness and holy jealousy of themselves. No; this is no burden, but a blessing: Proverbs 28:14, 'Blessed is the man that feareth always.' Sin gaineth upon us for want of taking heed at first. They that see no need of this caution are little acquainted with the practice of godliness, or the state of their own hearts, have not a due sense and apprehension of the danger of displeasing God, or of their own proclivity and prone-ness to sin; therefore live by chance and peradventure, and leave themselves to be transported by their own affections, to do anything which occasions and temptations invite them unto. Were we as sensible of the dangers of the inward as outward man, we should surely stand more upon our guard, and resist the first motions and tendencies towards a sin; certainly we would not give such harbour and indulgence to our corruptions as usually we do, lest we nourish and foster a viper in our own bosoms, which will at length sting us to death. Surely it is no wisdom to tarry till the death-blow cometh; an inclination to evil is best mortified at first, and the longer we dally and play with a temptation, the harder will our conflict be.

But when may we be said to omit our watchfulness?

[1.] When we grow bolder with sin, and the temptations and occasions of it, and think we have so good a command of ourselves, and can keep within compass well enough, though we cast ourselves

upon tempting objects and occasions unnecessarily, and without a call. Surely these men forget themselves and the danger of sin, as if they had some special amulet against it, which the people of God had not in former times. They know exactly how far they may go in every thing, even to the cleaving of a hair, and will not lose one jot of their {Page 287} liberty, and seem to make a sport of it, to show how far they can go, and how near the pit, and not fall in. They can allow themselves in all kind of liberty for lascivious songs, wanton plays, and yet look to the main chance well enough; please themselves with all kinds of froth and folly, yea, sometimes execrable filth, yet never any kind of infection cometh near their hearts. Alas! poor deluded creatures! they that do all that they may will soon do more than they should; and those that come as near a sin as possibly they can without falling into it, cannot be long safe; yea, and they are infected already, that have so little sense of the strength of sin and their own weakness. I confess some are more liable to temptations than others, but yet all need watchfulness for their preservation; for sin is not extirpated and rooted out of any. And again, when I am in my calling, I am under God's protection, as a subject is under the protection of his prince, travelling in due hours on the highway; but none can presume their knowledge is so sound, their faith so strong, their hearts so good to God, as to think no hurt will come when they cast themselves voluntarily upon occasions of sin.

[2.] When you make a small matter of those corruptions which were once so grievous, even intolerable to you: Romans 7:24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' You lose tenderness of conscience, remit of your care.

[3.] When you content yourselves with the customary use of holy duties, though you find no profit nor increase of grace by them, rather perform them as a task, than use them as a means to get and increase grace. Nunquara abs te absque te recedam. Lord, I will never go from thee without thee: Genesis 32:26, 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'

[4.] When you neglect your hearts, grow strangers to them, find little work to do about them. Every Christian findeth work enough from day to day to get his heart quickened when it is dead, enlarged when it is straitened, prepared when it is indisposed, to be made serious when it is vain and frothy, cured when it is distempered, settled when it is troubled and discomposed; but sin becometh easy, and conscience becometh patient and quiet under it. Surely you are not watchful, and mind not your covenant vow.

2. It reproveth those that hope to have sin subdued and kept from reigning, though they never strive against it. It is the striving Christian which is here encouraged, those that have given up themselves to Christ's conduct, and to fight in his warfare. Many run of their own accord into sin, others make no opposition against it. Now Christ undertaketh not to keep these. The captain of our salvation only taketh charge of his own soldiers, to lead them safe to eternal glory and happiness; others are excepted. Grace received from him is of little use to us if we fight not. Therefore, besides watching, there must be resisting. This resistance must be --

[1.] Earnest and vehement, such as cometh from a hatred of sin as sin. The light of nature will rise up against many sins, especially at first, as sin is a disorder and inconvenience; but this is but partial and soon tireth; but the resistance required of Christians is such as ariseth from a constant hatred: Romans 7:15, 'That which I do I allow not; {Page 288} for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate that do I.' When Eve speaketh faintly, the devil reneweth the assault: Genesis 3:3, 'Of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.' She speaketh too warmly, and with an impatient resentment of the restraint, and too coldly of the commination. God had said, 'In dying ye shall die.' A faint denial is a kind of a grant. Our Lord rebuketh the devil with indignation: Matthew 4:10, 'Get thee behind me, Satan.'

[2.] It must be a thorough universal resistance. Take the little foxes, dash out the brains of Babylon's brats. The devil would frighten you by propounding great sins at first, but he approacheth by degrees; therefore, Ephesians 4:27, we must not 'give place to the devil.' You set open the door to Satan by yielding a little. A temptation is better kept out than gotten out; when he hath but the narrowest passage or least opportunity, he seeketh to re-enter, and seat himself in the heart, and exercise his former tyranny, and doth excite the person to commit more sin. When the stone at the top of the hill beginneth to roll downward, it is a hard thing to stay it. I '11 yield but once, saith the deceived heart; but the devil chargeth us further and further, till he hath left no tenderness in our conscience; as some that thought to venture but a shilling or two, by the secret witchery of gaming have played away all their estates.

[3.] It is not for a time, but perpetual. It concerneth us not only to stand out against the first assault, but a long siege. What Satan cannot gain by argument, he seeketh to gain by importunity; but 'resist him, steadfast in the faith,' 1 Peter 5:9; as Joseph's mistress spake to him day by day, Genesis 39:10. Deformed objects, when we are accustomed to them, seem less odious. As you rate away an importunate beggar, that will not be answered. To yield at last, is to lose the glory of the conflict.

Now many resist not. You may know it --

(1.) When you cannot bring your hearts to let sin go, though conscience worry you, and condemn you for it, as many men sin while their hearts condemn them: Romans 1:18, κατεχόντων, 'they hold the truth in unrighteousness.'

(2.) When you slightly purpose hereafter to amend, but do not presently resolve: Acts 24:25, 'And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and said, Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for

thee.' The contrary you may see in David: Psalm cxix. 60, 'I made haste and delayed not to keep thy commandments.'

(3.) When you do not consent to the necessary effectual means of your recovery, which, if you were truly desirous to get rid of sin, you would do. They that will not use the means, do not desire the thing: Proverbs 21:25, 'The desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour.'

(4.) When in actual temptations you interpose not a strong dissent or negative, either by serious dislikes, or rebukes, deep groans, hearty defiance, or strong arguments, which are the several ways of resistance.

Use 2. Exhortation, when God affordeth to poor captivated sinners {Page 289} such help, if they will but take it, and make use of it in time; surely, then, we should watch and strive. And that I may deal the more effectually in this use, I shall distinctly unfold the duty of watching and striving, the means to curb and check sin.

First, Watching.

1. The spring and rise of it in the soul are these three fundamental graces of faith, fear, and love; otherwise it is but moral prudence and caution, which will be too feeble a restraint to sin, unless it be animated and inspired with these graces.

[1.] Faith puts upon watchfulness; that faith which looketh to things to come, and maketh them in a manner present to the soul; it is a realising sight, Hebrews 11:1, 'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.' The more lively sense we have of the concernments of another world, and the more mindful we are of our eternal enjoyments, the more watchful. In every sin it is our eternal enjoyments are in danger, and heaven and hell are not things to be sported with, or ventured and put to hazard for a little carnal satisfaction. Many expound that, Ephesians 6:12, 'We wrestle with spiritual wickedness in high places,' ἐν ἐπουρανίῳ, 'about

heavenly things,' for the word places is supplied; it is in the original only in or for the heavenlies. The main quarrel between us and Satan is about high and heavenly things, which tend to the honour of God and the eternal good of our souls; it is not our temporal and worldly, so much as our spiritual and heavenly concernments which are struck at. The devil would fain cheat us of our souls, our God, and our happiness, and by propounding some base and unworthy trifle deprive us of everlasting glory. Now, a man that hath a sense of eternity deeply impressed upon his heart, and hath 'made eternal things his scope,' 2 Corinthians 4:18, he hath his eyes in his head, is careful not to lose his interest in and hope of these things, who knows that the whole world will not countervail the loss of his soul, and that one glimpse of heaven's glory and happiness doth so much outshine all the pomp and gaudy vanities of the present life, that he dareth not -let his heart linger after these things, lest he should forget or neglect those better things. He is cautious of 'coming short of the heavenly rest,' which his eye and his heart is upon, Hebrews 4:1. But they whose faith about these things is either weak or none at all are bold and venturous, as if there were no such danger in sins and temptations; they forget God and their souls, and the great account they must give of all their actions to their impartial judge, and the eternal recompenses of heaven and hell, into which all the world shall at last issue themselves.

[2.] Fear, or a reverent and awful regard of God's eye and presence; they are afraid to do anything unseemly in his sight: Genesis 39:9, 'How can I do this wickedness, and sin against God?' How will God take it to be affronted to his face? As Esther 7:8, 'Will he force the queen before me in the house?' So, shall we give vent to our sin when God seeth and heareth? void our excrements in his presence? The Israelites were commanded to march with a paddle: Deuteronomy 23:12-14, 'Thou shalt have a place also without-the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad. And thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon, and it shall be when thou wilt ease thyself abroad, {Page 290} thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back, and cover that 'which cometh from thee. For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst

of thy camp to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy, that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.' The master's eye makes the servant diligent; the presence of a reverend man will hold us in some order. If Gehazi had known that the spirit of Elisha went with him, would he have run after Naaman for a reward? 2 Kings 5:26; his prophetic spirit went with him. We can no more be removed from the presence of God than from our own being; he is the continual witness and judge of our conversations; he seeth us in secret as well as in public. Now, when the soul is habituated to this thought, how awful and watchful shall we be? Psalm cxix. 168, 'I kept thy precepts and thy testimonies; for all my ways are before thee.' The sense of his presence is the great ground of watchfulness. God is not so shut up within the curtain of the heavens, but that he doth see and hear all that we do or say; yea, he knoweth our thoughts afar off.

[3.] Love to God maketh us tender of offending him, for it is a grace that studieth to please; the soul is jealous of anything which looks like an offence to those whom we love. Others are not troubled though they sin freely in thought, foully in word, frequently in their daily practice, because an offence to God seemeth as nothing; they have no love to God: Psalm 97:10, 'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.' It is a loathsome thing to them; to a gracious heart it is argument enough against sin that it 'is the transgression of the law,' 1 John 3:4; and he inferreth it out of love to God, 1 John 3:1, 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us.' &c. They have such a deep apprehension of God's love to them in Christ, that it breedeth an awe upon them, or a fear to offend. Ezra 9:13, 14, 'After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; shall we again break thy commandments?' Joshua 24:31, 'Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, which he had done for Israel.' What! offend God, who is so blessed a being, who created us out of nothing, of whose mercy we have tasted every moment, who

preserveth and delivereth us continually, from whose goodness we expect all our blessedness! Is our deliverance by Christ of less value than all our temporal deliverances? Will not love draw the same inferences and conclusions from it? Caution doth not arise out of a fear of anger, but a loathness to offend.

2. The time when this duty is to be practised; always; it is never out of season. Conscience must still sit porter at the door, and examine what goes in and out. If men neglect their watch but for a little while, how soon doth sin get an advantage against them. Lot, that was chaste in Sodom, miscarried in the mountains, where there was none but his own family. David, whose heart was so tender that it smote him for cutting off the lap of Saul's garment, falleth into so deep a sleep afterwards that his conscience was silent when he had defiled it with blood and lust. The tears and sorrows of many years {Page 291} may perhaps not repair the mischief which one hour may bring unto you. You have need to watch after the sense of your duty hath been revived upon you. Satan loveth to snatch the prey from under Christ's own arm: 'He entered into Judas, after the sop,' John 13:27. After solemn duties, how soon do people miscarry! As soon as the law was given with terrible thunderings, the people do presently miscarry by worshipping the golden calf, Exodus 32.; and the priests in the very day of their consecration, in the beginning and first day of their ministration, offered strange fire to the Lord, Leviticus 10. After some escape from sin we need to watch that we be not entangled therein again: 2 Peter 2:20, 'If after they have escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.' As under the law, a sore rising as a boil, when it was healed, might afterward break out again, and turn to a leprosy, Leviticus 13:18-20; so sins, after we seem to be healed of them, may return, and make us worse than before. As Christ saith to the man cured: John 5:14, 'Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.' In prosperity we need to watch; it is hard to carry a full cup without spilling, and to live at ease and yet to keep up a due and lively sense of our duty. And

in our adversity, when the course of temptation is altered, we are strangely surprised; every condition bringeth its own snares with it: 'Ephraim is a cake not turned,' Hosea 7:8. Those who are most advanced in a state of grace, they need still to watch: Mark 13:37, 'What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.' We are never past this care; this is the great difference between Christian and Christian; one is mere watchful than another.

3. Against what we must watch.

[1.] Generally against the three grand enemies of our salvation, the devil, the world, and the flesh.

(1.) Against Satan; for he hath laid his ambushes and enterprises against us continually, and by his spiritual nature hath advantages of being near us, when we are little aware of him: 1 Peter 5:8, 'Be sober, be vigilant; for your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.' Satan is ever watching, therefore you should watch. You give him the greatest advantage by your folly and negligence; now the apostle saith he would not give him any advantage, 2 Corinthians 2:11, 'Lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices.' He is unwearied in his motions, lays his designs deep, takes all advantages and occasions to destroy us. If the devil were either dead or asleep, or had lost his malice and power, then we need not stand so much upon our guard.

(2.) Against the world; for we are bidden to 'deny worldly lusts,' Titus 2:12. Not only ungodliness must be watched and prevented, but our inclination to worldly things. See how these two are matched; for when we fall off from God we take to the creature: Jeremiah 2:13, 'My people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that will hold no water;' and 'Christ died to deliver us from this present evil world,' Galatians 1:4. Here lie all the baits, and snares, and {Page 292} dangers; pass hut safe through those flats

and quicksands, and we shall soon arrive to the haven of eternal glory. The great virtue and proper effect of the cross of Christ is seen in crucifying us to the world: Galatians 6:14, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.' When the fashion of worldly glory is spoiled, and it seemeth less lovely in our eyes, then the cross of Christ hath produced its effect upon us, and the spiritual life advanceth apace. It is the world that is an enemy to God, and quencheth and abateth our love to him: 1 John 2:15, 'Love not the world, neither the things of the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;' James 4:4, 'Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is an enemy of God.' Some temporal good lieth nearest our hearts, and God is not our chiefest good and last end, wherein lieth the life of all religion. It is the world that diverts us from our duty, that hinders the vigour and perfection of the life of grace: Luke 8:14, 'They which fell among thorns are they which, when they have heard, go forth and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.' It is the world that makes us grudge at the strictness of Christ's precepts: Matthew xix, 22, 'When the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.' It is the world that tempts us to live in a slight way, as other careless creatures do about us. It is the world that maketh us slightly mind heavenly things, and affect a life of pomp and ease here: Luke 16:25, 'Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime -receivedst thy good things.' It is the world that enticeth us to stay by the way and neglect our home, that maketh the impressions which arise from the belief of another and better world to be weak and inefficacious, 2 Corinthians 4:4, 'In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, which is the image of God, should shine on them.' Well, then, we cannot be watchful enough against the sly insinuations of the world. When it seemeth too sweet and amiable to you, the devil is at your elbows, enticing your souls from God; when the things of this world begin to be represented as more sweet and delectable than God, and holiness, and heaven, and

you are ready to value your happiness rather by worldly prosperity than by the favour and friendship of God, and you are more indifferent, and can contentedly live without a sense of his love, but your desires are more urgent and strong after an increase of temporal enjoyments, when you affect to grow rich in this world, and neglect to grow rich in grace, -- oh! then Christians have need to stand upon their guard, mischief is near, and unless it be prevented, will prove the bane and everlasting ruin of your souls.

(3.) The flesh must be watched against. The flesh is importunate to be pleased, and will urge us to retrench and cut off a great part of that necessary duty which belongeth to our heavenly calling; yea, it will crave very unlawful and unreasonable things at our hands. It may be not at first; but if you continue to gratify sense and brutish appetite with an uncontrolled license, it is impossible that you should keep within the bounds of your duty. Therefore, unless you keep a {Page 293} constant government over your senses and appetites, how shamefully will you miscarry! Therefore, as you love your souls, you must 'abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,' 1 Peter 2:11. For whilst you keep gratifying and pleasing the flesh by the excess of lawful delights, you do but strengthen your enemy, increase corruption in heart and life, provide fuel for Satan's temptations, and jostle God out of the throne, and finally hasten your own eternal ruin. If you would keep sin under, you must cut off the provisions of the flesh, not cater for them: Romans 13:14, 'Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.' If you would resist Satan, you must be 'sober and watchful,' 1 Peter 5:8; that is, sparing in the use of worldly delights. If you would preserve God's interest, and reserve the throne of your hearts for him, you must take heed that the pleasures of the animal life be not too much indulged, for these will soon secure their interest in our affections: 2 Timothy 3:4, 'Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.' If you would not have your consciences benumbed, and grow forgetful of spiritual danger, you must set a guard upon these outward delights: Luke 21:34, 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day

come upon you unawares;' 1 Thessalonians 5:6, 'Let us watch and be sober.' There is a strange infatuation and senselessness groweth upon you, and though we keep up a show of religion, yet we feel little of the life and power of it. They indispose us for our Christian warfare, quench all our sense of heavenly things: 1 Peter 1:13, 'Be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.' These delights that offer themselves in our pilgrimage make us forget our journey, as lewd servants sent to a market or fair spend all their time and money at the next inn. We are strangers and pilgrims, that is the apostle's argument: 1 Peter 2:11, 'Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.' We may bait here, as in a house of entertainment, but so as to set onward still on our journey, that it may be a refreshment, not an hindrance. Certainly they that would make progress in their journey to their heavenly home should meddle sparingly with sensible delights, though lawful in themselves. Certainly they who make their corrupt inclinations their ordinary guide and rule, and the satisfying thereof their ordinary trade, miscarry shamefully, and shipwreck all their hopes of glory.

[2.] More particularly, the object of our watching are these things -- (1.) Our thoughts, which are sin's spokesmen, and make the match between the soul and the object: Proverbs 4:23, 'Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.' If we do not take care what thoughts we have, and whereunto they tend, the heart is entangled before we are aware; our lusts stir up thoughts, and these thoughts entice the heart; and whilst we muse and sit a-brood upon them, these cockatrice eggs are hatched. It is musing maketh the fire to burn; and when the fire is kindled, then the sparks begin to fly abroad; men execute what the heart contriveth, and finish it without stopping: James 1:14, 15, 'Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.' There we {Page 294} read of the manner of the birth, or bringing forth of sin. Some pleasurable lure, represented by sense, awakeneth

the lust; that draweth off the heart from God and heavenly things: then lust conceiveth by thoughts, as the eggs are hatched by incubation; then it is a full-grown sin, and so they go on to the very last, till they drop into hell. Oh! then, suppress the musings, the vain and sinful thoughts; for whilst you dandle sin in your minds with a secret consent, liking, or a pleasing musing, the mischief increaseth, the stranger becometh your master.

(2.) You must watch against occasions. It is ill sporting with occasions, or playing about the cockatrice's hole, or standing in harm's way. Many say their infirmities make them run into such or such sins; but if they were minded to leave their sin, they would leave off evil company, and all occasions that lead to it. We are often warned of this: Proverbs 4:14, 15, 'Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away;' Proverbs 5:8, 'Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house.' The wisdom of God thought fit to give us these directions; they that think they have so good a command of themselves that they shall keep within compass well enough, though they venture upon the occasions of sin, converse with vain company, frequent the haunts of the wicked, go to plays, and entertain themselves with dalliances, refuse none of the blandishments of sense, surely they are not acquainted with the slipperiness and infirmity of human nature, know not what the new creature meaneth, nor what a tender thing it is to preserve it in strength and vigour. Is sin grown less dangerous? or have men gotten a greater command of themselves than they were wont to have when the Scriptures were first written? Surely man is as weak as ever, and sin as dangerous. Why then should we venture upon evil company, and the places where they resort, and go too near the pit's brink, and freely please ourselves with, the electives of sin, and apostasy from God, such as are wanton plays, idle sports? Is there no infection that secretly tainteth our hearts?

(3.) Against all appearance of evil: 1 Thessalonians 5:22, 'Abstain from all appearance of evil.' Some things, though not apparently evil,

yet they have an ill aspect, as being unsuitable to the gravity of our holy calling, or the strictness of our baptismal vow and covenant made "with Christ, or as being things not practised by good men who most seriously mind heavenly things, or have been usually abused to sin, and so are not of good report, to be sure do rather blemish religion than adorn it. Christ's worshippers should be far from scurrility, lightness, vanity in apparel, words, deeds; and they should avoid all things that look towards a sin. It is notable under the law, that the Nazarite who was not to drink wine was not to eat grapes, moist nor dry, nor to taste anything that was made of the vine-tree, from the kernels even unto the husk: Numbers 6:3, 4. A Christian that hath consecrated himself to God, and hath made such a full and whole renunciation of all sin, should exactly take care to avoid every occasion and provocation to evil, every appearance of evil, not only the pollution of the flesh, but' the garment spotted with the flesh,' Jude 23.

(4.) Watch to prevent the sin itself. The actual reign of sin maketh way for the habitual. The progress is this; temptations lead to sin, for {Page 295} there are few of us but discover more evil upon a trial than ever we thought we should before, as the piercing and broaching of a vessel showeth what liquor is in it; and small sins lead to greater, as the small sticks set the greater on fire; and greater sins lead to hell, except God be the more merciful, and we stop betimes. Well, then, watch against the sin itself, for every foil maketh you suffer loss. Sin cometh to reign by degrees, and a man setteth his neck to the yoke by little and little. It is not easy to fix bounds to sin, when it is once admitted, and given way to. Water, when once it breaketh out, will have its course; and the gap once made in the conscience will grow wider and wider even-day. A little rent in the cloth maketh way for a greater; so, if we do not take heed of small sins, worse grow upon us. The fear of God and sense of sin is lessened by every sinful act, and conscience loseth its tenderness, and our feeling decayeth. The best stopping of the stone is at the top of the hill; when it beginneth to fall downward it is hard to stay it. The deceived heart thinketh, I will yield a little; and the devil carrieth

them further and further, till there is no tenderness left in the conscience. As in gaming there is a secret witchery, a man will play a little, venture a small sum, but he is wound in more and more and entangled; so men think it is no great matter to sin a little. A little sin is a sin against God, an offence to him; and therefore why do not you make conscience of it? And it will bring other mischiefs along with it, as it disposeth the heart to sin again.

(5.) Watch against the mischief of heinous or presumptuous sins. When you venture to do any foul thing against apparent checks of conscience, any small sin may get the upper hand of the sinner, and bring him under in time, after it is habituated by long custom, so that he cannot easily shake off the yoke, and redeem himself from the tyranny thereof; but these steal into the soul insensibly, and enslave us, as they get strength by multiplied acts. But presumptuous or heinous sins, by one single act, bring a mighty advantage to the flesh, and weaken the spirit or better part, and advance themselves suddenly into the throne: Psalm 19:13, 'Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.' The regenerate, if the Lord do not keep them from temptations, or do leave them in temptations, may fall into most scandalous sins against the light of their consciences, and for the present are under woful slavery and inconvenience. David representeth the utmost mischief of these kinds of sins, as afraid (with the fear of caution) it might tend thereto. Now if a man, nay, a child of God, may possibly fall into scandalous sins, being enticed by the pleasure or profit of them, and for the present be blinded, then, after any heinous fall there should be a special mortification or weakening of sin; because when we are gotten to that height, sin will break out again in the same or other kind, as a venomous humour in the body, heal one sore, and it breaketh out in another place. After some notable fall or actual rebellion against God, it is good to come in speedily, to prevent hardness of heart by all holy means, that we may not settle in an evil course; it is not enough to ask pardon, to forbear the act, but you must mortify the root of the distemper.

There are three things in sin -- culpa, {Page 296} reatus, macula. The fault is continued as long as the act is repeated; you are in danger of this till the breach be made up between God and you; as Lot doubled his incest, the orifice of the wound was not yet closed; and Peter doubled and trebled his denials, whilst the temptation was yet upon him, and he had not recovered himself by repentance; Samson's folly and inordinate love to women twice betrayed him, Judges 16:1-4. The guilt continueth till repentance, and suing out pardon in the name of Jesus Christ: 1 John 1:9, 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Though a man should forbear the act, yet unless he humbleth himself before God, and in a brokenhearted way applieth himself to his mediator and advocate, the guilt is not done away. But besides, there is the blot, or the inclination to sin again; the evil influence of the sin continues till we mortify the root, and the core of the distemper be gotten out. Take for an instance Jonah, the prophet; the original reason of his tergiversation from his call was a fear of being ashamed, and found false in those threatenings which he was to denounce in the name of God; this maketh him run away from his duty, and it cost him dear; for a tempest pursued him, and he was thrown into the sea, and swallowed up of a whale or great fish. Well, he being disciplined, confesseth his fault, repenteth his forsaking his call, begs pardon, is delivered, addresseth himself to his work. God interposeth by the prerogative of his grace upon the humiliation of the Ninevites, and then Jonah is all in a fury, his old reasons return: Jonah 4:1, 2, 'Was not this my saying when I was yet in my country?' &c. Therefore, it is not enough to bewail or discontinue the sin, but we must lance the sore, mortify the root of the distemper, till all be well. This was the reason of Christ's speech to Peter: John 21:15, 'Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these?' that is, more than the rest of the disciples present. Peter had boasted, Matthew 26:33, 'Though all men be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.' Now saith Christ, 'Lovest thou me more than these?' He reflecteth upon his former conceit of himself and singular undertaking. Peter had wept bitterly for the fact of denying his master; Christ would try if the cause were removed. The

evil of the saints' apostasy and defection will never be cured thoroughly unless the fountain-cause and root of it be cured and continually watched over. His making comparisons and lofty conceit of himself was that which occasioned his former fall; therefore Christ, to see what he did think of it, and whether it did continue with him, puts him this question. Peter was grown more modest than-to make any comparisons now; his sad fall taught him sobriety, not to boast of himself beyond others. (6.) You are to watch against evil customs, that you do not lose your tenderness of conscience. Conscience, as the eye, is soon offended. The least dust, if it get into the eye, will pain it; so will conscience smite for lesser failings and exorbitances; but afterwards when you make bold with it, it is like the stomach of the ostrich, which digesteth iron, or like a part or member of the body which is seared with a hot iron, it hath no feeling, 1 Timothy 4:2; or like freezing water, which at first will not bear a pin, but afterwards it freezeth and freezeth, till it bear a cart-load. So men lose their tender sense by frequency of {Page 297} sinning. Therefore it is some degree of mortification to prevent the custom, and the hardness of heart that comes thereby. When a member is sprained or out of joint, if you let it alone and delay to set it, it never groweth strong or straight; so the longer corruption is spared, the worse it groweth, and requireth more strength. Therefore, at least let not your hearts settle in a course of vanity or disobedience unto God.

(7.) Take heed of your darling sin. We are more tender of one sin than another: 'It is sweet in our mouths, and we hide it under our tongues,' Job 20:12; there is most pleasure and profit in it. This is the sin which is most apt to prevail, and settle into a tyranny in the soul; and your uprightness is tried by your watching and striving against it: as Psalm 18:23, 'I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity:' Unless we humble ourselves more for this, watch against this, strive against this, it will be our ruin, and prove the ground of our apostasy in a time of temptation. There is some secret vent which all men have for their corruptions, or some postern or back-door by which Satan usually enters. Now this sin should be

always in your eye, for the strength of other sins dependeth upon love to this: 'Fight not against small or great, but against the king of Israel,' 1 Kings 22:21. You should be most jealous of your hearts, lest they miscarry by this sin, and labour to increase in the contrary grace. He that will not spare his darling, he hateth no sin indeed.

Secondly, For striving, this is required of us also; for we are bidden 'to stand against the wiles of the devil,' Ephesians 6:11, 'To withstand, that after all we may stand,' Ephesians 6:13. A stout and peremptory resistance of Satan's temptations is required of us in order to victory. The more we yield to sin, the more it tyranniseth over us: Matthew 12:45, 'Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first.' The more Satan is resisted the more he loseth ground: James 4:7, 'Resist the devil and he will flee from you.' Christ promiseth the crowns to those that will fight manfully: Revelation 2:10, 'Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' Therefore do not basely yield, nor lazily sit down, as if the work were already done.

But what is this striving? It implieth two things -- (1.) An avowed defiance; (2.) A courageous resistance.

An avowed defiance. The first preparation of -it is the resolution of the mind, or the dedication of ourselves to God. When we are regenerate, we renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, and bid defiance or proclaim an eternal feud and hostility against them, declare ourselves enemies to these three.

A courageous resistance; for after that time we are fearfully assaulted, and in continual warfare with Satan: 1 Peter 5:8, 'Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, like a roaring lion, continually walketh about, seeking whom he may devour;' with the world: James 4:4, 'Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend to the world is the enemy of God;' with the flesh: Romans 7:15, 'For that which

{Page 298} I do I allow not; for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I; there is the strife described. Now we resist --

[1.] By strength of resolution: Daniel 3:18, 'We will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up;' Psalm 39:1, 'I said I will take heed unto my ways, that I offend not with my tongue.'

[2.] Partly by hazarding our temporal interests: Hebrews 12:4, 'Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin;' Revelation 12:11, 'They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.'

[3.] By opposing gracious considerations: Genesis 39:9, 'How shall I do this wickedness, and sin against God?' 1 John 2:14, 'Ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one,' by opposing reasons out of scripture, or arguing strongly against sin.

[4] By praying, or crying strongly for help, when we are sensible of the burden of sin: Romans 7:24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? '

[5.] But chiefly by being acquainted with all the Christian armour, and the use of it. We must not go one day unarmed, but be armed cap-a-pie with the helmet of salvation, which is hope, the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, the shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit. The apostle beginneth with --

(1.) 'The girdle of truth,' whereby is meant a sincere and honest intention to be what we seem to be. Satan useth wiles; but we must not imitate our adversary in deceit, but labour for truth of heart, which as a girdle is. strength of the loins.

(2.) 'The breastplate of righteousness,' which is a principle of grace inclining us to obey God in all things, or a fixed purpose and

endeavour to give God and man their due. This secureth the breast or vital parts.

(3.) 'The feet must be shod.' We meet with rough ways as we are advancing to heaven; and soldiers had their greaves or brazen shoes, to defend from sharp-pointed stakes, fixed by the enemy in the ground over which they were to march. This preparation is a readiness of mind to suffer anything for Christ; this is built on the gospel of peace: Acts 21:13, 'Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus;' 1 Peter 3:15, 'Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.' We must be ready to confess Christ in persecutions and dangers. When we have a sense of our peace and friendship made up between God and us by Jesus Christ, and our great and eternal interests are once settled, what need a believer fear?

(4.) 'The shield of faith,' which covereth the whole body, a sound belief of the mysteries of the gospel, and the promises thereof, especially a clear sight of the world to come. They that have such a faith see a sure foundation to build upon. On the one side the righteousness of Christ, or the promises of the gospel to a penitent believer of {Page 299} pardon, of strength to maintain grace received, and finally of eternal life; on the other side, threats to impenitent and sensual persons.

(5.) 'The helmet of salvation,' which is a well-grounded hope of eternal life: 1 Thessalonians 5:8, 'But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation.' This maketh a Christian hold up his head in the midst of all encounters and sore assaults. He that often looketh above the clouds, and expecteth within a little while to be with God in the midst of the glory of the world to come, why should he be daunted?

(6.) 'The sword of the Spirit' This is a weapon both offensive and defensive; it wardeth off Satan's blows, and maketh him fly away wounded and ashamed. If Satan saith, Oh! it is too soon to mind religion! he hath the word ready, Ecclesiastes 12:1, 'Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth.' If that it is too late, then, John 3:16, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' If that his sins are too great, or too many to be pardoned, then, Isaiah 55:7, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' If Satan tempt him to live sensually, Romans 8:13, 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.' If to defile himself with base lusts, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4, 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.' If to a negligent careless profession, then, Philippians 2:12, 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;' 1 Thessalonians 2:12, 'That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.' If to despondency and fainting, 2 Corinthians 12:9, 'My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.'

SERMON XVI

What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. - Romans 6:15

Here the apostle preventeth an absurd conclusion, which might be inferred by people of a libertine spirit from what he had said in the former verse, either from the first or the last clause, the privilege or

the reason. From either, carnal men might collect what might be matter of security to them in sin; either because of the privilege, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you;' therefore they might let loose the reins; sin should not reign, and consequently not damn; or else from the reason, 'Ye are not under the law, but under grace;' the negative part might seem to infer an exemption from the duty of the law; the positive, 'but under grace,' which provideth pardon for the lapsed, they might infer hence that therefore they might sin impune, without any fear of punishment. So that, in short, three doctrines of grace are apt to be abused.

{Page 300} The free pardon or exemption from condemnation which the new covenant hath provided for sinners; therefore they might sin securely, no harm would come of it.

The liberty and exemption from the rigour of the law, which requireth things impossible at our hands under the penalty of the curse; as if this had freed us from all manner of bonds and ties to obey God, 'They were not under the law.'

The doctrine of perseverance, as if they might do what they list; the covenant of grace would secure their interest, and whether they watched or strived, yea or nay, sin should not have dominion over them. All these are rejected as unreasonable conclusions. 'What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.'

In the words we have --

First, An interrogation, to excite us to regard what conclusions we draw from Christian privileges, 'What then?' that is, what do we conclude thence?

Secondly, A faulty inference or conclusion is mentioned, 'Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?' Where --

The inference itself, 'Shall we sin?' that is, let us continue in sin, or serve sin, or not strive against sin.

The ground whence it is inferred --

[1.] From the evangelical state negatively proposed, 'Because we are not under the law.' as if we were exempted from the rule of the law because we are exempted from the rigour of it.

[2.] From the evangelical state positively proposed, 'But under grace.'

(1.) The grace of justification; we may indulge sin, since the gospel offereth a pardon or freedom from condemnation.

(2.) The grace of sanctification by the Spirit; God will maintain our right, though we mind it not, and so we turn the grace of God into looseness or laziness.

(3.) The brand upon this conclusion, or his abhorrence specified; it is not only unreasonable, but impious, $\mu\eta\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\tau\omicron$; far be it from believers thus to conclude --

(1st.) Because the conclusion is unreasonable, being a distortion of true doctrine, or of the grace of the gospel.

(2d.) It is ungrateful. What! be more licentious for God's grace? It is the most abhorred use of God's mercy that is imaginable.

Doct. That it is a manifest abuse of the new covenant so much as to imagine that it countenanceth any licentiousness or liberty in sin.

I shall first prove it by two arguments --

From the design or end of God in setting up this new transaction with mankind.

From the tenor and constitution of it.

Secondly, Shall vindicate those doctrines of free grace, which may most seem to occasion such thoughts in the hearts of men.

1. From the design of God in setting up this new covenant, which was to recover lapsed man from the devil and the world unto himself, that he might not wholly lose the glory of his creation; which {Page 301} appeareth by manifold expressions in scripture: Luke 19:10, 'The Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost.' Now we were lost first to God; as Luke 15., the lost groat was lost to the possessor, the lost sheep was lost to the owner, the lost son lost to the father: these two last parables show that they were also lost to themselves; but that is but a consequent; the primary sense is, they were lost to God, and therefore Christ came to recover them to his obedience. But to leave parables, it is said expressly, Revelation 5:9, 'Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood,' that we might not only be admitted into his friendship and favour, but fitted for his service, and that he might 'bring us to God,' 1 Peter 3:18; by which is meant not only to reconcile us unto God, but bring us into a state of subjection and obedience to him. Christ is set up as a mediator and lord of the new creation, to the glory of God the Father: Philippians 2:11, 'That every tongue might confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father;' that his interest in his creatures might be secured. And the kingdom of the mediator is subordinate to the kingdom of God; all the authority and power which Christ hath as mediator, to enact laws and make a new covenant, is to bring men back again to the obedience of God upon more comfortable terms. Our subjection to him is not vacated or made void, or only reserved, but established on' more comfortable terms, as we have grace given us for the pardon of failings, and the effectual help of his Spirit to incline us to obedience.

2. From the tenor and constitution of it. As to the precepts, it begins with faith and repentance, and is carried on in the way of new obedience or holiness. None are admitted to the first privileges but those that repent. Upon Mary's repentance Christ said, 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven her,' Luke 7:47; 'Him hath God exalted

to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins,' Acts 5:31. Now repentance is a serious fixed purpose of returning to the obedience we owe to God. And the last privilege, eternal glory, we have it not without holiness: Matthew 5:8, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;' Hebrews 12:14, 'Follow peace and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' All the intermediate privileges do expressly require or imply holiness: Psalm 84:11, 'For the Lord God is a sun and a shield; the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.' So that from first to last it is a holy covenant, as it is called Luke 1:72. Yea, it is holy, not only with respect to what it requireth, but with respect to what it promiseth. It promiseth the Holy Spirit to sanctify us: Acts 2:38, 'Repent and be baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;' Ezekiel 36:25, 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean, and from all your idols will I cleanse you;' 1 Corinthians 6:11, 'Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' And the heaven of heavens is perfection of holiness: 1 John 3:2, 3, 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what I shall be; but this we know, that when he shall {Page 302} appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; and he that hath this hope purifieth himself as he is pure;' Ephesians 5:27, 'That he might present it (the church) to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.' Once more, the aim of it is to promote holiness: 2 Peter 1:4, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature;' 2 Corinthians 7:1, 'Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;' Luke 1:75, 'That we might serve him ἀφόβως, without fear' (that is the great privilege of the new covenant), 'in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives.' In short, the covenant dealeth only with a holy people, and excludeth the profane and unclean: the holy

covenant must have a holy people suitable to it, or else it speaketh no good to them. If you be not holy, you have no part in Christ, nor interest in his covenant: Acts 20:32, 'And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified;' Acts 26:18, 'To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that we may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.' Well, you see the whole scope and great drift of the covenant is to promote holiness.

It remains, secondly, to vindicate those doctrines of grace that may seem to occasion these imaginations.

1. God's freeness and readiness to pardon. The law threateneth punishment, but grace offereth pardon and impunity; therefore men let loose the reins; they think mercy will pardon all and discharge all. But this is a wretched abuse.

[1.] Though pardon be offered to penitent sinners, yet it is on purpose that they may forsake their sins, and timely return to the obedience of God: Psalm 130:4, 'There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared;' that they may not stand aloof from God as a condemning God, but return to his fear and service. It is offered to prevent despair, not to encourage us in sin; so that you quite pervert the end of the offer.

[2.] This pardon belongeth only to the penitent. The offer is made to all, but none have an actual right to it till they repent: Isaiah 55:7, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon;' and Proverbs 28:13, 'He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy.' All sinners are to be told that God is ready to pardon; but all sinners are not to believe that their sins are pardoned, for this is an act that belongeth

to God as a governor and judge. Some things God doth as a free Lord, and there 'it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,' Romans 9:16. Other things God doth as a righteous judge and governor, according to the law of commerce between him and his creatures; there it is, 'So run that ye may {Page 303} obtain,' 1 Corinthians 9:24. To apply this to the case in hand. Pardon of sins is an act of judicature, dispensed upon certain terms; gracious and free they are indeed, but terms and conditions they are still, without which we have no right to pardon, or are not qualified to receive it. All the privileges of the gospel are a benefit, but a benefit dispensed on certain terms, such as our sovereign Lord was pleased to prescribe.

[3.] They are expressly excluded that securely go on in sin: Psalm 68:21, 'But he will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.' That exceptive participle but relateth to what was said of God before. Now, twice before God is called a God of salvation: Psalm 68:19, 'Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation, Selah;' and Psalm 68:20, 'He that is our God is the God of salvation; but he will wound,' &c. A man that goeth on still in his sins is reckoned an enemy to Christ, whatever he be by outward profession, and as an enemy he shall be dealt with. The God of salvation, or the merciful Saviour, will not save him, notwithstanding all that lenity and goodness which he showeth to them that are sincere. The God of salvation will strike home upon their hairy scalp, that is, utterly destroy them. Therefore, when men go on in a state of impenitency, either ignorantly, or against conviction of conscience, upon a presumption that God's mercy shall bear them out, they make the God of all grace their enemy; his justice is against you, and his mercy will not help you. By the law is the knowledge of sin, and by the gospel you are excluded from pardon, till you break off your sins by repentance; and the more sin you commit, the further off you are from salvation, every sin is a step further: Psalm 119:155, 'Salvation is far from the wicked, for they seek not thy statutes;' a pari, salvation is near to the righteous: Romans 13:11, 'Now is your salvation nearer

than when ye first believed.' Every man, every day, is a step nearer to heaven or hell.

2. The second doctrine abused is exemption from the rigour and curse of the law, 'Ye are not under the law, but under grace.' Therefore men take a liberty to sin; they are not under the law. But we must distinguish how we are, and how we are not, under the law.

[1.] We are still under the law as a rule of obedience; so the apostle saith, 1 Corinthians 9:21, 'Not being without law to God, but under the law to Christ.' The apostle still ruled his actions by law, both the law of God and the law of Christian charity. To be in this sense without law, is either to make us gods or devils. If you plead it de jure, of right, it is to make the creature a god; for it is impossible any created thing can be without law; that were to make it supreme and independent, as if its own will were its rule, without liableness to be called to an account by another. Saul proclaimed, 1 Samuel 17:25, 'That whosoever would encounter the Philistine, his house should be free in Israel;' but it is as impossible to free the creature from subjection to God, as it is from dependence upon him. If you plead it do facto, this were to make us devils, to live in direct opposition to God, and rebellion against him, or exempt us from his authority: Psalm 12:4, 'Who have said, With our tongues will we prevail: our lips are our own; who is lord over us?' Thus every creature must be under a law.

{Page 304} [2.] There is a good sense in which we are said not to be under the law; as here in the text, and Galatians 5:18, 'If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law;' that is, not under the condemning power of it, spoken of Romans 8:1, 'There is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ;' or the irritating power of it, spoken of Romans 7:5, 'While we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death;' namely, as it did rigidly exact duty from us, and gave no strength to perform it. Well, then, we may from hence

see what liberty we have by grace. There is a twofold liberty -- a holy and blessed liberty, and a wicked and carnal liberty.

(1.) The holy liberty is to be freed from the power of sin and the curse of the law, that our enthralled spirits may be set free to love, serve, please, and delight in God; and so, 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,' 2 Corinthians 3:17. And for this end we are freed from the law as a covenant of works, which required what to us becomes impossible: Romans 8:2, 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death;' and freed us also from the burdensome task of ceremonies, which God thought fit to impose in the church's nonage: Galatians 5:1, 'Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with a yoke of bondage.' These ceremonies did revive the sense of transgressions, and the curse due to them.

(2.) The sinful liberty is a freedom from righteousness, as the apostle calleth it, Romans 6:20, 'When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness;' from a voluntary subjection to God and his holy laws, a desire to be free from that strict and holy manner of living which God commandeth, or to be at liberty to sin against God, or please the flesh and follow our own wills, to be merry, wanton, lustful, worldly, to eat and drink what we have a mind to, to game, and roar, and riot, and revel, and in the general to live as we list, without being curbed by so precise a law as God hath given us. Now I will show -- (1.) That this is not liberty; (2.) That Christ never came to establish it; (3.) That the contrary is the true liberty.

(1st.) That this is not liberty. For *libertas non est potestas volendi et faciendi quod velis, sed volendi et faciendi ea quae lex divina iugeth* -- it is not a liberty to live as we list, but to live as we ought: Psalm 119:45, 'And I will walk at liberty, for I keep thy precepts.' Man affects the false liberty, and is impatient of any restraints: Psalm 2:3, 'Let us cast away his bands and cords from us;' they would do what they please without check and control. But all this is but delusion and mistake. In reality they live the freest life that lie under the

bonds of duty, that make conscience of praying to and praising God, and walking with him in the stricter course of holiness. Carnal liberty is but a thralldom of slavery; for these we are disabled from pursuing our great end, which is to be everlastingly happy in the enjoyment of God. They that indulge this liberty dare not call themselves to an account for the expense of their time and employments, which every wise man should do, nor think seriously of death, or judgment, or heaven, or hell, but presently they feel a horror and torment in their minds.

(2d.) Christ never came to establish this liberty; for he came to {Page 305} bring us back again in heart and life to God, from whom we had fallen, to fit us to obey the law of God, by healing our natures: Hebrews 8:10, 'This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.' The great blessing of the gospel is grace to keep the law, not liberty to break it; and all new creatures are enabled to keep it, not in absolute perfection, yet with a sincere obedience: Ephesians 4:24, 'And that are put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;' Luke 1:75, 'That we should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives.'

(3d.) The more we set ourselves to keep the law, the more we enjoy God and ourselves.

First, The more we enjoy God; for the more obedient we are, the more pleasing we are to him and amiable in his sight: Proverbs 11:20, 'They that are of a froward heart are an abomination to the Lord; but such as are upright in their way, are his delight;' Psalm 11:7, 'The righteous God loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright.' God delighteth in us not so much as pardoned, but as sanctified. They have most communion with him: 1 John 1:7, 'If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with

another;' they have most of the favour of God, and fellowship with him.

Secondly, The more also we enjoy ourselves. Sin is a wounding thing; nature looketh upon it as a disorder, therefore where it is allowed it breedeth fear, which is a bondage the wicked are never freed from, though they do not always feel it: Hebrews 2:15, 'And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.' Put now the more we set ourselves to keep the law of God, the more happiness and serenity in our own souls: Psalm 119:165, 'Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them;' partly from the consciousness of having done their duty, partly as their interest is more clear, and so their comfort more full and strong.

3. The doctrine of perseverance, 'Sin shall not have dominion over them,' whether they strive against it, yea or no; and so, instead of a resolute resistance, they cherish presumptuous security. There is a holy confidence which the sincere cherish, not to slacken duty, but increase it; such as that of Paul, 2 Timothy 1:12, 'For the which cause I also suffer these things, nevertheless I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.' This is trusting ourselves in God's hands, and keeping his way. But there is a presumptuous security also, when men think they are past all danger, and so look upon cautious watchfulness as a needless thing, whereas the scripture presseth it everywhere. Now, to prevent this, consider --

[1.] The union of ends and means. The sincere convert shall be kept blameless to God's heavenly kingdom, but he is kept in God's way. All God's purposes are executed by fit means. God had assured Paul, 'That there should be no loss of any man's life among them, but {Page 306} only of the ship,' Acts 27:22; yet afterwards he telleth them, 'Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved,' Acts 27:31. How could that assurance given to Paul from God, and Paul's caution stand together? God, that decrees the end, hath appointed means whereby he will execute his decree. Well, then, God having showed

us in his word what means are necessary to such an end, there is a necessity of duty lying upon man to use those means, and not to expect the end without them. God intended to save all in the ship, yet the mariners must abide in the ship; we must not pervert God's order. You shall not fall away and revert into your old slavery; but you must remember you have given up your bodies as instruments of righteousness-unto God.

[2.] Among other the means required by God, there are these two things to be considered -- fear of falling, and the danger of backsliding.

(1.) Fear of falling: Hebrews 4:1, 'Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it;' 1 Peter 1:17, 'Pass the time of your sojourning here with fear;' Philippians 2:12, 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.' Fear is careful and solicitous. What fear is this? A fear of caution: 1 Corinthians 10:12, 'Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.' Of reverence: Jeremiah 32:40, 'I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.'

(2.) The danger of backsliding is often represented to believers to increase their caution; as Christ said to his own disciples, John 15:6, 'If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.' The danger of apostasy is represented to them to confirm their standing, or laid before them to make them afraid of defection. So Hebrews 10:26, 27, 'If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.'

(3.) The promise and exhortation go together, that we may carry an even hand between despair and presumption. Compare Romans 6:12, 'Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof,' with the text, 'Sin shall not have

dominion over you.' We must not presume because of the filthiness of our hearts, and the number of the snares that are still before us; we must not despond because of the unchangeableness of God's covenant love. Let us improve the grace we have "received, that we may continue in it. The act is ours, but the help is God's. To sin upon a confidence that we are sure to persevere is to cease persevering, and to fall away because we are sure not to fall away, which is a contradiction.

Use of information. It informeth us --

No doctrine is so sound but a corrupt heart will abuse it; therefore as much as in us lies we must prevent these misinterpretations.

How prone sinful men are to take all occasions to indulge liberty to sin; being naturally bent to licentiousness, they pervert Christ's holy doctrine to this end.

With what abhorrence we should entertain anything that lessens {Page 307} the necessity of the creatures' subjection to God, or doth befriend sin, or enticeth you to make light of obedience; yea, though this should be done with the most glorious pretences of grace, it is but poison ministered by a perfume.

4. What caution and watchfulness we should use over our own thoughts and inferences. Every one draweth one conclusion or other from the gospel; what use do you make of it? Many that will not say so, that we should sin because we are not under the law, but under grace, are apt to think and do so. And since it is natural to us, we should be provided of a remedy.

[1.] Let every sacred truth be digested into holy love and practice. Love, 2 Corinthians 8:1, 2, 'Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.' Practice: 1 John 2:4, 'He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.' When truth is turned into love, it is turned into a

new nature, and deeds discover the reality of our opinions more than words.

[2.] Let no mystical truth be set up to avoid God's unquestionable natural right to govern his creature, or to infringe the rights of the godhead, as to set up Christ against the moral law, as if that were abrogated; and if no law, no transgression, no sin, no duty, no judgment, no punishment, no reward.

[3.] Do not set up Christ against Christ: Hebrews 5:9, 'And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.' Do not set up his merits against his law, he is Saviour but to those that obey him.

SERMON XVII

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? - Romans 6:16.

In this verse the apostle proveth that it is unreasonable and absurd to conclude that we may sin because we are not under the law, but under grace. Why? Because it destroyeth the state to which we pretend, for men cannot be under grace that serve sin. He proveth it by a general maxim, evident by the common reason of mankind, 'Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are,' &c. So that in the words we may observe two things -

-

A general maxim evident by the light of nature.

The application of it to the matter in hand.

1. The general maxim, that whatsoever or whomsoever a man voluntarily obeyeth, he maketh it or him his proper lord and master. There take notice of --

[1.] The evidence of it, 'Know ye not,' q.d., you may easily know this by the common course of affairs of the world. Here four things are evident --

{Page 308} (1.) That *omnis servus est alicujus domini servus* -- that every servant hath some particular lord and master.

(2.) That the interest of this particular lord and master is grounded upon some special title.

(3.) This title, as matters are carried in the world, is either voluntary contract, or consent, or plain conquest, getting another into his power. By voluntary contract one is a servant that bargaineth with another to serve him; either wholly, that selleth himself as a slave, or in part for such services and ministries: the one is *servus*, a bondman or a slave; the other is *famulus*, an attendant or apprentice, not absolutely, but for such a time, and for such ends. By conquest: 2 Peter 2:19, 'While they promise themselves liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage.'

(4.) Where a master hath such a legal title, every servant is bound to obey his master. Aristotle maketh it the property of a servant, to τὸ ζῆν μὴ ὡς βούλεται, to live not as himself listeth, but as his master pleaseth. All these things are plain and obvious to every man's understanding.

[2.] The matter of it; there are two things observable -- (1.) Yielding ourselves to obey; (2.) Actual obedience.

(1.) Consent, 'To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are; as a man contracts with another to serve him.

(2.) The act, 'His servants ye are to whom ye obey,' whether there hath been a formal contract, yea or no. He that actually obeyeth another is to be accounted his servant, and becometh his servant. The first notion teacheth us that none can be a servant to another but by the election and consent of his own proper will, and whatsoever service men enter, they enter it of their own accord; the devil cannot force us to evil, and Christ will not force us to good. The second notion teacheth us that we must not judge of our service to any, either to sin or God, by our professed consent barely, but by our practice and obedience. If we obey sin, we are servants to sin, whatever we profess or say to the contrary; and if we do not live in obedience to God, whatever professions, vows, and covenants we make to him, or with him, we are not servants of God.

2. In the application of it to the matter in hand, take notice -- (1.) Of two contrary masters, sin and obedience; (2.) Of two contrary rewards and wages, death and righteousness; (3.) The suiting the one to the other, sin and death, obedience and righteousness.

[1.] By sin he meaneth sinning wittingly and willingly, constantly, easily. By death, as the wages, is understood the second or eternal death.

[2.] The other master. By obedience is meant obedience to God, if you obey God's commands; and as our duty is expressed by obedience, so our reward by righteousness. He doth not say, εἰς ζωὴν which the law of contraries would seem to require, but εἰς δικαιοσύνην, by righteousness; you may expound it either of our title to happiness, or our reward itself.

(1.) Our title; you shall be pronounced and accepted as righteous, and so heirs of eternal life. There are many acceptations of the word righteousness in scripture. In short, take them thus --

{Page 309} (1st.) It may be taken, in a moral sense, for a good disposition of mind and heart: Ephesians 4:24, 'That ye put on the

new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.'

(2d.) In a legal or judicial sense, for a state of acceptance, or the ground of a plea before the tribunal of God. So Romans 5:19, 'By the obedience of one many shall be made righteous.' In this judicial sense either with respect to the precept or the sanction --

(1st.) With respect to the precept or the law, as it is sincerely and evangelically obeyed: 1 John 3:7, 'He that doeth righteousness is righteous;' and Luke 1:6, 'They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless,' this is opposite to *reatus culps*.

(2d.) With respect to the sanction, which is double -- the threatening or the promise. With respect to the threatening, so righteousness implieth freedom from the obligation to punishment. So Romans 1:17, 18, 'For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, The just shall live by faith; for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;' this is opposite to *reatus pence*. With respect to the promise, so righteousness imports our right and title to eternal life, not from any merit in our obedience itself, but God's gracious condescension in the covenant: 'There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness,' 1 Timothy 4:8. Our title is first by faith, then continued by new obedience.

(2.) It may imply the reward itself; for it is said elsewhere, Isaiah 48:18, 'Oh! that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments; then had thy peace been as the river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea;' where by righteousness is not meant any moral virtue or gracious disposition, but prosperity and happiness. So Proverbs 8:18, 'Riches and honour are with me, yea, durable riches and righteousness;' thereby is meant felicity. As iniquity is put for punishment: 'He shall bear his iniquity;' so righteousness is put for

reward. So here righteousness is opposed to death, and signifieth eternal life.

Doct. That it greatly concerneth Christians to consider upon what they bestow or employ their time, service, and obedience.

This will be evident by these considerations --

1. That the great business which belongeth to our duty is the choice of a master, or to consider to what we must addict ourselves, and upon what we bestow our minds and hearts, our life and love, our time and strength: 1 Kings 18:21, 'How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.' He brings the business to a trial, not to give them liberty to be of what religion they pleased, but on deliberation to choose the best. So Joshua 24:15, 'If it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve.' He doth not leave it to their liberty to choose God or idols, but would have them to compare the best with the worst, the service of God or the service of devils; which will be life and which will be death, which will be good and which will be bad for them; not as if it were doubtful which to choose, for that is evident to any man in his right wits; nor to blunt their zeal by any {Page 310} demurrer in the case, but rather quicken and hasten their choice; but chiefly that they might choose freely, and be more firm and constant in their covenant, and to shame them, that they might be more inexcusable, if, pretending to God, they divert their obedience from him to other things. Well, then, whom will yon serve and love? To whom will ye give up your minds and hearts, and whole man? To do what God requireth, or to serve and please your lasts? Make a right choice, and then be firm and true to it. Will you pretend to be servants to God, and do nothing for him?

2. The considerations which must guide us in this choice are two -- (1.) Eight and interest; (2.) The good or hurt that we all get by it; for there are wages proportionable and suitable to every work.

[1.] Where lieth the right to command, and who hath the best title to us; justice is to give every one his own: 'Give unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' Surely sin is a usurper, but God is our rightful Lord, for he made us, and to him, we must give an account of our time, strength, and employments: Acts 27:23, 'There stood by me this night an angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve.' And --

[2.] His service turneth to the best account. Our apostle telleth us, Romans 6:23, 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

3. That in a moral consideration there are two masters -- sinful self, and the holy God. This distribution comprehendeth all men; either they are servants of sin, or servants to God: whosoever yieldeth his consent or obedience to sin doth thereby make himself the true and proper servant of sin; and whosoever yieldeth his obedience to God is the servant of God. If you deliver up yourselves to serve God, to obey his commands, you will be reputed as his servants, and so accepted of the Lord; therefore one of them you are, a servant of sin or a servant of the Lord. I shall prove it by these considerations --

[1.] That all men are either good or bad, carnal or regenerate; there is no middle state. All that can make us demur upon this must be either this objection, that all sinners are not alike vicious, but they are all sinners: Isaiah 53:6, 'All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one into his own way.' As the channel is cut, so doth corrupt nature vent and issue forth. Some serve one sin, some another; but if you give up yourselves to any sin to serve that, you are slaves to sin: Psalm 119:133, 'Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.' It may be you are no adulterer, no drunkard, yet you have your way of sinning, or some great drain into which all your corruption emptieth itself. Or this objection, that some are inter regenerandum, upon regeneration, as being under some common work of the Spirit, which, if God bless, may be the beginning of a new estate; as, for instance, take that scripture,

Matthew 13:45, 46, 'The kingdom of heaven is like to a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, and when he had found one of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.' The seeking of goodly pearls is the inclination of nature to happiness; the finding one of great price is common grace, which implieth knowledge, some kind of faith and esteem of Christ; but his going and selling all to buy it is special and {Page 311} saving grace. All men would be happy; none can be happy but by Christ. When we count all things dung and dross that we may gain Christ, then we are really converted. Now before this, here is some knowledge, some assent, some value for Christ. Do not these things make a middle estate?

Ans. -- No; though they have some thoughts bubbling up in their minds concerning the goodness of God, the necessity of a saviour, the love of Christ, and the joys of heaven, yet they are not so rooted in the heart, as to become a new nature in them, or the habit and principle of their daily course of life; they do not gain the heart to Christ, and engage us resolvedly to do his will, and therefore they are to be reckoned among the carnal and unsanctified, though not among the profane. So the young man had a great deal of good in him, for which Christ 'loved him;' 'but he went away grieved, for he had great possessions,' Mark 10:21, 22. And we read of another to whom Christ said, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God,' Mark 12:34, that is, from being a Christian, but really was not so; for he put the question to Christ temptingly. Many that come near never enter, and though they be almost Christians, yet, if not altogether, they are not converted, and so to be reckoned among the obedient servants of God. So that this needeth not stop our way; though they have some convictions of the good of holiness and evil of sin, and some mind to part with it, yet there is no saving change till their hearts be subdued to a resolute obedience.

[2.] That no man can serve both. This is asserted by our Lord in so many words: Matthew 6:24, 'No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and mammon.'

Where the masters are opposite, and differ in their employments and designs, it is impossible that a man can comply with both. Indeed, if two men or more do consent to employ one and the same man in the self-same business and service, then, as we say, many stones make but one load, and many things of several weights but one burden. Thus two or three men or more concurring in the same designs make but one master; but to execute the will of men that differ in their designs is as impossible as to go hither and thither at once. If their commands were subordinate one to another, they might both have their answerable obedience, God in the first place, sin in the next; but their commands are contrary, and both require our full strength of mind, heart, and life; therefore it is impossible that he that serveth sin should be a servant of God, for God will have the heart and mind and whole man to do what he requireth, whatever the consequence be, and sin will have the whole mind, heart and endeavour, whatever come of it. So that a man must needs be divided between his obedience to God and his obedience to sin, and forsake the one and cleave to the other, if he will in good earnest serve either master. So much as he giveth to sin, so much his mind and heart must be drawn away from God and obedience to him, and he must offend God when his lust craveth it of him. Or else, on the other side, he must always be alienating his heart from sin, and devoting it to God, if he be a true servant of the Lord. Many would compound these things, that are so irreconcilable; they hope to please the flesh and God too; it may be {Page 312} they have something that is good in them, but much more that is bad for the bent of their hearts is more for sin than against it; the good is controlled by the evil, which hath the chief power in the soul; for certainly it hath so when we wittingly or willingly continue in any sin, and take on a little religiousness either to hide it or feed it, as in many their religion maintaineth their lusts, and they take the more liberty to live in sin because they have some kind of love to God, and do some good thing that he hath required of them, to excuse the bad.

[3.] All of us by nature were servants of sin; it is grace that maketh us servants of God. So it followeth, ver. 17, 'But God be thanked, that ye

were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.' God created us, and therefore was our rightful Lord; but sin hath invaded mankind and reigned over them, and by a right of recovery God seeketh to recover the creature to himself, and to possess his own again. Therefore, in the consultation about the choice of a master, we must not take it as if the heart of man were a mere waste, occupied by none, but left to the next comer to seize upon. No; there is a usurper there already, sin commandeth and employeth our time and strength, and we must be made free from sin before we can become servants to God. The business is whether we have changed masters, and are willing that God should be restored to his right, out of which he hath been so long kept. They have a notion in the civil law which they call *ius postliminii*, a right of entering upon their own again after it had for a long time been possessed by another: this favour was granted to captives when carried into a foreign country, but denied to fugitives that ran away out of treachery or for some crime: afterwards it was enlarged to those who were driven away by famine, or removed themselves whilst an inundation of enemies whom they could not resist possessed their country; they had a right of entering again upon their houses and lands, though by reason of their long absence they were possessed by another. This was the case of the Shunamite, who having left her country for seven years to avoid the famine, her house and land was seized on, 2 Kings 8:9:5, which upon intercession was restored. This is not directly the case in hand, only so far, that other lords have had dominion over us, which is not only by our departure from the Lord, but by our rebellion;. only in reason his right should be owned by repentance and resignation of ourselves to his use and service: 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 'Ye turned to* God from idols, to serve the living and true God.' So much for the third consideration, that, morally speaking, there are but two masters- -- sin and obedience.

[4.] That by yielding ourselves to obey either of these, we become servants to the one or the other. If we yield ourselves to obey sin, we

are servants of sin; and by yielding ourselves to obey God, we become servants of God.

(1.) I shall speak of sin's servants, and two things I shall say of them -

-

(1st.) That they enter upon this service voluntarily indeed, and draw this woful slavery upon themselves, but not by solemn contract and covenant. The servants are ashamed of their master, and will {Page 313} not own themselves to be what they are; for they are cheated into their slavery, they are enticed and drawn away: James 1:14, 'Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.' They yield themselves to obey sin by voluntary inclination, but not by express covenant; they are not forced but enticed, and willingly put themselves into this bondage. They do not openly profess it, but their course of life showeth it, their hearts are upon evil, and so they are rebels and enemies to God, and refuse his blessed government: Colossians 1:21, 'You that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.'

(2d.) The second thing which I observe is, that they are not only servants in legal reputation, or so accounted before God, as John 8:34, 'Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin;' but they are so by woful captivity, or a sad necessity they have brought upon themselves; for they are deprived of all liberty to help themselves: 2 Peter 2:19, 'While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage.' Our service to God is a debt of duty, their serving sin is a debt of fatal necessity. He is a freeman that hath right and power to dispose of himself or his own actions or employments; but he is a servant that is at another man's beck and disposal, and cannot do what he would, be it de jure or de facto. Now, then, the servants of sin, though it is true de jure, of right, they should do it, yet de facto they are very slaves to their brutish affections, and have no power to resist temptations, or come out of

their wretched condition, when they have some mind to it, and are convinced of better.

(2.) Of God's servants I observe two things --

(1st.) That they become so, not only by voluntary inclination, but open profession and express covenant. God will have no servants but who deliberately adhere to him, and by choice bind themselves to walk in his ways, 2 Corinthians 8:5, 'They first gave up themselves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God;' a voluntary surrender is necessary. So Isaiah 66:4, 'They choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;' and Isaiah 66:6, 'They join themselves to the Lord to serve him.' This deliberate voluntary choice is expressed in a solemn covenant resignation. God is not a master to be ashamed of, but may and must be publicly owned.

(2d.) Our consent, or yielding ourselves to obey, is not enough, but it must be verified and made good by a continual course of actual obedience on our part; for besides the yielding up of ourselves to obey, 'his servants ye are whom ye obey.' Many make covenant with God, but do not keep covenant with God; they will and purpose, but do not perform. It is known whose servants we are, not only by our consent, but our continual practice; if we live in a constant careful obedience to God, we are his servants, though conscious of many failings. The trial of our case mainly runneth upon two things -- the bent of our hearts and the drift of our lives, our choice and our course. We read of some that said, 'All that the Lord hath commanded us we will do;' and God answered, Deuteronomy 5:29, 'Oh! that there were such a heart within them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always.' They are now in a good mood, promise fair. {Page 314} Therefore it is not enough to yield up ourselves to God, unless we employ ourselves for God; for besides the purpose and inclination, there must be a constant practice and study to please him.

[5.] Both sorts of servants receive wages suitable and proportionable to the work they have done.

(1.) Of sin unto death. The servants of sin bring upon themselves eternal death. Sin and death go hand in hand; in all the methods of his justice God hath put them together: James 1:15, 'Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.' Now this should be thought of by us; when Satan and your own corrupt hearts show you the bait, faith should see the hook. This will be death, or I am going about that which in its nature doth expose me to eternal death. The fear of temporal death inflicted by the magistrate restraineth much of the evil of the world, and keepeth men from things forbidden by him; and is not God more to be dreaded? 'There is but one lawgiver that is able to save or to destroy,' that hath potestatem vike el necis ceternce, James 4:12; and shall not we fear and reverence him? Sinners that go on wilfully in their sins, seem to make nothing of dying eternally.

(2.) Of obedience unto righteousness; that is, if we be the faithful servants of God, we shall have the reward of eternal life; not only non-condemnation, or freedom from eternal death, but the everlasting possession of glory and blessedness. There is none of us can say that God bids us serve him for nought or to his loss; he propoundeth endless rewards and punishments to procure obedience to his laws; as he will punish the wicked with endless miseries, so he will reward the obedient with everlasting blessedness. Though we merit nothing of him, you cannot say you work for nothing; he is very ready to manifest his approbation of the obedient: Matthew 25:23, 'Well done, good and faithful servant!' It is a delightful thing to him to speak good of his servants, and that before all the world.

Use 1. We learn hence whom we should choose for our master, or to whom we should stand in the relation of servants.

Consider God's unquestionable title; that will awe the soul. You are servants of God by obligation before you are servants of God by consent; you are his by creation before you are by contract. Our self-obligation is necessary, the more to enliven the sense of our duty, and make it more explicit and active upon our hearts, and more acceptable to God. God will make the wicked see he hath a right to punish them, without asking their consent; but he will not reward you without your consent, unless you willingly give up yourselves to serve him and obey him. Christ forceth not men to good against their wills, but the effect of his victorious grace is to make you willing, to bring you to yield up yourselves to obey him: Psalm 110:3, 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.'

Consider the necessity of obedience. Our service is not abrogated by grace, but changed: 'His servants ye are whom ye obey.' We are redeemed that we may obey: Luke 1:74, 75, 'That we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives.' We are pardoned that we may obey: Psalm 130:4, 'There is {Page 315} forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.' We are renewed and sanctified that we may obey: 1 Peter 1:2, 'Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience.' And when once we are brought into this blessed estate, and are in covenant with Christ, to depend upon him and obey him, then all the subsequent privileges are dispensed according to our obedience. As the further supply of the Spirit: Acts 5:32, 'Whom God hath given to them that obey him;' and eternal life, Hebrews 5:9, 'And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal life to all them that obey him;' all the effects of God's internal and external government, all the intervening communion with God that we have in the world: John 14:21, 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him;' that is, he will enlighten him with the knowledge of his salvation, quicken him by the saving operations of his grace, and lift up the light of his countenance upon him, give him

peace of conscience: Matthew 11:29, 'Take my yoke on you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls;' a sanctified use of such good things as he seeth meet for them: Isaiah 1:19, 'If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.' It is his obedient servants that Christ is so tender of, and willing so to cherish, and to give to them the effects of his illuminating, quickening, comforting grace, and of his fatherly providence.

Consider much what it is wherein you should obey him, or study to know his will: Ephesians 5:17, 'Be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is;' Romans 12:2, 'Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed in the renewing of your minds, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.' Doubtfulness of our duty doth exceedingly weaken our care of obedience; so it doth also our detestation and resistance of sin. When you are sure a thing is sin, you will be more shy of meddling with it; and when you are sure it is a duty, temptations will less draw you from it; for it will strike you with horror in the hour of temptation: What! shall I disobey God by venturing to do that which he hath forbidden, or omitting to do that which he hath expressly commanded? When our duty is once made matter of controversy, you shall always find people less serious in it; therefore it is the Lord's mercy that most of the necessary things are unquestionable and out of debate, otherwise sin would be more commonly committed, and with less regret of conscience. Therefore it concerneth you to understand what is duty or what is sin, that want of light may not disable nor enfeeble your practice, and abate your zeal for such things as God hath, commanded, or against such things as God hath forbidden.

To continue your resolution of obeying God, you should often consider of two things -- what is past and what is to come.

[1.] What is past, the fruit of serving sin and obeying God. The fruit of serving sin. Alas! we cannot look back without shame and

blushing: Romans 6:21, 'What fruit have you of these things whereof you are now ashamed?' The object of shame is either folly or filthiness. Now your eyes are opened by grace, you see both in that former course of disobedience wherein you wandered from God. But what {Page 316} fruit had ye then? It filled you with the bondage of anguish and fear, that you could not have one comfortable thought of God; and alas! what was all the vanishing pleasures of sin to this trouble and anxiousness of mind? And you who have tasted of these bitter waters, will you try once again?' 'What an evil and a bitter thing it is to forsake God,' and walk in the way of your own hearts! Jeremiah 2:19. They that have smarted before are wont to be more cautious afterwards; a child that hath been bitten by a snappish cur will not easily venture his fingers again. They reasoned, Josh. 22:17, 'Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day?' Will you again fly from the face of God, and grow shy of him? Sin is another thing in the review than it was in the committing; do not lay open your old wounds, and make conscience bleed afresh. But do not only remember the fruits of your disobedience, but your experiences of obedience also in the tastes of God's love, the deliverances and blessings vouchsafed to you; as David, Psalm 119:56, 'This I had, because I kept thy precepts;' this comfort, this peace, or serenity of conscience, this protection, this deliverance; and why should we grow weary of God? What iniquity have we found in him? Micah 6:6, 'Wherein have I wearied you?'

[2.] For what is to come; what will be the fruit of sin or obedience? 'Of sin unto death, of obedience unto righteousness.' Sin in itself deserveth damnation, and hell is not a matter to be jested with; for this many are now in flames, and will you take that path which leadeth down to the chambers of death? But the other, obedience, hath righteousness. Your title to glory is more unquestionable. God would not have you to obey him to your hurt and ruin. No; he is leading you to endless joy and bliss.- Holiness directly leadeth to eternal life, and for the present your right is clear. Heaven is the portion of serious believers that love God and live to him.

Because the heart is fickle, and the force of an old consent may be spent, you must often renew your dedication, and afresh yield up yourselves to God to obey him; for our obedience is founded in consent; and the more fixed and firm it is, the more even will your obedience be. Therefore we should often solemnly renew the covenant made in baptism, and deliver ourselves up to God as his professed servants and subjects, firmly resolving upon a stricter course of future obedience. 2 Chronicles 30:5, 'So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel from Beersheba even unto Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem; for they had not done it for a long time in such a sort as it was written.'

When you have again yielded yourselves to God, make more conscience of obeying him; partly because the devil loves to tempt those who are newly consecrated to God, as Christ after his baptism, the Israelites at the giving of the law, the disciples quarrelling for greatness after Christ's transfiguration, those that were drunk at the love-feasts; partly because obeying showeth the truth of your consent, 2 Corinthians 5:15, 'And that he died for all, that they that live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.'

SERMON XVIII

But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.—ROM. 6:17.

IN the sixteenth verse the apostle had laid down a general maxim, which he applieth, first to the matter in hand, in the same verse; now to the persons to whom he wrote, the believing Romans, in the text, 'But God be thanked,' &c.

In the words there are three things—

1. Their past estate by nature, or what they were before conversion, 'Ye were the servants of sin.'
2. Their present estate by grace, 'But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of sound doctrine which was delivered to you.'
3. The praise of all is given to God's grace, 'But God be thanked.'

To open these, I shall begin with—

1. Their past estate. They had been servants of sin, that is, lived long in a course of sin: John 8:34, 'Whoso committeth sin, is the servant of sin;' that is, whosoever doth voluntarily and ordinarily indulge sin, and goeth on in an open course of sinning, he is a servant or slave to sin; for he doth not, yea, cannot, do that which reason and conscience judgeth to be good, or the word of God requireth from him; but doeth the contrary, that which the word of God and conscience disalloweth. This was sometimes their estate, and ours also; for we are all hewn out of the same quarry and rock. Only let me tell you, that the servitude of sin is either natural or acquired.

[1.] Natural or hereditary from our first parents; so we are all prone to evil, and averse from and unable to that which is good: Gen. 8:21, 'The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.' The word which we translate youth, signifieth also childhood; and the scripture elsewhere runneth up to the womb: Ps. 51:5, 'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.' We see how early children manifest sin. Now the earliness and commonness and universality of these evil inclinations showeth what contagion hath invaded all mankind.

[2.] Acquired, when time and custom doth confirm these evil habits in us: Jer. 13:23, 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, who are accustomed to do evil.' We use to say, Custom is as a second nature. It is so here; it is corrupt nature confirmed, or inbred and native corruption improved. Thus were they servants of sin, and though all do not improve corrupt nature to such a height and degree as others do, yet all serve sin till grace maketh a change.

2. Their present or converted estate; where take notice—

(1.) Of their rule, 'That form of doctrine;' (2.) The manner of applying it, 'Which was delivered unto you;' (3.) The effect, 'Ye have obeyed from the heart.'

[1.] The rule, the 'form of doctrine,' that is, the whole gospel, or at least some summary of the christian doctrine concerning things to be believed and done, called 'the pattern of wholesome words,' 2 Tim. 1:13, or 'the principles of the doctrine of Christ,' Heb. 6:1.

[2.] The manner of application, 'Which was delivered unto you,' or 'whereinto ye were delivered,' εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδαχῆς. The doctrine of the gospel is the pattern and mould according to which the new creature is framed; as metal taketh its form from the mould into which it was cast, there is a due impression left upon the soul; or

as the stamp and seal leaveth a suitable impression on the wax; but rather the former.

[3.] The effect, 'Ye have obeyed from the heart.' There is—(1.) Obedience; and (2.) Obedience from the heart.

The most precious truths will do us no good unless they be digested into love and practice. When truth is turned into love, or received into the heart, it becometh a new nature to us; and when it is obeyed and practised, it attaineth its proper use and effect. For the truths of the gospel were not delivered to us to try the acuteness of men's wits, who can most subtly dispute of these things; nor the strength of memory, who can most firmly retain them; or plausibleness of discourse, who can most elegantly speak of them; but the readiness of obedience, who can best practise them. Therefore here is obedience spoken of, 'Ye have obeyed,' that is, begun to obey, 'the doctrine of the gospel;' therefore you must go on still, and not return to your old slavery and bondage. And this 'from the heart,' which implieth both the voluntariness and sincerity of their obedience.

(1.) It was free and voluntary, not compelled; for that is said to be from the heart which is not done grudgingly and of necessity, but readily and cheerfully: 2 Cor. 9:7, 'Every one according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, nor of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.'

(2.) It was sincere, and not dissembled: Col. 3:23, 'Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, not unto men.' God seeth all things; what is done to him must be sincerely done.

3. There is one thing yet to be explained; and that is his giving thanks for this, $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma\ \tau\tilde{\omega}\ \Theta\epsilon\tilde{\omega}$, 'God be thanked.' Here it may be inquired—(1.) Concerning the object, for what he giveth thanks; (2.) The subject, from whom he expects this performance.

[1.] Concerning the object; it respects not the former, but the latter clause: their being once sinners is not the matter of his thanksgiving,

but that they had received and obeyed the christian faith. However, this must be said, that it doth heighten the mercy, or illustrate the benefit: it is a great mercy, that, having been once slaves of sin, yet now at length they were recovered by grace. To be brought into a state of light and life by the gospel were a great benefit, if a man had always been good and holy, at least not considerably bad; but when God will take us with all our faults, and those of so great and heinous a nature, surely we have the more cause to give thanks. Well, then, he doth not, could not give thanks, that once they had been the servants of sin. God was not the author of their servitude to sin, but he was of their obedience to the doctrine of life; his mercy turned the former evil to good. Or, if you will take that into any part of the thanksgiving, it must be thus: Since the condition of the servants of sin is so miserable, God be thanked that you have escaped it.

[2.] From whom he expects this thankfulness. I answer—

(1.) It doth excite their thanksgiving; he exciteth them to give thanks for this blessed change wrought in them: he moveth them not to give thanks for riches and secular honours, nor so much as consider whether they had or wanted these things; but for the good estate of their souls, that they were partakers of so great a benefit, as from servants of sin to become servants of Christ.

(2.) It expresseth his own thanksgiving on their behalf, as congratulating and rejoicing with them in this mercy. The angels rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, Luke 15:10. So should we rejoice in the good of others, especially the pastors of the church: 3 John 4, 'I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth.' Nothing that I more delight in in the world than to hear that those that are converted by me live after a christian manner.

Doct. That to be turned from the service of sin to the sincere obedience of the gospel is a benefit that we cannot sufficiently be thankful for.

Let me represent it in the circumstances of the text—

First, Here is a reflection upon their past state, 'Ye were servants of sin.' This is necessary and useful—

1. To heighten the sense of our privileges by grace. Alas! what were we when God first sought after us? Slaves to sin and Satan, and children of wrath even as others. Look, as Jacob, by remembering his poor condition, doth raise his heart the more to admire God's bounty to him: Gen. 32:10, 'I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.' It would cure the pride of many if they would remember their mean originals, and how, like the hop-stalk, they mount up and grow out of the very dunghill. God solemnly enjoined his people, when they enjoyed the plenty of the land, to remember the obscure beginnings of their being a nation; and therefore, when they offered the first-fruits, they used this confession, Deut. 26:5, 'A Syrian ready to perish was my father when he went down to Egypt, and sojourned there with a few men, and became a nation great and mighty and populous.' Thus God taught them to acknowledge that their first estate and original was most wretched and miserable; and so must we. It holdeth more in moral things: Eph. 2:1–5, 'And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ;' 1 Tim. 1:13, 'Who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious; but I obtained mercy,' ἤλεήθην, all to be mercied. That God should take us with all our faults, and bring us into a better condition, how doth this heighten the mercy!

2. To quicken us to more diligence in our present estate. He that hath been a diligent servant to a hard and cruel master, from whom he could not expect any recompense worth his toil, surely should be diligent and faithful in the service of a loving, gentle, and bountiful master. This is urged, Rom. 6:19, 'As you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.' And it is illustrated by several scriptures: 1 Cor. 15:9, 10, 'I am the least of the apostles, and am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace that was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all;' and Acts 26:11, 'I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even to strange cities.'

3. To make the reality of the change more evident There is a great change wrought in those who are brought home to God; it doth much hurt to believers, in judging of their own case, to forget what they once were; whereas, comparing these two, what they are and what they were, would sooner bring it to an issue, and make the change more sensible and evident. The scriptures often direct us to this method: Col. 1:21, 'And you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled;' Eph. 2:13, 'But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ;' and Eph. 5:8, 'Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.' Our gradual progress in holiness is more insensible, and therefore we may overlook the mercy, because we see not such eminent effects as we found at first. But all that belong to God may see a change, and say, as the blind man, John 9:25, 'This one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, I now see;' they may see plainly they are not the same men they were before. But when men forget the estate they were once in, and the great change the Spirit wrought in them, and feel not such alterations continually, they live in doubtfulness and darkness. As our forgetting our poverty and affliction maketh us undervalue a

more plentiful condition, and those comforts which we would account a wonderful mercy before; or as when recovered and in health we forget the tediousness of sickness, and are not thankful for the comfortable days and nights we enjoy, when we go about our business and sleep without pain. So we undervalue the present state of grace by forgetting the unfruitful works of darkness, or the evil dispositions and practices of our unregeneracy, and have not such comfortable apprehensions of the mercy which the Spirit of God showed in our cure. Cannot you remember when it was once much otherwise with you? that you are not now the persons you were then?

Secondly, Here is a description of their present state by grace, which deserveth to be weighed by us. In it I observe—

1. That the doctrine of the gospel is in conversion imprinted on them; for it is said, that they have obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine into which they were delivered. Their very heart and soul was modelled according to the tenor of the gospel and the truths revealed therein.

[1.] I will prove that it is so with all converts by that promise of the new covenant: Heb. 8:10, 'I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts.' The thing written is the law of Christ or the new covenant, or the substance of the doctrine of the gospel; not every lesser opinion or minute circumstance of their duty, but those points which are essential to christianity; smaller matters depend upon a particular gift. The book is the mind and heart of the believer: by the mind is meant the understanding; by the heart the will or rational appetite: in the one is the directive counsel; in the other, the imperial and commanding power of the soul; the one is compared to the ark in which the law was put, 'I will put my laws into their minds;' the other to the tables of stone upon which the the law was written. God will convince their understandings of their duty, and incline their affections to receive and obey it. The writer, I. God challengeth it as his proper work: 2 Cor. 3:3, 'Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the

Spirit of the living God.' By this Spirit the mind of man is enlightened, the heart is inclined; but yet we must do our duty, both to understand the will of God, and set our hearts upon it, and do the things required of us. To understand, we must 'dig for knowledge, and cry for understanding,' Prov. 2:3, 4; and for inclining our hearts, Ps. 119:112, 'I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end;' and for actual obedience, we are solemnly consecrated to God in baptism, that we may take up that course of living that is prescribed of God in the gospel; and therefore it is said, 1 Peter 1:14, 'Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts of your ignorance.' We must not mould ourselves to any form but that of this doctrine, cast all our actions into this mould.

[2.] I will show the fruits of it. They are either internal, within the man, or essential to this work, or resulting from it by immediate consequence; such as an abhorrence from sin, and a promptitude and readiness to holy actions.

(1.) For the first, where the doctrine of the gospel is imprinted on our hearts, it is an awing principle which restraineth us from sin: Ps. 37:31, 'The law of God is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide;' he that knoweth and loveth what is commanded, knoweth and hateth what is forbidden; therefore his heart giveth back when anything contrary is offered to him: 1 John 3:9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; neither can he sin, because he is born of God.' Still something riseth up by way of dislike; he looketh upon sin not only as contrary to his duty, but his nature: Gen. 39:9, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' The heart as thus constituted is not easily brought to it. By this temptations are defeated, whether from Satan or our own hearts. From Satan: 1 John 2:14, 'I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.' Or from our own hearts: Ps. 119:11: 'Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.' Our hiding the word in our hearts is subordinate to God's

writing it in our hearts; we must use the means, the grace is from him.

(2.) A promptitude and readiness to holy actions; for all holy and heavenly actions are suited to them, and there is a cognation between the law within and the law without, so that they are carried after them with more love, delight, and pleasure: Ps. 40:8, 'Thy law is within my heart; I delight to do thy will, O God.' There is an inclination and propensity to do the will of God, and to please and serve him, which maketh our obedience more easy and even.

[3.] The benefits of being stamped and moulded into the form of this doctrine.

(1.) It is ready for our use; they have principles laid up to be laid out upon all occasions, either of trouble or temptation, or business, and affairs: Prov. 6:21, 22, 'Bind them continually upon thine heart, tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.' So that the christian is a bible to himself, as the heathens were said to be a law unto themselves; there was something urging them to duty, restraining them from sin.

(2.) It preventeth vain thoughts. What is the reason evil is so ready and present with us? Because our hearts are not stocked with the knowledge of heavenly truths. Vain thoughts cannot be prevented unless the word dwell richly in our hearts. If a man have many brass farthings, and but a few pieces of silver, he will more readily draw out farthings than pieces of silver. But a christian, when alone, and destitute of outward helps, Ps. 16:7, 'His reins instruct him in the night season,' when he hath no benefit of the Bible, or other literal instruction.

(3.) It furnisheth and supplieth our speech; for the tap runneth according to the liquor with which the vessel is filled. In prayer, the new nature beareth a great part, for its desires and inclinations

furnish us with requests, its annoyances and grievances with complaints, its solaces and satisfactions with thanksgivings; and where it is not obstructed, there cannot be that leanness and baseness of soul wherewith we are often surprised: Ps. 45:1, 'My heart is inditing a good matter; I will speak of the things that I have made touching the king; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.' As to ordinary converse: Mat. 12:35, 'A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.' When the spring is dried up, there can be no water in the stream.

(4.) It giveth us greater certainty of the religion we profess, when we feel the power of it in our hearts: 1 John 5:10, 'He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself;' he hath a sense of what he hath heard; he hath felt the power of the Spirit inclining him to God and heavenly things, and subduing his carnal affections; he hath tasted the sweetness of God's love in Christ, and you cannot persuade a man against his own sense; therefore, when men have tasted and tried, and found the admirable effects of the gospel upon their hearts, they will know that which bare speculation could never discover to them, in order to love, certainty, and close adherence; they find all made good and accomplished to them; they find the truth doth make them free, heal their souls, and sanctify their natures, appease their anguish, offer them help in temptations, relieve their distress, bind up their broken hearts, &c.

(5.) Then the truth hath a power upon us; when it is put into their mind and heart, they have, an inward engrafted principle: James 1:21, 'Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.' They find not only truth in the word, but life; and obey God, not only as bound to obey, but as inclined to obey; there needeth no great enforcing: 1 Thes. 4:9, 'Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another;' and Prov. 2:10, 'Wisdom entereth into thy heart;' it becometh another nature to us; if it enters upon the mind only, it begets but a lazy and faint inclination.

(6.) It begets a holy conversation; for those who have the word of God stamped upon their hearts and minds will show it in their actions. So it is said, 2 Cor. 3:3, 'Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.' Believers are Christ's epistle, by which he doth recommend himself and his doctrine to all men, when they see what excellent spirits his religion breedeth. So Phil. 2:15, 16, 'That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.'

2. I observe that the fruit of this imprinting of the doctrine of the gospel upon their hearts was obedience; for so saith the apostle, 'Ye have obeyed.' All that knowledge we have must still be directed to practice: Deut. 4:6, 'Keep therefore, and do them; for this is your wisdom and understanding;' otherwise we do little more than learn these truths by rote, or at best to fashion our notions of religion, that we may make them hang together.

[1.] We are bidden to inquire after the ways of God, not to satisfy curiosity, but to walk therein: Jer. 6:16, 'Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls; but they said, We will not walk therein.' Their disobedience was not so much against the knowledge of the truth, as against the practice thereof. Men are not against truth so much in their minds as in their hearts; they will not do what they know.

[2.] The comfort and sweetness is in keeping and obeying: Ps. 19:11, 'In keeping thy commandments there is great reward;' not only hereafter, but now. There is a sweetness in knowing; for all truth, especially heavenly truth, is an oblectation of the mind; but there is more in keeping and obeying, because practice and obedience giveth a more experimental knowledge of these things, as a taste is more than a sight, and by a serious obedience the taste of these blessed

truths is kept upon our hearts. It is but a flush of joy that is stirred up by contemplation; the durable solid joy is by practice and obedience. Besides that, God rewardeth acts of obedience more than acts of contemplation with comfort and peace; for contemplation is an imperfect operation of man, unless the effect succeedeth; yea, we are not capable to receive this comfort, for knowledge doth not prove the sincerity of our hearts so much as obedience; therefore it is practice that hath the blessing in the bosom of it.

[3.] Where men receive the doctrine of the gospel rather in the light than in the love of it, they do but increase their punishment: Luke 12:47, 'That servant that knew his master's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, he shall be beaten with many stripes.' All the privilege of their exact knowledge shall be but a hotter hell.

3. I observe that it is obedience from the heart; and so it must needs be, if we consider the contexture of the words, or the imprinting the doctrines of the gospel; it is first upon our hearts, and then upon our lives: Isa. 2:7, 'The people in whose heart is my law. So Deut. 6:6. These words that I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart; for by the love of it we are brought to the obedience of this holy law. So Prov. 4:4, 'Let thy heart retain my words;' Prov. 22:22, 'Lay up my words in thy heart;' there is the proper repository of the law of God; it cannot work any good effect upon us till we get it there; there is its proper seat, thence its influence. I shall urge but two arguments—

[1.] It is terminus actionum ad intra; it is the end of all those actions that come inward. The heart is that which God looks after: Prov. 23:26, 'My son, give me thy heart.' He commandeth the oar, but still his commands reach the heart. It is the heart wherein Christ dwelleth, Eph. 3:17; not in the ear, tongue, or brain; till he take possession of the heart all as is nothing. The bodies of believers are temples of the Holy Ghost, but still in relation to the heart or soul; nothing is prized by God but what cometh thence. Men care not for obsequious compliances without the heart: 2 Kings 10:15, 'Is thine

heart right as my heart is with thy heart?' Some content themselves with a bare profession of religion, or some superficial practices; but all is nothing to God. Though thou pray with the pharisee, pay thy vows with the harlot, Prov. 7 kiss Christ with Judas, offer sacrifice with Cain, fast with Jezebel, sell thine inheritance for a public good, as Ananias and Sapphira, yet all is nothing without the heart. Judas was a disciple, yet Satan entered into his heart, Luke 22:2. Ananias joined himself to the people of God, but 'Satan filled his heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost,' Acts 5:3. Simon Magus was baptized, but 'his heart was not right with God,' Acts 8:22. The great defect is in the heart.

[2.] It is fons actionum ad extra, the well-spring of all those actions which look outward; as Prov. 4:23, 'Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life;' Mat. 15:19, 'Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.' If the heart be kept pure and loyal to God, the life will not be so spotted and blemished; for *principiata respondent suis principiis*, the actions suit with the heart, and it is impossible for men so to disguise their conversation but that their principles and inclinations will appear; they may disguise it in a particular action, but not in their course and way; it will appear how their hearts are constituted by the tenor of their actions.

Thirdly, Here is thanks given to God for this change, χάρις Θεῷ.

1. Thanksgiving to God is a great and necessary duty, the very life and soul of our religion: 1 Thes. 5:18, 'In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you;' Heb. 13:15, 'By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. Our great business is to give thanks to God for Jesus Christ both in word and deed.

2. We are chiefly to give thanks for spiritual mercies. They much excel those which are temporal and transitory; therefore if there be a

just esteem of the mercies we pray God for, we will bless God for them: Eph. 1:3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' Temporal favours we all understand, but a renewed heart is most taken up with spiritual blessings. Ephraim said, Hosea 12:8, Blessed be God, 'I am become rich;' but it is better to say. Blessed be God, I was once a servant of sin, but now I have obeyed God from my heart.

[1.] These are discriminating mercies, and come from God's special love: Eccles. 9:1–3, 'No man knows either love or hatred by all that is before them. All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good, and to the clean, and to the unclean,' &c.; and Ps. 17:14, 'From men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure; Ps. 119:132, 'Look upon me, and be merciful to me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name;' and Ps. 106:4, 'Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people, O visit me with thy salvation.'

[2.] These concern the better part: 2 Cor. 4:16, 'Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day;' the other concern the outward man: Ps. 17:14, 'Whose portion is in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure; they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance unto their babes.'

[3.] These are purchased at a dear rate: Eph. 1:3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' Others run in the channel of common providence.

[4.] These have a nearer connection with heaven: 2 Cor. 3:18, 'We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of our God.'

[5.] These incline and fit the heart for praise and thankfulness to God: Eph. 1:12, 'That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.'

[6.] These are never given in anger, as outward mercies may be: Jer. 17:14, 'They that depart from me shall be written in the earth.'

[7.] These render us acceptable to God: Ps. 11:7, 'The righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright;' 1 Peter 3:4, 'The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.'

[8.] We need acknowledge these, that God may have the sole glory of them. There are certain opinions which rob God of his glory, as that of the Stoics, *quod vivamus*, &c.—that prosperity is to be asked of God, but prudence belongeth to ourselves. Thus men are taught to usurp the glory of God. This opinion is sacrilegious, as if we should praise God for our felicities, and not for those things that belong to our duty and obedience. The other opinion is among christians, that teach you that Peter is no more beholden to God than Judas for his differencing grace; but, 1 Cor. 4:7, 'Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou hast not received? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou didst not receive it?' Mat. 11:25, 26, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that 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.'

3. Among all spiritual mercies, we are to give thanks to God for our conversion. It is the fruit of election: Jer. 31:3, 'The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.' It is not from our merit, but wholly ascribed to God's mercy: 2 Tim. 1:9, 'Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began.' It cometh not from

any power in us, or ability in ourselves, but is the mere effect of his grace. We cannot break off the yoke of sin: Rom. 8:2, 'The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death;' nor can we fit ourselves for future obedience: Eph. 2:10, 'We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.' Therefore ascribe all to the proper author.

4. We must bless God not only for our own conversion, but the conversion of others. The body of Christ is the more completed: 1 Cor. 12:14, 'The body is not one member, but many.' The glory of God is concerned in it: Rom. 1:8, 'First I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world;' Gal. 1:23, 24, 'They had heard only that he which persecuted us in time past now preached the faith that once he destroyed, and they glorified God in me.' They are monsters of men that repine at the riches of grace poured down on men by their own or others' ministry, as if they could not endure any should be godly and serious: Acts 11:23, 'Barnabas, when he came and had seen the grace of God, was glad.'

Use. Is there a change?

1. Be in a capacity to bless God for spiritual blessings. Should a leper give thanks for perfect health? a mad man that he is wiser than his neighbour? or a man ready to die thank God for his recovery? a slave of sin for his liberty by Christ? This is to mock God. He may thank God for redemption, for the new covenant, for the offers and invitations of grace, for means and time to repent; but for the great change, and for an actual interest in Christ, we can never thank him till first it be wrought in us and given to us.

2. Live in admiration and acknowledgment of grace. Let this endear God to your hearts: Eph. 1:6, 'To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved;' and ver. 12, 'That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.'

3. Make your qualification more explicit, by being printed and marked with your religion in heart: 2 Cor. 3:18, 'You are changed into the same image from glory to glory;' in life, Phil. 1:27, 'Only let your conversation be as becomes the gospel.'

4. Never return unto your old bondage. The time of slavery is past: 2 Peter 2:20, 'If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.' They that revert to their old bondage have no due sense of the mercy of their deliverance out of it.

SERMON XIX

Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. Romans 6:18, 19.

These words are an inference and conclusion from the foregoing discourse, showing, that, as they had changed masters, they should change their course of life. In them observe two things --

First, The state of the believing Romans both past and present.

Past; that is implied; they were once under the bondage and slavery of sin.

Present; they were freed from that bondage, and become the servants of righteousness; where observe two things --

[1.] The freedom from their former servitude, ἐλευθερωθέντες. This word is used of them that are emancipated, or brought out of bondage into liberty. Sin was a cruel and hard master.

2. Their entrance into a new estate of obedience, in the word ἐδουλώθητε, 'ye became the servants,' or subjected yourselves; you have given up yourselves to a more ingenious service.

Secondly, The exhortation hence deduced. Where observe two things -- (1.) The preface to sweeten it; (2.) The matter of it.

1. The preface to sweeten it, 'I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh.' Some think the apostle excuseth the earthly similitude, whereby he had represented these matters, as if he were forced to use these notions of master and servants because of the weakness of their understandings, which could not brook a more sublime and spiritual way of discoursing. Rather I think it is meant of the equity of the proposal, which is set forth by two expressions --

[1.] The humanity of it.

[2.] The due consideration taken of the weakness of their flesh, 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak,' Matthew 26:41; that is, your will indeed is good, but you must remember it may be hindered by your natural frailty. So here, the weakness of the flesh is mentioned to intimate their disability wholly and fully to do the will of God, that is, allow for infirmities; and ἀνθρώπινον λέγω, I speak moderately, humanly, and by way of condescension; I propound that which is common, and judged reasonable among men; that is said to be common to men, that doth not exceed the strength of men. {Page 328} 1 Corinthians 10:13, 'There hath no temptation taken you but such as is ἀνθρώπινος, human, or common to men;' 2 Samuel 7:14, 'I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men;' that is, not in rigour, but with a gentle and fatherly hand.

2. The matter is delivered by comparison of what is now due with what was formerly done by them when they were under the slavery of sin.

[1.] What they had done; they 'Yielded their members to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity.' Mark here, two sins are mentioned, uncleanness and iniquity. By uncleanness some understand carnal sins; by iniquity, spiritual wickedness. Others by uncleanness understand those sins whereby the pleasure of the carnal inclination is gratified; by iniquity the violence of the passions. But the words are taken in a larger sense; all sin is uncleanness, as defiling the soul; all sin is iniquity, as disagreeing with the equity of God's law. But divers words are heaped up to show -- (1.) That they stuck at no sin; and whereas it is said, they 'Yielded up themselves to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity,' it teacheth us, that seldom doth sin stand alone; one doth as it were impel and bind us to another, venture a little and you have a tie upon you to go further. (2.) That they rested not in the inward consent or lust, but added iniquity unto iniquity, that is, from the habitual inclination they proceeded to actual sin.

[2.] What they should now do; they should 'yield up their members servants to righteousness unto holiness;' that is, employ their time and strength to serve and please God, and continually to grow in grace.

Doct. Those that are recovered from sin to God should show the reality of their change by being as earnest in holiness as before they were in sinning.

In all reason this may be required of you, and less we cannot require. Let me so open the point that you may take along with you the sense of the words of the text.

That there is a great change wrought in all them that are brought home to God is evident by the whole scripture, which sets them forth

as those that have been 'Called out of darkness into light,' 1 Peter 2:9; 'Who have passed from death to life,' John 3:24; 'Translated from the power of Satan into the kingdom of Christ,' Colossians 1:13; and many other such expressions. And therefore every one that would judge of his own estate must look after this change of state, and wherein he differeth from- himself unconverted, when unconverted, not only from others, but from himself, when and how the case is altered with him, since he was acquainted with God in Christ.

The difference between the two estates is chiefly seen in the change of masters, or the dominating principle in the soul; what governeth the man? for that determines our estate. There are some who are under the reign of sin, even 'Those who are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,' Romans 2:9. But there are others who are under the empire and sovereignty of grace, who are fitted and framed for what is right, good, and holy, and hate the contrary: Ephesians 4:24, 'And that ye put on the new man, {Page 329} which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.' The constitution of their souls is for holiness and against sin. Therefore we must see what governeth us.

The two masters are sin and righteousness: as Ephesians 4:18, 'Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.' Righteousness is the opposite master to sin; before sin was their master, now righteousness governs them. He doth not say, Being now made free from sin, ye became the servants of God, but servants of righteousness. All will pretend they are servants of God; but if you be so, you will be servants of righteousness, that is, do those things which right and reason calleth for at your hands. Therefore, if you be servants of God, you will not neglect his precepts. What do you for him?

The difference between the two services is very great: the service of sin is a captivity and bondage, but the service of righteousness is true liberty, In the general they agree that both are service; committing sin or living in sin is a servitude: John 8:34, 'Whosoever committeth

sin is the servant of sin;' and living to righteousness is a service also, not a slavery, but a voluntary service, as we oblige ourselves to God to live righteously ever after the time we enter into his peace and obedience. Therefore both are expressed in the text by terms that imply serving. Our emancipation from sin implieth a slavery before, and our giving up ourselves to God an obedience for the time to come; therefore we are said to be servants of righteousness; it is service in regard of the strictness of the bond, but liberty in regard of the sweetness of the work; it is service, because we live according to the will of another; but it is liberty, because of our inclination and delight to do it. In short, though we are said to be the servants to righteousness, yet there is no work more pleasant, more honourable, more profitable.

[1.] More pleasant, because it implieth a rectitude and harmony in the soul of man; it is a feast to the mind to do those things that are good and holy. The heathens saw it, τὰ δέοντα πράττειν, &c. It breeds serenity. Surely much of the happiness of a man is to enjoy himself, which a wicked man cannot do whilst his soul is in a mutiny, and his heart disalloweth himself in the things which he doth love and practise, and his convictions check his affections and inclinations: 'The fruit of righteousness is peace,' Isaiah 32:17; 'And all the paths of wisdom are pleasantness,' Proverbs 3:17. In the body the vigorous motion of the spirits breedeth cheerfulness, and health ariseth when all the humours of the body keep their due temperament and proportion. In the world, when all things keep their place, and the confederacies of nature are not disturbed, the seasons go on comfortably. In a kingdom, *pax est tranquillitas ordinis* -- when all persons keep their rank and place, there is peace. So when all things are rightly governed and ordered in the soul.

[2.] No work more honourable: Proverbs 12:26, 'The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.' Many think it to be a low-spirited thing to be godly, and, on the contrary, imagine it a sort of excellency to be free from the restraints of religion, and to live a life of pomp and ease, without any care of the world to come. The sensual world

esteemeth little of a good man; but alas! that carnal {Page 330} life, which maketh show of ease, delight, honour, and riches, is nothing to the life of grace; for if God be excellent, they are excellent; they are 'made partakers of his nature,' 2 Peter 1:4; admitted into the communion of his life, which all others are deprived of, Ephesians 4:18; when others live as beasts, they live as God; when others live as beasts, their life is employed about the noblest objects and ends, and is assisted by the immediate influence of God's own Spirit. Therefore, if honour be derived from the true fountain of honour, those who are most God-like are the most noble and excellent.

[3.] No work is more profitable; for it giveth us the favour and fellowship of God for the present, and makes way for an everlasting fruition of him in glory.

(1.) The favour and fellowship of God for the present. What an unprofitable drudgery is the life of an unsanctified worldling, in comparison of the work of a holy man, who lives in communion with God, and attendance upon God, and hath access to him when he pleaseth, with assurance of welcome and audience! He hath a surer interest in God than the greatest favourite in the love of princes. God never faileth him: Psalm 118:8, 9, 'It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man: it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.' A poor Christian, that liveth in obscurity in the world, is never upbraided with the frequency of his suits, never denied audience, never hath cause to doubt of success. The princes of the earth have uncertain minds, love to-day, hate to-morrow, as in the instance of Hainan; their being is uncertain: Psalm 146:4, 'His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day all his thoughts perish;' 1 Kings 1:21, 'Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders.' Therefore attendance upon God is surely a noble work, to be made courtiers and family servants of the infinite sovereign; their hearts are employed in loving him, tongues in praising him, lives in serving him, and are constantly

maintaining converse with him through the Spirit; surely these have the most profitable service creatures can be employed in.

(2.) The everlasting fruition of God in glory hereafter: Psalm 17:15, 'I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness;' 1 John 3:2, 'Now we are the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but this we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' Then we shall be admitted into his immediate presence, to see his face, and shall be changed into, and satisfied with his likeness: we shall then live with God for ever, and be in a larger capacity to know God, and love him; and then our work shall be our reward, we shall be everlastingly loving and praising of God. Well, then, though we are not altogether at liberty when freed from sin, but enter into another service, yet this service is no bondage, but a blessedness, and a beginning of our eternal happiness, and therefore to be preferred before liberty itself.

No man can be a servant of righteousness but he that is first by the goodness and mercy of God freed from the power and slavery of sin; for the apostle saith, 'Being made free from sin, ye became the {Page 331} servants of righteousness.' There is an order in our deliverance, and one part conduceth to another; for righteousness and the conscience of our duty can have no hold on us till the power of our lusts be broken. As soon as we are freed from the slavery of sin, we are in part righteous; but when we are freed from the being of sin, we are altogether holy and righteous; but where sin reigneth, there is an obstruction of the life of grace; there the creature is valued above God, earth before heaven, the body before the soul; neither faith, love, nor hope can produce any thorough work in our souls Not faith: John 5:44, 'How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only. Nor love: 1 John 2:15, 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Nor hope, 2 Corinthians 4:18, 'While we look not at the things that are seen, that are but temporal, but at the things that are not seen,

that are eternal.' The person that hath not his heart and hopes in heaven, and looketh not at that as his only happiness, and doth not make it the business of his life to attain it, but setteth his heart more upon the things of this life, is certainly unconverted: 1 Corinthians 15:19, 'If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.' This should be regarded by us, that we may look more after this, whether we have escaped the bondage of corruption, and that we do not return to bondage again, but that we maintain our liberty: Galatians 5:1, 'Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage.'

6. He that is a servant of righteousness shows it by doing as much for righteousness as formerly he did for sin. This is the end of the apostle's reasoning with them in this place; therefore I shall a little insist upon it.

[1.] That in reason and strict justice more might be required of us; for the reasons moving us to good are more than the reasons moving us to evil, if we consider either master, work, or wages.

(1.) The master; shall we not do as much for God as we did for Satan? Whose are you? Christians, from whom did you receive your beings? and from whom do you expect your happiness? From God or the devil? Whom will you call father or master? Pretences will do nothing in the case; it will be tried by your work: 'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do,' John 8:34; 'He that committeth sin is of the devil,' 1 John 3:8. God be merciful to us I we have done too much of the devil's work already, it is time to give over; the business is for the future; whose work do you mean to do, and how will you do it, haltingly, superficially, perfunctorily, or in the greatest earnest?

(2.) The work; sin is a de-ordination, a prostituting of the noble faculties of our souls to our base lusts and vain pleasures: Titus 3:3, 'Serving divers lusts and pleasures;' whereas by holiness we obey the

rational appetite, the will guided by the highest reason, which is the law and will of God: 1 Peter 4:2, 'That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.' The business is, whether for the future we will be beasts or men, and employ our remaining time in the service of the flesh, or in {Page 332} obedience to the will of God; whether the beast should ride the man, or reason and conscience be put in dominion again over sense and appetite?

(3.) The wages. Surely reason will teach you that there should be greater care to secure your life and salvation than to ruin and damn yourselves. Now you went on earnestly in a way of sin, as if you could not soon enough or sure enough be damned: the sure 'wages of sin is eternal death,' Romans 3:23, determined by the righteous appointment of God's law; and though through the patience of God it be not presently executed, yet conscience showeth the justness of it, and the word showeth you how sin hath made it your due; and therefore, should you not do as much for salvation as you have done in order to damnation, especially when your eyes are opened, and you begin to have eternal blessedness in view and pursuit? Well, then, reason will inform you that you should do more for God, and more for heaven, and more for holiness than ever you did for sin; so that it is an equitable proposal, or the rule of our duty expressed after a modest manner, there is less than in strict reason may be required of you. Men are weak, and cannot bear too much severity. What shall we say then? Do as much for righteousness as you did for sin.

[2.] That in exact proportion even this equitable rule will not always hold good. Why? Because in corrupt nature our principles were entire, but in our renewed estate they are mixed: Galatians 5:17, 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit;' there is a counterpoise to the life of grace, therefore our evil works were merely evil, but the good we do is not merely good. Our Lord telleth us that 'the children of this world' (and such we were all by nature) 'are wiser εἰς τὴν γενεὰν ἐαυτῶν, in their generation, than the children of light,' Luke 16:8. We have the advantage of the world in matter of motive and reason;

but they have the advantage of us in matter of principle. Grace is a powerful thing, but it is like a keen sword in the hands of a child. The opposition of the flesh causeth weakness. Our motives are more noble, but their principles are more entire.

[3.] Though the exact proportion will not strictly hold, yet there is enough to distinguish the servants of righteousness from those that are not made free from sin; as --

(1.) The main bent of the heart and life is for righteousness, and not for sin. Where the main bent of the heart and life is still for the flesh and the world, they are far from grace; for there the flesh and the world, and by them Satan, is superior still, the influence of corruption is more seen in-their lives and actions than the influence of grace; but he whose main bent both of heart and life is for God, he now serveth God as before he served sin; and therefore, 'being made free from sin, is become the servant of righteousness.'

(2.) Because there is some proportion and resemblance between his activity in the new and spiritual life, and the former activity in a way of sin. To clear this -- (1.) I will show wherein the resemblance holdeth good; (2.) The reasons why it must be so. First, The resemblance holds good in these things -- 1. We may take notice of a care and solicitude to do evil: Romans 13:14, μή ποιεῖσθε πρόνοιαν, 'Make no provision for the flesh;' they are provident in sin, studied to please their lusts. Surely such a {Page 333} like care should we have of sanctity, 'Providing things honest,' Romans 12:17; 'Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear,' 1 Peter 1:17. When men are solicitous that the new nature be not annoyed, as they were formerly that the carnal nature might be gratified, it is a sign that serious godliness possesseth their hearts. Now men were careful heretofore that their lusts might want no satisfaction, and shall they not be careful that the course of their obedience shall be carried on without interruption?

Industry and diligence is notable in the servants of sin. We read of some that 'do evil with both hands earnestly,' Micah 7:3. There is an eager disposition in many to sin. Wicked men take a great deal of pains to go to hell; we all served sin with all our might and strength. Now, should there not be such an unwearied diligence in holiness? Romans 12:11, 'Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' As industrious as you were in obeying your base lusts and vile affections, so industrious should you be in obeying the precepts of Christ. Our vigour is turned into another channel. See Paul's instance, Acts 26:11, 'I punished them oft in every synagoge, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities;' compared with 2 Corinthians 5:13, 'For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, Or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.'

With a like promptness and readiness of mind. There need no great deal ado to draw men to evil, as a stone runneth down hill of its own accord, because of its natural tendency thereto, and the smallest temptations seem to have an irresistible force in them: Proverbs 7:21, 'With the flattery of her lips she forced him.' Now after grace received we should be as ready to obey the motions of the Spirit. There is no greater evidence of the new nature than that our obedience becometh more easy and even. There needeth not much ado to persuade the new creature to such things as belong unto and suit with the new nature: 1 Thessalonians 4:9, 'For as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write to you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.' Inclination preventeth persuasion. Others with much ado are brought to a sense of their duty, and after all they put off God with a little compulsory service, which they have no mind unto, and had rather forbear than do it.

Resolution and self-denial. How firm are men to a purpose of sinning, and go on still, though it cost them dear, much expense of time, waste their estate, bring a blot on their name, yea, many a wound in their consciences, and 'flesh and blood is consumed,' Proverbs 5:11. Oh! that we could thus deny ourselves for Christ!

Every lesser hindrance is pleaded by way of hesitancy and bar to our duty; a little inconvenience in the service of God seemeth irksome and grievous to us; those that do not take notice of the inconveniences of sin, but will easily take notice of the troubles of afflicted godliness: 'What iniquity have you found in me?' Jeremiah 2:5. Alas! that we cannot more deny ourselves for God, who gave us all that we have, and can give us greater things than ever we lost for him.

They stopped at no sin: 'Ye yielded your members to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity.' From habitual sin they proceeded to actual, from one kind to another, rested not in the lust or purpose, {Page 334} but were still accomplishing what their lusts craved at their hands. So will you count yourselves servants of righteousness, because you have some purpose to do good, or have some wishes to be better, though they never come into act and effect? Alas! a Christian is to be determined not by knowing or wishing and woulding, but by doing; 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me,' John 14:21: 'And whoso keepeth my words, in him verily is the love of God perfected,' 1 John 2:5. The carnal nature venteth itself not in lusts only, but practices; so doth the new nature; it is a habit and principle that influenceth your daily course of life. The same God that ruleth the heart doth also rule the life. The root is for the fruit, and the life within to enable us for action without; so we have the root and life of grace and holiness, that we may bring forth the fruit and do the works of grace and holiness. Therefore, whatever wishes and desires men have, if they live as they did before, neither God nor any wise man will judge that they are freed from sin and become the servants of righteousness.

6. The progress; they went forward from one sin to another, and never stopped. Now, as they heaped up sin upon sin, so should we add to grace grace: 2 Peter 1:5-7, 'Add to your faith, virtue; to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.' You should always

grow more pure and holy, and aim at a higher degree of sanctification, till all be perfected in heaven, 2 Corinthians 7:1, 'Perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' The more grace overcometh nature, the more comfortable every day will your lives be, and religion will grow a more easy and delightful thing to you. The complete subjection of our will to the will of God is the health, ease, and quietness of our wills; therefore study to be perfect.

Secondly, The reasons why it must be so.

From the love and goodness of God showed in our change, which should constrain us, and awaken in us principles of gratitude towards him, 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15, 'For the love of Christ constraineth us,' &c.; Luke 7:47, 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven her, for she loved much.' It is a trouble to them that God hath been so long detained out of his right, that the devil hath engrossed so much of their choicest time and best strength, and therefore now they would make some recompense: as travellers that set forth late, ride the faster. Especially doth this hold good of them that have been great sinners. It is possible that some have stuck at no villainy, but have engulfed themselves in all manner of dissoluteness. Oh! how zealous should they be for God for time to come, and bestir themselves that they may show forth the sacred influence of grace, as they have done the cursed rigour of nature I

By grace we have received a new principle and power. Now *principiata respondent suis principis* -- a new heart showeth itself by newness of life; therefore the power and effect of grace must as much discover itself as formerly we bewrayed the power of sin, otherwise why is this new principle planted in our hearts? It is dangerous to receive objective grace in vain, 2 Corinthians 6:1, 'We then, as workers together with him, beseech you that you receive not the grace of God in vain.'

{Page 335} We frustrate the method of God when we suffer the gospel to be cast away upon us; but to receive subjective grace in vain

is worse, as this is a closer application, as a power put into our hearts, and we make the choicest gifts of the Spirit idle and un-useful.

Use. Is to persuade us to make our new obedience more clear and explicit.

By manifesting the change, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.'

By our growth and increase: 1 Thessalonians 4:1, 'Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus Christ, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.'

By exceeding in a course of holiness, as ye did before in sin: 1 Corinthians 15:10, 'I laboured more abundantly than they all.'

Reasons --

It is not an indifferent thing whether ye be eminent in obedience, yea or no. God maketh a great matter of it, as appeareth by his strict injunctions: Psalm 119:4, 'Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently;' by his ample promises: Deuteronomy 11:26-29, 'Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day;' by his punishment of the disobedient: 2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9, 'To take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;; by the example of Christ: Hebrews 5:8, 9, 'Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.' You have gained a great point when you are persuaded of this.

That the government of God is not for the ruler's benefit, but the subject's welfare. It is as the physician's prescriptions, the pilot's steering to direct us to our happiness, the parent's education: Deuteronomy 5:29, 'Oh! that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with with them, and with their children for ever!'

That after grace received there is still the weakness of our flesh. The mind in part is blind and ignorant, in the corrupt will there is a back-bias, passions are turbulent, temptations of sense and appetite are incessant and powerful; therefore watchfulness and caution are not unnecessary; the heart is very treacherous.

The honour of grace is much concerned in our activity and zeal; for the new creature is formed for somewhat: Ephesians 2:10, 'We are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.'

SERMON XX

For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. - Romans 6:20

In this verse the apostle rendereth a reason why they should add to righteousness holiness, as they had before added iniquity unto iniquity; because righteousness had no whit of their service then, therefore sin should not have any jot of their service now they had devoted themselves to God, He layeth before them the wretchedness of their carnal estate in two notions --

First, They were slaves to sin.

Secondly, Strangers to righteousness. This latter he expresseth by this phrase, 'Free from righteousness.'

What it signifieth.

Why used here.

1. What it signifieth. A man may be said to be free from righteousness two ways --

[1.] Dejure; so no man is or can be free from righteousness; for every creature is under a law and an obligation of duty to God. Saul proclaimed that whosoever would encounter Goliath, his house should be free in Israel, 1 Samuel 15:25; meaning not a total exemption from obedience, but have certain regalities bestowed on his family. A subject, remaining a subject, cannot be altogether freed from duty to his prince. Now man, being God's creature, is also his subject; and therefore of right he neither is, nor can be, free from righteousness.

[2.] Defacto; they carried themselves as if they were free, never busied themselves with thoughts of God, nor regarded to walk holily before him.

2. Why it is put here. To show we must not divide our service, but abstain as strictly from sin as we did before from all good; you must serve righteousness as before you served sin. When you were under sin's yoke, righteousness had no power over you; and now you are under Christ's yoke, the power of sin must at least be considerably weakened.

Doct. Those who become servants of God should be as free from sin as before they were from righteousness.

I suppose that there is a liberty which is a perfection of human nature, and a liberty which is a defection from God. That liberty which is a perfection is to be willing and ready to perform our duty to God: Psalm cxix. 45, 'I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts.'

That liberty which is a defection or a revolt from God is properly licentiousness rather than liberty, and that is a desire to live as we list, to be free from the bonds of duty: Psalm 2:3, 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.'

They that most labour for this carnal liberty are the most wretched servants of sin, because they are overcome and led captive by it, and wholly give up themselves to obey sin. So 2 Peter 2:19, 'Whilst they promise themselves liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.' The flesh seeketh its peace and quietness, {Page 337} which it cannot enjoy but by giving itself over to its lusts, and so they are pleased with this servile condition, and remain in this bondage, though it be the worst of all.

3. That the servants of sin, or those who are under the yoke of sin, carry it as if they were free from righteousness, that is to say, either by way of neglect, or by way of resistance.

[1.] By way of neglect. They made no conscience, did not so much as think what was holy and pleasing to God, as some go on carelessly, not considering what they do, nor whereunto it will tend. These are said to despise their ways: Proverbs 19:16, 'He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul, but he that despiseth his ways shall die.' Some care not how they live, but are carried on by their own blind lusts. Righteousness, or a conscience of their duty, hath no power over them; they do not consider of their actions, much less take care to mend their course.

[2.] By way of opposition and resistance; for they are said to be free from righteousness that are opposite and averse from it; as 'the carnal mind is enmity to the law of God,' Romans 8:7. Some bewray an obstinate wilfulness, as others do a negligent carelessness; they beat down whatsoever standeth in the way of their sins; neither right, nor reason, nor shame, nor fear can restrain them; though a commandment standeth in their way, they break through. Nothing can stop the course of a sinner's violently pursuing his lusts; as

Balaam went madly on against all the rebukes of God, either in his conscience or external providence.

Though all the unregenerate are void of righteousness, yet they are not all alike sinful. There is a difference between unrenewed men; some are more, some less gross in the outbreking of their sin; some are more filthy, but 'all are gone out of the way; there is none that doeth good, no not one,' Psalm 14:3. They all agree in this, that none of them doth, or can do, anything at all commanded by God, as commanded, from righteous principles and for right ends. Some may be free from outward vice, as Paul was, 'touching the righteousness of the law blameless,' Philippians 3:6. Our Lord saith, Matthew 5:20, 'Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven;' though there is some external conformity to the law, outward austerity and strictness, yet no inward purity and holiness.

That where men are changed by grace, certain it is they must away with their former sinful life; partly because the gospel rule requireth it: Matthew 9:13, 'I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;' and repentance is a turning of the soul from sin to God. God may be reconciled to our persons, never to our sins. Partly because this is the end of that grace that hath wrought the change in us: Luke 1:74, 75, 'That we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives.' Partly because the nature of the thing showeth it. If there be any sound change, we have changed masters and work, way and end, business and hopes; and therefore our conversation will be quite otherwise than it was before, and the course of our endeavours will be turned into another {Page 338} channel: Ephesians 5:18, 'And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be ye filled with the Spirit.' We have other work to do, and other happiness to seek after: Philippians 3:19, 20, 'Who mind earthly things, but our conversation is in heaven.'

6. When men shake off the yoke of sin for righteousness, they should be as free from sin as formerly they were from righteousness. Now here I will show --

How far this should be.
Why this should be.

First, To state it, how far this can or should be? For the difficulty lieth here, how we can be as free from sin as formerly from righteousness, since after conversion there is a mixed principle in us. I answer -- This is to be considered two ways -- quoad conatum, et quoad eventum.

Quoad conatum, as to endeavour, which is to get rid of all sin. A sincere Christian doth so give up himself to a holy life, as to watch and pray and strive against all sin; this is his endeavour, and if it were possible, he would root out all; this is his aim, business, and constant care; but because he obtaineth not his end, he is troubled: Romans 7:24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' In the meantime he hath the settled bent of his will and conscience to satisfy him: Hebrews 13:18, 'Pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.' His soul is bent, and his endeavours are accordingly.

Quoad eventum. He is so far free from sin, as carrieth a good proportion with his freedom from righteousness in his carnal estate. His freedom from righteousness was consistent with urgings of conscience, which pleaded God's right with great earnestness. God doth not so far forsake mankind as to leave them without all convictions of their duty, or some inclinations to it, but it is weak and ineffectual. So now, his freedom from sin is not altogether to be free from the urgings of sin; for the carnal principle is still within him, and a warring working principle it is, and doth not lie idle in the soul. But as then men were free from righteousness by their carelessness of it, or averseness from it, so now they that have changed masters and estates are to be so far free from sin as not to sin wilfully, and by

way of opposition to grace any more, nor yet negligently and carelessly to go on with their former course; for if there be any known sin which they do not hate, but had rather keep than leave it, and do not pray and strive and watch against it, they are not sanctified. For the sanctified 'hate every false way,' Psalm 119:104; they pray against it, Psalm 119:133, 'Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me;' they watch and strive against it to some degree of prevalency: Psalm 18:23, 'I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from my iniquity.' They cannot bear with sin; they have a nature which beareth an enmity and repugnancy to it; as the carnal mind doth to the law of God, so doth this new nature to sin: 1 John 3:9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.'

Secondly, Why this should be so.

1. Let us consider the equity as to matter of right; it should be so.

{Page 339} The necessity as to matter of evidence; it must be so.
The conveniency as to matter of benefit.

1. The equity as to matter of right. All rules of equity will oblige you to this, whether you consider the master, the work, or the reward,

[1.] The master, if you consider how great and how good a master you now serve. If you consider him as great, you can never do too much for him; or as good, not so much as he deserveth of you.

(1.) As a great God he cannot be too much loved, nor obeyed too exactly, nor served too diligently; all is short of the greatness of his majesty. We have mean thoughts of his glorious excellency if we think that anything will serve the turn, or that such a God will be put off with anything; though we have formerly consumed our strength in the service of sin, yet a little slight obedience will be enough for God, we need not be so strict and exact; this is as bringing the sickly lamb instead of the male of the flock. And therefore God pleadeth his

majesty: Malachi 3:14, 'I am a great king, saith the Lord of hosts.' Therefore, if you have a greater master than you had before, you should do as much or more work than you did before: Colossians 1:10, 'That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing;' 1 Thessalonians 1:12, 'That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.'

(2.) As good; he hath deserved at our hands more than ever we can repay him. By experience we have felt the evil of sin, and why should we indulge it any longer? We have also 'tasted that the Lord is gracious,' 1 Peter 2:3. And why should we not prize and love him, and value his service? The Lord our God is the best master, and therefore we should serve him cheerfully. He is not true to God, and hath not a due sense of his mercy, that is indifferent and cold in his service. We are bound 'to serve God with gladness of heart for the abundance of all things,' Deuteronomy 28:47; that is, because of our obligations from common providence; but how should we serve him for his mercies in Christ, wherein he is infinitely good to us? Romans 12:1, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, that is your reasonable service;' 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15, 'For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.' There the obligation is much greater. Nature will teach us to love those that love us; and who loves us better than God, who hath provided pardon and life for us? Shall we go about his work with backwardness and weariness? You should serve him after another manner, with more zeal, diligence, and exactness.

[2.] The work, which on the one hand is sin, and on the other, righteousness. To be hot and earnest in sin, and cold and negligent in our duty, when God hath set thee in a better work, how can this be justified, not only before the bar of God, but of any sound reason? Surely the best work requireth the best strength. Now which is

better, to be rebelling against our creator, and violating the rectitude and harmony of our own nature, or to be serving our creator, and regulating {Page 340} our faculties in their due order and proportion to the great ends and uses for which we were made? There is a great deal of difference between the way we have left and the way we are put into by grace; the one is our distemper, the other is proper work for a man, that our endeavours should show how much we prefer the one before the other; for surely it is better for us to live as a man than to live as a beast: Psalm 119:140, 'Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it.'

[3.] The wages, which is eternal life. Now the question is, whether you will seek heaven as fervently and diligently as before you sought the world, and the fleshly pleasures thereof. Will you now be contented with a sluggish wish, and lazy, dull endeavours, whereas before you thought you could never do enough in the pursuit of your lusts? Will you not bid as much for a jewel as you would for a bead or a piece of glass? In all reason more. If you laid out your strength before for nought, for that which satisfieth not, will you now stand hucking when a blessed inheritance is offered to you? Who can excuse you from folly? We are bidden to seek after these things in the first place: Matthew 6:33, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness thereof;' 1 Corinthians 15:58, 'To abound in the work of the Lord;' Philippians 2:12, 'To work out our salvation with fear and trembling.' We are, on the other side, bidden 'to use the world as if we used it not,' 1 Corinthians 7:31. Now, then, what will you do?

The necessity in point of evidence; hereby we show that we have utterly shaken off the yoke of sin; otherwise it will remain as a nice debate whether your change be sincere or no. It is certain you did much for sin; conscience is sensible of that. The only sensible evidence of your change is when the vigour and fervency of your spirits is turned into another channel, and you are as earnest to please God as ever you were to serve your lusts; otherwise you never sensibly and plainly distinguish yourselves as renewed from

yourselves as carnal. There is no question then but that there is a thorough change wrought in you. Therefore, that your sincerity may not be a doubtful thing, and hard to interpret, you should be as free from sin as formerly from righteousness. When men are unlike themselves, there is no doubt: 1 Corinthians 6:11, 'Such were some of you; but you are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;' Philemon 11, 'Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me.' This is no small or obscure change, but such as may be felt of ourselves and discerned by others. Paul a persecutor and Paul a preacher showeth the same fervour, but his earnestness was employed about other matters, therefore plainly different from himself.

It is convenient it should be so, that we should do as much good, or far more good, than we have done hurt by our ill example; therefore the worse we were before our calling, the better we must be afterwards. This was that which made Paul go beyond the rest of the apostles in pains and zeal, because of the hurt he had done by the sins of his unregeneracy: 1 Corinthians 15:10, 'I laboured more abundantly than they all.' This made Mary Magdalene to exceed in love to Christ above others, because she had been so excessive before in the love of her unlawful pleasures: Luke 7:47, 'Her sins, which are {Page 341} many, are forgiven her, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.' Therefore it concerneth us to repair our errors, especially when they have been noxious to others, that by eminency of grace we may awaken those whom we have hardened by our sins, or joined with in their sinful courses. Dives would have his brethren and companions believe: surely this charity will possess the hearts of the converted.

Use 1. To press those that are, or would be, accounted renewed by grace, to free themselves from sin yet more and more. The chain is broken by grace, and you have had experience of both masters; now show it, that you do heartily forsake the one, and cleave to the other.

Be more tender and fearful to offend. As long as you make little reckoning of sin, you are in danger of committing it. It is said: Proverbs 13:13, 'Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed, but he that feareth a commandment shall be rewarded.' Those are the two opposite parties, those that despise and those that fear a commandment; there is not a worse or a better frame than the one or the other. They are properly free from righteousness that despise a commandment, and so in the high way to destruction. They say, Tush! it is folly to stand so scrupulously and nicely upon our duty. But on the other side they are free from sin that fear a commandment, that dare not venture, when God hath hedged up their way. The one are profane, they will speak and do as they list, say God what he will to the contrary; the other godly, and have a deep reverence of God, and so of his word upon their hearts: 'My heart standeth in awe of thy word,' saith David, Psalm 119:161. Many fear the punishment of man, or a judgment, when to visible appearance it is likely to tread upon the heels of sin; and some may fear a threatening; but a gracious heart feareth a commandment. If a commandment standeth in the way, it is reason enough to a gracious heart to forbear, more than if there were a lion in the way, or a band of armed enemies, or an angel with a drawn sword, such as stood in the way to stop Balaam. They have a deep reverence of God's authority, and it is no more than needeth; for this direction is given to us, 1 Peter 1:17, 'Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear,' to those that take themselves to be renewed ones.

Be more resolved against sin. We shake off the yoke by a solemn entering into covenant with God, wherein we renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, and heartily dedicate ourselves to live unto God; now the more resolved we are in either, the more sincere is our covenant. A wavering purpose maketh us neither wholly off from sin, nor wholly on upon God's service, but hangeth between both; the heart is not biassed and engaged, and so there is a considerable and notable inconsistency in the life: James 1:8, 'A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.' Therefore, till the purpose cometh to be full, we are not freed from the power of sin. Some kind of willingness

and unsound consent there is in the half converted; yet for want of this true resolution, 'their hearts are not right with God, neither are they steadfast in his covenant,' Psalm 78:37. It is long ere men will yield to live to God, and when they seem to yield, {Page 342} are long wavering ere they fully resolve. They see all is not well with them, and that they are not in a safe condition to appear before God in the judgment, and they have many persuadings of the Spirit of God, and their own consciences reasoning the case with them; and under these persuasions the mind is under some purpose to take a new course. But these purposes are either for the time to come; -- hereafter they will be more strict and holy, but still adjourn and put it off; -- or else they are but half purposes, that reach not to a full resolution; and therefore, if they make some kind of change, it is by halves; they are not free from sin, which often returneth, and recovereth its former power and reign in their hearts. But when men are resolved past all contradiction that this shall be their work and scope, to please God, then they do more fully yield themselves to the renewing Spirit, to be sanctified and prepared for God's use. The scales are cast; righteousness gets the power that sin had before; the man is new armed with a resolution to cease from sin, and to betake himself to a holy life, whatever it cost him: 1 Peter 4:1, 'Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.' He is resolved to deny the flesh, forsake the world, and 'to cast off the weight that hangeth on him, and the sin that doth so easily beset him, and to run with patience the race that is set before him,' Hebrews 12:1, 2. Good wishes and good purposes will not now serve the turn, but active and serious endeavours: the man hath another work to do, that he may actually forsake the sin which he hath renounced.

3. Do not make a light matter of sin, but hate and abhor it. The soul is never truly converted to God till holiness hath our delight and love, and sin our hatred and aversion. When it is hated it is mortified. While a man is a servant of sin, he loveth not God nor spiritual things, nor the holy ways of God; but rather there is an opposition to

them, and enmity against them in the heart: but when we become the servants of God, the object both of our love and hatred is changed; we love God, and his people, and his ways; but then they hate sin sincerely, even 'the garment spotted with the flesh,' Jude 13; the very evil actions they do themselves they hate: Romans 7:15, 'The evil which I hate, that do I.' Sin may break out sometimes, but it is contrary to their liking; but generally this hatred prevents sin, and is a very great help to the forsaking of it; they are so fallen out with sin that they keep it under: Psalm 97:10, 'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil' Their hearts are turned from it and against it. Whereas formerly they lived in fleshly pleasures, their delight is in pleasing God; the main bent of their heart and life is against sin, and their chief design and endeavour is to destroy it. Grace hath taught them that sin, Satan, and the flesh are their deadly enemies, that seek the damnation of their soul; and therefore they deal with them as enemies, and bid defiance to them. Alas! what ado have we with many to leave a base lust, because they never truly hated it. There is some dislike of their sins for a while; but when the fit is over, they relapse into them, because there is not an irreconcilable enmity and abhorrency: Isaiah 30:22, 'Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and {Page 343} the ornaments of thy molten images of gold; thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, 'Get thee hence;' Hosea 14:8, Ephraim shall say, 'What have I to do any more with idols?' Others stand dallying with sin, but cannot leave it.

If you would be free from sin, avoid the temptations that lead to it. If ravens or crows be driven away from the carrion, they love to abide within the scent. Those that will play about the cockatrice's hole will surely be bitten; therefore we ought to fly the occasions and appearances of evil: 1 Thessalonians 5:22, 'Abstain from all appearance of evil.' If men would not be drowned, what do they so near the water's side? nor wounded, why venture they among enemies? or meddle with the bait, if they would escape the hook? Therefore caution is your preservative.

If you would be free from sin, live unto God. For vivification doth promote mortification, and the sensual life is best cured by the soul's delight in God, and care to please him: Job 1:1, 'Job was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed evil.' True grace is an effectual principle, both to produce its own operations and to restrain sin: Proverbs 16:6, 'By mercy and truth iniquity is purged, and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.' Iniquity is purged in a way of sanctification.

SERMON XXI

What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. - Romans 6:21.

The apostle pursueth his argument, why they should be as free from sin as formerly they were from righteousness, by comparing the two services together, the service of sin and the service of righteousness. He speaketh in the next verse of the service of righteousness, in the text of the service of sin. As to the service of righteousness, it is matter of joy and pleasure while it is a-doing; of comfort and confidence in the remembrance of it; and for the future, life and eternal salvation. But, on the contrary, if we take a view of sin with respect to the three distinctions of time, past, present, and to come, we shall find it evil and very evil: 'What fruit had yon of those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.'

Sin may be considered three ways -- either as to the time of committing it, or the time of remembering it, or the time of God's rewarding and punishing of it; and you find in all so many arguments against it.

As to the time of committing it; so the apostle argueth ab inutili, 'There is no fruit;' then, when you lived a carnal life, what fruit had you?

As to the present remembrance, 'Ye are now ashamed.' Now, that is -
-

[1.1 Now, the commission is over. Or rather, [2.] Now, after your conversion to God. Grace breedeth shame in us because of foregoing sins; so that here the apostle argueth a turpi.

{Page 344} 3. As to future expectation, 'The end of those things is death;' there the argument is a damno, from the hurt and damage that cometh to us thereby. As to time past, sin is unprofitable; as to time present, shameful; as to time to come, pernicious and deadly. By all these considerations it may be made fearful to us.

First, The apostle's argument ab inutili is propounded by way of question, which is the strongest way either of affirmation or denial; for it is an appeal to conscience and experience. If the service of sin was at any time fruitful, it was, questionless, when it was a-doing, when you were servants of sin, and had nothing to check and allay it, but were altogether blinded by your lusts, feeding the oblectation and pleasure of your fleshly minds with the vanities of the world. 'What fruit had you then?.' that is, you had none at all.

Doct. There is no solid benefit or profit to be gotten by sin.

The scripture representeth it as unfruitful and deceitful.

As unfruitful: Ephesians 4:11, 'Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.' A state of sin maketh us unfruitful to God. We cannot gather grapes off thorns and figs off thistles; so it is unfruitful to the sinner himself, who loseth his time and strength, for that which will only occasion shame and trouble, and hereafter eternal death.

As deceitful: Ephesians 4:22, 'That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts;' Hebrews 3:13, 'Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.' It is so called because it promiseth much, and performeth but little.

[1.] It promiseth much. Sin smileth on the soul with enticing blandishments. Satan told our first parents, 'Ye shall be as gods,' Genesis 3:5; and still we promise ourselves something from sin, some contentment, some profit; for no man would be wicked gratis, merely for his mind's sake, or without an aim at some further end. Mere evil, as evil, cannot be the object of choice; there is some fruit or benefit expected in all that we do.

[2.] It doth not make good its word to us.

(1.) It doth not answer expectation; the sinner looketh for more contentment and satisfaction than ever he doth enjoy: Ecclesiastes 5:16, 'What profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?' It is fruitless enterprise; it may be there is a wind, a short-lived transitory-delight, but it is gone as soon as it cometh; nothing cometh of it that may be called fruit, nothing that may be solid satisfaction to a man that hath a conscience, and is capable' of an immortal estate, and hath a maker or a judge to whom he must give an account how he hath spent his time and strength, and what hath been the business of his life in the world. Alas! the fruit of sin dieth with the very act, and when the lust is satisfied, it beginneth to be contemned; as Amnon hated Tamar more than ever he loved her, 2 Samuel 13:15. So short are all unlawful pleasures, enduring no longer than the sinful act; for which, like fools, men hazard and lose pleasures for evermore. Reason taketh the throne when appetite is satisfied, and scourgeth the soul with bitter remorse, because appetite hath been obeyed before it. Sin after the committing appeareth worse than before; when it is too {Page 345} late, the sinner crieth out, What have I done? Esau, when he had sold the birthright, sought it afterwards with tears, Hebrews 12:16, 17. Judas,

when the treason was over, he saw the worthlessness of the price for which he sold his master: Matthew 27:4, 'I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood.' When once conscience is touched and awakened, guilt flasheth in the sinner's face, then the bitter effects of sin are felt by experience.

(2.) It is not valuable; the profit will not countervail-the loss, nor the pleasure the pain.

(1st.) The profit will not countervail the loss. Men hazard their souls, and then gain a little wealth, and that is the worst bargain men can make: Matthew 16:26, 'What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? 'Besides that, the wealth gotten by sin cometh with a curse, that within a while consumeth it: Proverbs 10:2, 'The treasures of wickedness profit nothing;' so that to seek to grow rich by sin is, in the eye of faith at least, a fruitless enterprise.

(2d.) Nor the pleasure the pain; it is delightful to the sensual part, but at the end it biteth like a serpent: Hebrews 11:26, 'All the pleasures of sin are but for a season.' Sometimes they leave us in the midst, always in the end of our days, and then the horror and anguish beginneth. But to speak nothing of what is eternal, but of that which is of present feeling, sin raiseth a tempest and storm in the conscience, which is not easily allayed: Hosea 8:7, 'They have sown the wind, they shall reap the whirlwind.' The pleasure we fancy in sin is lost as soon as enjoyed, but the sting is not so soon gone; the crop doth answer the seed, and usually with increase. They that sow the wind can expect to reap nothing but the wind; but they reap the whirlwind. A man that feeleth the gripes of a surfeit buyeth the pleasant meat at a dear rate; and what a sorry purchase doth he make that is at so much cost and expense of time to please the flesh, and getteth nothing but trouble of mind and horrors of conscience for his recompense!

(3d.) If there be any fruit of sin singly, yet comparatively it is as none; that is, if compared with what we might get by God's service. The carnal world lives by sense, as God's children do by faith. Now they that judge of their happiness by their senses, expect and promise themselves more good by the pleasures, honours, and profits of the world than all God's promises; but a little experience confuteth them. On the other side, they that measure their happiness by the rule of faith, God's promises are heritage enough to them: Psalm cxix. Ill, 'Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage for ever, they are the rejoicing of my heart.' God promises things truly good to them out of love: Psalm 84:11, 'He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.' They are all Yea and Amen, of unvariable truth, and of certain accomplishment. Therefore happy are they that trust in him, when others go a-whoring from him, Ph. Ixxiii. 28. Now, though by sin men should get increase of riches, enjoy variety of pleasures, endear themselves to the favour of great men, yet is this fruit to be compared to that we may have by serving and trusting in God? Alas! the nature of {Page 346} these things is such, that they cannot make us good, much less happy, and their value is much lessened when we cannot have them without so spiteful a condition as sin, without committing or doing something against conscience, or omitting what God requireth of us. Well, then, if it seem fruit singly and apart, yet it is none comparatively in respect of what we might have by pleasing God.

Use 1. To rouse us out of a state of sin. Men would not lie so long in it if they would recollect themselves, and consider, What have I gotten since I was the devil's bond-slave, but a blind mind, a troubled conscience, and a hard heart, and it may be shame and disgrace in the world? Now what a folly is it for any one to pursue that which will bring him no fruit. One beginneth to be awakened when he beginneth to say, Job 33:27, 'I have sinned, and perverted that which is right, and it profited me not.' Whatsoever sin promiseth, or sinners fancy, it will be found at last an unprofitable course. What do men get by drinking, gaming, chambering, and wantonness, what by all

the lusts of youth, and the bold attempts of riper years, but an ill name and a worse conscience, a diseased body, and many times an encumbered estate? They turn their back upon God to their great disadvantage. God is willing to stand to this trial, that his service doth us no hurt: Jeremiah 2:5, 'What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain? 'Yea, that it will do us much good: Micah 2:7, 'Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?' But sin cannot stand the trial; it doth us much hurt now, and will do us more hereafter: Proverbs 5:11, 12, 'And thou mourn at last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart hath despised reproof? '

Use 2. To prevent acts of sin for the time to come. It is good often to put this question, *Qui bono?* 'What doth it?' Ecclesiastes 2:2. What shall I gain by those vain delights and sinful practices? To take pains to no purpose is folly, to an ill purpose is unnatural and self-destruction. Ask what doth it? To my body? A modest temperance will keep it in better plight, and freer from diseases than a gluttonous pampering of it. To my estate? A little with the fear of God is better than great revenues with sin. To my soul? Shall I be more cheerful to serve God, or my mind in a better posture for the high uses of religion? To my eternal estate? Am I in the way to hell, or to heaven? If men would but commune with themselves oftener, What am I now a-doing? what will come of it? It may be I shall get a little worldly pelf, but what is this to the loss of God's favour, or to the loss of my soul? We are often quarrelling with God: What profit is it that I serve the Almighty, and pray unto him? Malachi 3:14, 'Ye have said, It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?' So Job 21:15, 'What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him? 'Surely we should do as much on the other side. What will sin come to? What profit by this sensual careless life, this hunting after the world, and neglecting God and my precious immortal soul?

{Page 347} Secondly, The second dissuasion or argument which the apostle useth is a turpi; it is a base thing, implied in that clause, 'Whereof ye are now ashamed.' You had no solid benefit then, and you cannot review your past sinful life without shame.

The words may be considered under a twofold reference --

As it is an act of repentance in the godly.

As it sets forth the evil and odiousness of sin.

First, As it is an act of repentance in the godly. After ye came to better knowledge, ye were ashamed of those things ye took pleasure in before, therefore now meddle no more with them.

Doct. That God's people are, and ought to be, ashamed of their past sins.

There are two things in sin -- (1.) The guilt of it; (2.) The folly and filthiness of it.

The guilt causeth fears and terrors with respect to the wrath of God which is to ensue; but the folly and filthiness of sin causeth shame. Man is a rational creature, and therefore is ashamed of what is foolish, and was at first made a holy creature, and to enjoy communion with a holy God, and therefore turpitude and filthiness is a cause of shame. Now it requireth a quick and more tender sense to be sensible of the folly and filthiness of sin, than to be sensible of the wrath due to sin; but all those who are brought home to God are sensible of both. A man covered with noisome boils and sores is not only affected with the pain, but abhorreth the sight and smell of them; but first he feeleth the pain. So the first work is terror; men are 'pricked at heart,' Acts 2:37, before they have a sight of their folly and filthiness. The soul beginneth to come on finely when it is brought to that, it is gracilis in re. To be sensible of this folly is the first degree of spiritual wisdom: 1 Corinthians 3:18, 'If any man among you seem to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise;' he cometh to himself again, and when sensible of his filthiness and

loathsomeness, it is a sign he hath some love and liking to the pure and holy ways of God. As there is more light and love infused into the heart, so do men more loathe themselves for their filthiness: Ezekiel 36:31, 'Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and abominations.' To be truly and really ashamed of sin is the effect of saving grace: Ezra 9:6, 'I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God.'

There are two sorts of shame: the shame of a guilty, stormy conscience, and the shame of a tender conscience; there is a confounding shame, and a penitential shame. The one breedeth trouble of spirit, and is the fruit of sin; the other a holy self-loathing, and is the fruit of grace; the first may be in carnal men, the other is only in God's children. The differences between these two sorts of shame may be these: --

(1.) The penitential shame continueth and increaseth under the greatest assurance of forgiveness, and dieth not when we think we are out of danger; the other is presently after the commission of sin, and while the guilt remaineth; as David grew shy of God, Psalm 32., after he got his discharge, and his sins were pardoned: Ezekiel 16:63, 'That {Page 348} thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.' There is a dislike of sin when they are upon the surest terms with God.

(2.) The first sort of shame considereth sin as it damneth or destroyed, not as it defileth; but the second, as it is an act of filthiness and folly; of folly, as David, Psalm 73:22, 'So foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee;' of filthiness, Ezra 9:6, 'O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities have increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up into the heavens.' They loathe sin as sin, because they love holiness as holiness: Psalm 119:140, 'Thy word is very pure, therefore

thy servant loveth it.' Conscience keepeth its own court, meddleth not but for moral evils, is ashamed not of calamities and infelicities, but crimes or sins, which are hateful to God, and therefore to the new creature; for it hateth and loveth on God's grounds and reasons.

(3.) The first sort of shame is accompanied with slavish fear, shunneth the presence of God, as Adam did, Genesis 3:10, 'I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself;' or David, Psalm 32:3, 4, 'When I kept silence, my bones waxed old,' &c. The other is accompanied with love, and causeth the godly to come into God's presence, but with self-loathing and reverence: Proverbs 30:2, 'Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man;' Luke 18:13, 'The publican standing afar off would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote on his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.' The one causeth us to hate God, the other to loathe ourselves for our unkindness to him, and unworthy dealing with him. The one is our torment, the other our cure.

(4.) The trouble and shame of hypocrites is because of the world; the shame of the godly is because of God. Saul was not ashamed of his sin, but ashamed that Samuel should reprove him before the people, 1 Samuel 15:30. So 'the thief is ashamed when he is found,' Jeremiah 2:26. But a child of God is ashamed before God, and of sins which the world cannot see: Psalm 59:5, 6, 'O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee. Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of Hosts, be ashamed for my sake; let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.' As if he had said, Sure I have just cause to be ashamed, &c.

(5.) The effect showeth a difference; the true shame quickeneth the soul to more resolution, vigilance, earnest striving against sin; so that our life, trade, and principal business in the world is to avoid it: Psalm 119:6, 'Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments;' but in the other it prevaieth no further than that they may avoid the present trouble, and get a little ease.

The reasons and causes of this shame: --

(1.) A new and heavenly light to see those things which others see not, and which themselves saw not before: Jeremiah 31:19, 'Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh, I was ashamed; yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth;' Romans 7:9, 'I was alive without the {Page 349} commandment once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.' They see more of sin, and more evil in sin than ever they saw before, as light discovers what lay hid before in the dark.

(2.) A lively sense and taste of God's mercy and goodness, of his forbearing mercy, that he did not strike as soon as the offence was committed: Romans 2:4, 'The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance;' redeeming mercy by Christ: 1 John 3:5, 'Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins;' covenanting mercy, or the offers of pardon and life in the new covenant: Acts 17:30, 'The time of this ignorance God winked at, but now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent;' his healing mercy: Titus 3:5, 'According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' To offend so good a God, or sin against the Lord of love and mercy, is a great crime.

(3.) The new nature, which is contrary to sin: Psalm 97:10, 'Ye that love the Lord hate evil;' There is odium offensiois, et odium inimicitim, a hatred of offence, and a hatred of enmity.

(4.) Their seriousness. Before the deluded soul is so taken up with fleshly pleasures, and deluding objects, that they had no time nor room to consider of their ways; what with business and sensual delights, and the crowd of worldly cares, and the noise of foolish sports and sensual passions, their hearts were diverted from observing things of the greatest and everlasting consequence, they did in effect forget they had souls to save or lose, or a God to serve, or a glory to look after: but now they remember, and loathe themselves.

Use 1. To show how much they differ from the people of God that wallow in all manner of filthiness, and know no shame. Impudency is a great note of obstinacy and impenitency: Zephaniah 3:5, 'The unjust knoweth no shame.' By long custom in sinning they lose the sense of the filthiness and odiousness of it, and so outgrow all feelings of conscience.

2. To stir up in the people of God this holy shame, by reason of sin past and present. It is a great help to the spiritual life, for when we make light of sin, we are in danger of being overcome by it. Therefore rouse up yourselves. Is the offending of the eternal God a slight thing? Surely God doth not make his laws for nought, nor doth he make such a stir by his word and providence against a tame and harmless thing, nor threaten men to hell for small indifferent matters; neither needed Christ to have died, and done all that he hath done to cure a small and little disease. More particularly,

[1.] Sin is the creature's rebellion and disobedience to the law of the absolutely universal sovereign: 1 John 3:4, 'Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.'

[2.] The deformity of the noblest creature upon earth: Romans 3:23, 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.'

[3.] A stain so deep that nothing could wash it away but the blood of Christ: Revelation 1:5, 6, 'To him that loved us, and washed our sins with his own blood,' &c.

[4.] It hath yielded a flood that drowned the world of sinners, yet it {Page 350} did not wash away their sins: 2 Peter 2:9, 'Bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.'

[5.] Hell itself can never do it, nor purge out the malignity of it, therefore it hath no end, Mark 9:44, 'Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'

[6.] God himself doth loathe the creature for sin, and nothing else but sin, Zechariah 11:8, 'Three shepherds also I cut off in one month, and my soul loathed them;' Deuteronomy 32:19, 'When the Lord saw it he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons and of his daughters;' Psalm 78:59, 'When God saw this he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel.'

Secondly, as it sets forth the evil and the odiousness of sin; shame dogs sin at the heels.

Doct. That sin is really the matter of shame.

1. It is so for the present, it will make you loathsome to yourselves, infamous to others, odious to God.

[1.] Loathsome to ourselves. Therefore a wicked man dareth not to converse with his own heart, but doth what he can to fly from himself, to divert his thoughts from the sight of his own soul, or the view of his own natural face in the glass of the word: John 3:20, 'Every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.' There is a secret bosom-witness which they fear: Job 27:6, 'My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go, my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.' There needeth a great deal of do to bring a man and his conscience together.

[2.] Infamous to others. He bringeth a blot upon himself: Proverbs 13:5, 'A righteous man hateth lying, but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.' They are a disgrace to the society in which they live: 2 Peter 2:13, 'Spots are they, and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast with you.' Those that love sin in themselves, hate it in another: Titus 3:3, 'We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.'

[3.] Odious to God: Psalm 14:2, 3, 'The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doth good, no not one;' and they are sensible of it, and therefore grow shy of God, 1 John 3:20, 21.

2. It will be much more so hereafter.

(1.) At the day of judgment. Shame is properly φόβος δικαίου λόγου, a fear of a just reproof, and that chiefly from one in authority, most of all from the judge of the world. This is principally intended, not shame of face before men, so much as shame of conscience, a loathness to come into God's presence: Genesis 3:10, 'I was afraid, or ashamed, because I was naked, and I hid myself.' There was verecundia before, an awful bashfulness, but not pudor, fear of reproof and blame; that entered with sin; much more when all things shall be opened and brought to light, as at the great day: 1 John 2:28, 'That we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.' Wicked persons that are void of righteousness, and all hypocrites that have been unfaithful and unthankful to him, will then be ashamed.

{Page 351} (2.) In hell. Shame in the damned is that troublous confounding sense of their lost estate, past folly, and evil choice, having now no hope of his grace: Daniel 12:2, 'Some shall arise to shame and everlasting contempt;' they shall be rejected by God as much as they now reject and disown him.

Use. Well, then, let us walk more cautiously, not return again to our wallowing in the mire, lest we provide matter of grief and shame to ourselves. It is a grace to be ashamed in a penitent manner; but it is a sin to provide matter of shame anew. The godly and wicked are both ashamed, the one to get sin pardoned, the other would have conscience deadened; the one to get sin mortified, the other only to have ease within themselves, though they wallow in sin, and be not

reconciled to God. God's children are more watchful for the time to come, but the other would only get rid of trouble. Now if we cannot hope to prevail with the one, we have great confidence the other will weigh his motive. Will you once more render yourselves odious to God, a burden to yourselves, and live contrary to him, whose favour is your life? You have more to do with him than with all the world, your happiness is to hold communion with him; will you, now you have eyes to see the odiousness of sin, break through all the restraints which light and love lay upon you?

Thirdly, The apostle's argument is a damno, it is harmful, the end of sin is death. The end may be taken for the scope, or for the effect; it is not scopus peccati, but finis peccati; this is the issue it cometh unto, we incur the penalty of eternal death. The sinner hopeth for a better issue, but the end of the work is death; it is finis operis, though not operantis.

Doct. If we continue in sin, we cannot expect other or better fruit and conclusion than eternal death.

Now we find the shame, hereafter death. All that I shall say now, shall be referred to these three heads: (1.) It is terrible; (2.) It is just; (3.) It is certain.

(1.) It is terrible, if we consider the loss -- a separation from the blessed presence of God; the disciples wept when Paul said, 'Ye shall see my face no more.' Oh! what will be our case and plight when God shall say, 'Depart, ye cursed, ye shall see my face no more!' Then for the pain, it is set forth by the worm and fire: Mark 9:48, 'Where the worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.' Alas! for momentary pleasures we run the hazard of eternal pains.

(2.) It is just. They sin against an infinite God, refuse eternal blessedness, have passed their trial, when they were upon their choice! If they had lived longer, they had continued in their

impenitency; now they are in their final estate, in termino, when no change of mind can be thought to proceed from grace.

(3.) It is certain, both by God's commination: Genesis 2:17, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death;' it is sin's wages: Romans 6:23, 'The wages of sin is death;' and conscience is in dread of it: Romans 1:32, 'Knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death.'

Use. Often think of the end. Men would be much more wise if they would more seriously think of the end of things. For the {Page 352} present, a sinner may bear it out confidently, and with some degree of pleasure; but what will the end be? That quite spoileth sin's market: Proverbs 1:17, 'In vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.' 'The silliest creature would not run into the destructive snare if he did see it. But we are guilty of two faults, either we believe it not, or we consider it not.

We believe it not. The apostle tells us, 'All men have not faith,' 2 Thessalonians 3:2; few have it, and the best have too little of it. Would they live such a careless life if they were persuaded that all would end in hell-torments? No, they would think they could not soon enough get out of the snare; they would 'flee from the wrath to come,' Matthew 3:7; they would 'fly for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them;' but alas! the other world seemeth little better than a fable to most men.

They consider it not: Proverbs 9:18, 'He knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell;' it is rendered as a reason why the fool counteth 'stolen waters sweet, and bread eaten in secret pleasant;' these carnal delights are taken by stealth, neither allowed by God nor approved by sound reason. How come men to be thus infatuated? They do not consider that these pleasures are salted with a curse, and that after all their free and licentious life, they shall be turned into hell.

To conclude the whole. Since there is no profit to be found in the ways of sin, and they will certainly bring shame and eternal destruction -- shame for the present, and confusion of face for evermore -- let all the people of God seriously think of these things: -

[1.] That they may be more thankful for their deliverance by Christ. Pliny tells us of a wood, though of an unpleasant smell, that recovers the pleasure of the senses again: so, that we may not be gospel-glutted, it is good to review the evil of the carnal estate, that we may the better give thanks for our recovery.

[2.] That we may walk more humbly and watchfully. You should be so far from running into your past sins, that you should never remember them without shame and self-loathing; and, considering the fruits of sin, we should meddle with this forbidden fruit no more.

SERMON XXII

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. -
Romans 6:22

The apostle having showed how miserable their estate past was, when they served sin, he showeth now the happiness of the opposite state, into which grace had translated them; 'But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.' In which words observe --

The change wrought in them.

The effect of it.

1. Their change of state, which is set forth --

{Page 353} [1.] Partly from the terms, from what to what they were turned -- from sin to God. Observe, he had called them before servants of righteousness, now servants of God. To serve God is heartily to obey his will, which is called the service of righteousness, because of the equity of his commands, and the strength of the obligation upon us; it is right and equal, it is a due debt. So that the service of God and of righteousness is all one.

[2.] The power by which it was accomplished, which is implied in the passive forms of speech, XXXX and XXXX. Before, it was XXXX and XXXX, Romans 6:20, 'When ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness;' now it is 'made servants,' and 'made free.' We are prone enough to sin of ourselves, and ready enough to that which is evil; but God, by his effectual working, made us to be that by grace which by nature we could never be; we were born servants of sin, but made servants of God by his Spirit.

2. The effect of this change, which is either holiness or happiness; the one in this life, the other in the next.

[1.] Holiness in this life; 'Ye have your fruit unto holiness.' The apostle's discourse leadeth him to speak of the fruit by holiness; but he saith, 'Ye have your fruit to holiness,' for he is comparing the service of God and the service of sin. Now, in the service of sin there is nothing to be had but shame and death; those were his arguments there, 'What fruit had you of those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.' Now he only saith, 'Ye have your fruit to holiness,' in opposition to shame, which was the consequent of sin; and in opposition to death he saith, 'And the end eternal life.' Why doth he thus speak? I answer, because,

(1.) Holiness is a reward to itself, it is its own fruit. If a man doth attain to purity of soul, it is enough; honour and joy doth accompany it, as shame doth sin.

(2.) It may be meant of holiness increased; for the more we serve God, the more holy shall we be: every good work increaseth our holiness, or our fitness and ability for obedience to God. So that, in effect, this is the argument: this good you reap by your subjection to God, that you are in this world sanctified, and fitted to walk in newness of life.

[2.] Happiness in the life to come, 'and the end everlasting life.' That is the final issue; for the holy life is a beginning and pledge of that life which is immortal and glorious.

Doct. That when all things are well considered, the only amiable life is that which is spent in God's service.

I word the doctrine thus -- (1.) Because the two lives are compared: the life spent in vanity and sin, and the life spent in holiness and righteousness; therefore I say, 'when all things are well considered.' (2.) Because those who are before called servants of righteousness, are now called servants of God; therefore I say, 'the life spent in the service of God.' (3.) I assert, this is the only amiable life, because the life spent in sin is full of shame and horror; of shame, because of the baseness and turpitude of that life, disagreeable to the reasonable nature; of horror, because of the dreadful issue -- 'The end of these things is death.' On the contrary, this life spent in the service of God is amiable, {Page 354} Because of the present fruit, sanctification or holiness, which daily increasing in them, breedeth comfort and confidence, and will never be matter of shame to them.

Because of the final issue; eternal life is the consummation of it. The matter doth not rest in sanctification, but looketh further; at last they obtain everlasting happiness, the hope of which breedeth joy and comfort in us.

Well, then, it rests upon me to prove two things: that this life is the most amiable life, because of the pleasure and honour that doth

accompany it: the pleasure, because of the end; the honour, because of the work.

First, The pleasure of a life spent in God's service. Man is ever inviting himself to some delight, and so far nature and grace are agreed; but the difference is, where true pleasure of mind is to be found. Man in his natural estate consults with flesh and blood, for then the beast rideth the man, and he careth for the body more than the soul, and nothing is sweet and pleasant but what gratifieth sensual appetite; but this soon bringeth slavery upon us; for it was our old bondage and servitude to prefer appetite before reason and conscience: Titus 3:3, 'We were sometimes disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures.' These delights corrupt the mind, and make it an incompetent judge of what is true and sincere pleasantness to such a creature as man is, who hath a conscience, and is capable of an immortal estate, and to give an account of his actions to the God that made him. And besides, they pervert the heart, and dull our desires and endeavours towards better things, and breed such a peace as is not the quiet and repose of the soul in God, but a numbness and deadness of conscience as may be called carnal security, rather than a true and solid peace. But by grace we are invited to more chaste and rational delights, such as ennoble the soul, and raise it to God; whose matter is not base and dreggy, but heavenly and spiritual, and cannot ensnare nature by any excess, but perfect it: so that a man shall live as a man, not as a beast, and have a solid peace, and durable comfort and confidence, that will not fail him in any condition; and this pleasure we can only have by having our fruit unto holiness.

I prove it thus: --

It is pleasant to do good; there is a pleasure and a peace that resulteth from the very rectitude of our actions: Psalm 119:165, 'Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.' Our will is conformed to the law and will of God. Now the compliance of our will with the will of God carrieth a quieting

pleasure with it, for then it agreeth with its proper rule and measure; all is right as it should be. Our subjection to God is to the soul as health to the body; when all the humours and members of the body keep their due proportion, temper, and place, according to the intention of nature, a man findeth himself at ease both in his work and in his rest, and as to his body, he enjoyeth himself with full contentment of mind. It is so as to his soul, when sense and appetite is subordinated to reason, and reason guided by the will of God; all is in its proper place, and there must needs be a serenity and contentment of mind.

God owneth him that liveth in his service; for those that love {Page 355} him, and keep his commandments, he will love them, and manifest himself to them, John 14:21, 23. Two ways doth God own them, --

[1.] He will forgive their sins.

[2.] Assure them of his love.

[1.J He will forgive their sins. How can any man be truly cheerful, till his sins be forgiven? If conscience be but a little awakened, in the midst of all his mirth he would see a sharp sword hanging over his head by a slender thread, and ready to drop upon him every moment, and that all his jollity is but like dancing about the bottomless pit, into which ever and anon he is ready to tumble. Nay, let him stifle, conscience as much as he can, he can never totally get the victory of it, but he hath his qualms and pangs and hidden fears, and stinging remorse of conscience, which, though not always felt, are soon awakened. So that, if you could dig a carnal man to the bottom, you will find that he is never truly and sincerely merry. Suppose none of this ever felt, yet you must grant that there cannot be a man who ever recollects his ways or life, and hath any serious consideration why he came into the world, or where he shall be when he goes out of it but this trouble is revived, and will haunt him, and sour his contentments, and put a damp upon all his mirth. But now he that hath sued out his pardon, and being made free from sin, is become a

servant unto God, and so hath his fruit to holiness; he hath true and solid cause of rejoicing, for God owneth him as one that is pardoned and adopted into his family, and admitted into fellowship with him: 1 John 1:7, 'If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' His great care is over; his wounds are healed; he hath got rid of his great sore and burden, which made his soul sit uneasy with him: Matthew 9:2, 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.' When the guilt of sin is taken away, the root of all trouble is taken away.

[2.] He will assure him of his love: John 15:10, 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.' Holiness and obedience, as it is an evidence of our love to Christ, so it is a means of keeping up the sense and assurance of his love to us. Holy walking giveth us a large share of the love of God and Christ; the Lord delighteth to own such, and to put peculiar marks of his favour upon them. Now it is a comfortable life to live in the love of God. If all the world loveth you, and God hateth you, you can have no solid peace, for you must at length fall into his hands; but if you have all the world at will, you may have it with God's hatred, who can make you miserable whenever he pleaseth; he can blast you with diseases, fill you with disquiets of soul, embitter all your comforts; but if God loveth you, and assureth you of his love, what is wanting to your satisfaction and peace? This is enough to support us in all conditions; one drop of it is enough to sweeten all our crosses: Romans 5:5, 'Hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.' And it is the life of all our comforts: Psalm 4:6, 7, 'Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and {Page 356} their wine increased;' and Psalm lxxiii. 3, 'Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.'

As God will own them so conscience speaketh peace and comfort to them that have their fruit to holiness. Before our full and final reward we have this solace, that our own hearts do not only acquit us, but approve what we do; and a holy course of life is usually rewarded with peace of conscience; it is not only without offence: Acts 24:16, 'Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man;' but it breedeth joy, 2 Corinthians 1:2, 'Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.' On the contrary, men's hearts smite and reproach them for their sins, and the breaches they make in their duty: Job 27:6, 'My heart shall not reproach me as long as I live.' The words imply that the heart hath a reproaching and condemning power; when we do evil, we shall sensibly find it by accusing thoughts within ourselves: Romans 2:15, 'Their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts in the meantime accusing, or else excusing one another.' Conscience must be better used, before it will speak a word of well-grounded peace to a man. They that keep the thorn in the foot will never walk without pain. If you would prevent the checks and upbraidings of your own consciences, you must take away the causes and occasions thereof; walk so that your hearts may not reproach you. Do you take care of your duty, and God will take care of your comfort; but if you give way to sin, conscience will awaken upon you.

Our title to the heavenly inheritance is more clear, and our right confirmed by holiness. There is fullness of joy reserved for God's people, Psalm 16:11; and if we look to the end, it must needs make the way the more pleasant and comfortable; especially when we have by faith a lively foresight of this endless glory and blessedness: Hebrews 11:1, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen;' and by hope and love a foretaste of it: Romans 5:2, 'We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' Blessed will the time be when ye shall be for ever with the Lord, and see his glory; and this is the end of the way you walk in. Alas! others can never have solid comfort; they know where they are, but know not where

they shall be when they die; they must into an unknown world, and which is worse, to an unknown God, of whose love they never had any taste or experience. But those that live always in the sight of the world to come, and keep themselves in the way that tendeth thither, and look continually when God will translate them into his immediate presence, they have the foretaste before they have the enjoyment: the promise is matter of joy to them, which is God's grant; Psalm 119:11, 'Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart.' The way they walk in is matter of joy to them, because that confirmeth their right: 1 Timothy 6:12, 'Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.' While they are in the way, they look to the end of their journey; while running their race, they see a crown set before them; the very acts of faith, hope, and love are {Page 357} pleasant: Romans 15:13, 'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost;' 1 Peter 1:8, 'Whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' Well then, who live the more pleasant lives, they that walk upon the brink of hell every moment, or the heirs of eternal life and happiness, who have a heaven to wait for?

5. They have easier access to God, or more free communion with him here than others have; because there is nothing to hinder, neither on God's part, nor theirs. God hath assured them of audience and welcome, and they have in a great measure overcome their legal bondage, so as they are not shy of God, nor stand aloof from him; they do not allow themselves in the omission of any known duty, nor in the commission of any known sin, and are sincere though not perfect: 1 John 3:21, 22, 'If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do the things which are pleasing in his sight.' Two things obstruct our ready access to God, our own guiltiness, and God's terror. Our own guiltiness straitens the heart and stops the mouth, and makes us afraid and shy of God; but

they who are renewed and pardoned come out of this state of bondage; their hearts do not condemn them for living in any known disobedience to God or course of sin, which whosoever doth carrieth his sting and his wound about him, and is subject to tormenting evils and legal fear. On God's part, he is reconciled to such as make conscience of holiness, and they may obtain at his hands whatever in reason and righteousness they ask of him. He hath given them liberty by his new covenant-grant and charter, founded in the blood of Christ; the covenant is large and gracious, and their claim firm and sure, and therefore they come boldly unto him. But now God's presence, which is the comfort of the faithful, is the burden of the carnal and the guilty, terrible to them that live in sin, and therefore they think they are never better than when they are furthest off from God. Well then, you see to have our fruit to holiness is the pleasure and comfort of our lives, for then we maintain our liberty in prayer, and our confidence towards God; there is an open door of access to admit us to God, and free and full communion with him.

6. Their work is more easy, because it is not done against the bent of the heart, but it is the course of life which they have chosen: Psalm 40:8, 'I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart;' 1 John 5:3, 'This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous.' And also for this reason, because it is their usual practice, and that which they are versed in: Proverbs 10:29, 'The way of the Lord is strength to the upright' Others, with much ado, bring their hearts to do a little good; but the more we walk in God's ways, the more we may; one part of godliness helpeth another, and the more we obey God, the more we are fitted to obey him. As in a watch there are many wheels, and the one doth protrude and thrust forward another; the motion could not be so constant and orderly if there were fewer wheels in it; so there are many duties implied in holiness, and one maketh another easy, and one duty put forward another, as hearing fits us for prayer, and prayer for {Page 358} practice, and frequent and continual practice maketh the whole work go off the more roundly. Or as in the body labour begets an appetite, and when we have an appetite food is

more pleasant, and that helpeth digestion, and that strengthens us to labour again; so the more we exercise ourselves to godliness, one part and degree fits for another: whereas Christian duties are difficult and tedious when men deal superficially with God; because the difficulty ever continueth, the work is not thoroughly minded. Partly also for this reason, because the more holiness prevaileth, the more the rebelling principle is curbed, and maketh least opposition, and is more weak and ineffectual to tempt and draw us from God: Galatians 5:16, 'Walk after the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' If you be sincere and true to God's interest, and cherish the better part, and follow the motions and directions of it, the flesh will languish and die away by degrees. There is yet a fourth reason, God's blessing goeth along with our sincere resolution to walk in his ways; for as he punisheth sin with sin, so he delighteth to reward grace with grace, and to crown his own work: Isaiah 58:13, 14, 'If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thy own ways, nor finding thy own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord;' Psalm 27:14, 'Wait on the Lord, and be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.' The way to pray is to pray, to delight yourselves in God is to delight in him. Pluck up your spirits, take courage, and God will give you courage for every holy action, and reward it with a new supply of grace, whereby strength is renewed; and the duty sincerely performed, bringeth its grace and hope along with it. Well, a life spent in holiness must needs be a pleasant life; because the more we mind it, and set about it, still the work is more easy. It is the partial superficial obedience that is difficult, and the hard heart that makes our work hard; for when men are biassed with fleshly lusts, and are not easily nor without much ado persuaded to set about religion in good earnest, they are only acquainted with the toil, but never with the comfort; conscience is still urging them to do that which they have no heart to do.

7. Those that have their fruit to holiness, all their mercies and comforts are more sweet, because they have them from God's love, and they use them for his glory.

[1.] They have their worldly blessings from God's love. A covenant-right is surely much sweeter than a-bare providential right: '1 Corinthians 3:22, 23, 'All things are yours, for you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' That is a covenant-right, when we have these things, not only by the fair leave and allowance of his providence, but as fruits of his fatherly love in Christ. We find most sweetness in the creature when our persons and ways are pleasing to God, 'God accepteth thy works,' Ecclesiastes 9:7. Alas 1 others who are not reconciled to God, have their portion soured by remorse of conscience; God may give them a liberal share of these outward things, but this is all, they must look for no more. It is said, Proverbs 10:22, 'The blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.' There is a common blessing which is {Page 359} vouchsafed to the carnal, and there is a special blessing which is vouchsafed to the holy. Wicked men do not acquire wealth without God's common blessing; the wealth itself, and the comfortable use of it, they have it from him; elsewhere it is called food and gladness. But these words are much more true of the spiritual blessing, when an estate is sanctified; then we have not only the natural comfort of the creature, but a spiritual use of it, a comfortable supply of outward things, and a peaceable conscience, which is more than natural refreshing. Alas! unless we be upon good terms with God, all our rejoicings are but as stolen waters, and bread eaten in secret.

[2.] As they use them for his glory, when they take more occasions to do good. That is the sweetest use of the creature, when we use them with thankfulness, charity, and purity. With thankfulness to God: 1 Timothy 4:4, 'Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving;' that is, with a due acknowledgment of God, whose invisible hand reacheth out these supplies to us. We must use them as a glass, wherein to see our creator's goodness and glory; and surely this religious use of the

creature is more sweet than the natural use. With charity with respect to our neighbours, ministering to others that want necessaries: Nehemiah 8:10, 'Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared.' Man is not lord of these things, but a steward; for we have not the right of a lord, but the right of a servant, and must give an account, Luke 16:2. We do not receive these things to satisfy our fleshly mind, but to do good with them; and the pleasure is not in the possession, but the use: Luke 16:9, 'Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations.' It is more God-like: Acts 20:35, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Sobriety respects ourselves, our Lord hath given us a caution: Luke 21:34, 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life.' Now, temperance is much sweeter than excess, as being more healthy and refreshing to nature; whereas excess oppresseth it. Upon the whole, the holy man's comforts are sweeter than other men's; he hath them from God reconciled, and useth them for his glory. And thus I have proved to you, that to have our fruit unto holiness is the greatest pleasure: the very doing it is pleasant; and God owneth them, pardoning their sins and assuring them of his love, and conscience speaketh peace to them, so that they have no inward trouble to damp their joy, and their end is eternal life: for the present they have some access to God, their work is more easy, and their comforts are more sweet.

Secondly, Let me now speak of the honour that doth accompany a holy life. It will never be matter of shame to us, as sin is to all that practise it, first or last.

1. Because holiness is the very image of God upon the soul, or that work by which he sets forth his praise to the world. If God be excellent, it can be no disgrace or dishonour to us to be like God, and nothing on this side of heaven so like him as a holy soul. This was the blessed perfection in which we were created at first: Genesis 1:26, {Page 360} 'And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our

likeness.' And when it was lost, for this end were we redeemed by Christ, who came to set up God's image in our nature: John 1:14, 'And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' That we may be renewed by the Spirit, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 'Wo all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of our God.' It is an image not made by painter or carver, but the Holy Ghost. Now certainly that which was our primitive glory and excellency, and is renewed and repaired with so much ado, will never be matter of shame to us.

They which have their fruit unto holiness have the best temper and constitution of soul of any men in the world; they have a new and divine nature, which inclineth them to the noblest objects and ends: 2 Peter 1:4; nothing below God can satisfy them. Their ends are the glorifying of God, and the eternal enjoyment of him, 2 Corinthians 4:18, 'While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.' Alas! what a poor drossy soul is an unsanctified soul, they that drive no higher a trade than providing for the flesh, or accommodating a life which shortly must expire. When these are seeking after the world, and scrambling for the honours and delights thereof, they are seeking after heaven, and adorning the soul while they are pampering the flesh. Surely they which contemn the world are more honourable than they which enjoy it; and it is much better to please God that we may live with him in heaven, than to flatter men that we may rise in the world.

Their way and course of life, as well as their temper and disposition of heart, is more noble; for when others live according to the vain course of this corrupt world, they live according to the will of God, which is the highest pattern of all perfection. The one live to the lusts of men, the other according to the will of God: 1 Peter 4:2, 'That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of

men, but to the will of God.' The one walk κατ' αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου: Ephesians 2:2, 'According to the course of this world,' the other κατὰ κανόνα. Galatians 6:16, 'As many as walk according to this rule,' &c. Now, which course is better? Let us refer this question to the sentiments of nature. Even though men be so much depraved by their slavery to their brutish lusts that they might justly be refused as incompetent judges; yet natural conscience in the worst doth homage to the image of God shining in the saints: as, 'Herod feared John, because he was a strict and just man,' Mark 6:20; and Exodus 11:3, 'Moses was great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of all the people;' his person and presence was awful to them.. Nature hath a secret sentiment of the excellency of holiness; those that regard not to practise it wonder at it: 1 Peter 4:4, 'They think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot.' Especially when they come to die, then do they approve a sober godly life, though they had no heart to embrace it before: Numbers 23:10, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last {Page 361} end be like his.' Though they chose to live with the carnal, yet they would die with the righteous, such an approbation is conscience forced to give first or last to a holy course of life.

4. That is honourable and glorious which is most esteemed by God; for he can best judge, and the great sovereign of the world is the fountain of all honour. Now, holiness is most esteemed by him, which he hath declared both by word and deed.

[1.] By word: Isaiah 43:4, 'Since thou wast precious in my sight thou hast been honourable.' God, that was refreshed in the review of the works of creation, is also delighted in the works that belong to redemption; yea more, as these gifts are more worthy, and brought about with greater expense and difficulty, therefore he delights most in the holy and righteous; any part of holiness is an ornament of great price in the sight of God: 1 Peter 3:4, 'Let your adorning be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the

ornament of a meek and of a quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.'

[2.] In deed, as they are taken into a nearness to himself, and here enjoy his favour and fellowship, and hereafter shall live with him for ever. Now they have his favour, and enjoy communion with him: Psalm 11:7, 'For the righteous God loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright;' hereafter they shall see his blessed face: Matthew 5:8, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;' Hebrews 12:14, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God,' They are capacitated for true happiness. This is so certain a truth, that all who are made partakers of a divine nature have the same disposition in them: Psalm 15:4, 'In whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.' They look not to the outward pomp and prosperity of the world, and therefore have a heart to honour and respect godly men, as being beloved, prized, and set apart by God, and as they are made partakers of these sure, great, and glorious things, which are infinitely more worthy of our love than anything below. So again: Psalm 16:3, 'To the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.' When we think too highly and pleasingly of the condition of the rich, and too meanly and contemptibly of the state of the holy and godly, as if it were a better thing to be great in the world than to excel in grace, we discover more of the spirit of the world than of the Spirit of God.

5. That excellency which is more intrinsic puts a truer honour upon us than that which is extrinsic and foreign; as we do not value a horse by his trappings, but by his mettle and vigour. A corpse may be laid in state, and sumptuously adorned, but there is no life within. Crowns and garlands may be put upon an image; the white bulls destined for sacrifices to Jupiter were brought to the gates with garlands on their horns, Acts 14:13. So men are not to be valued by their external advantages, wealth, and greatness, but their intrinsic perfections, knowledge, holiness, humility, faith, sobriety, godliness: Psalm 45:13, 'The king's daughter is all-glorious within, her clothing

is of wrought gold;' not the things without a man do commend him, but the things within him.

{Page 362} 6. That is honourable and glorious which will everlastingly be so. But we cannot say so of the things of the world; 'All flesh is grass, and the glory of man is as the flower of the field.' 1 Peter 1:24. The best estate of men, considered with all their ornaments, wherein they use to glory, is frail and perishing; riches, wisdom, strength, and beauty are soon blasted; but they that are holy are lovely for ever, amiable and acceptable to God for ever; 1 John 2:17, 'The world passeth away, and the lusts thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever;' he abideth when other things fade.

Use 1. To exhort you to undertake the service of God, that you may have your fruit to holiness, and the end everlasting life.

1. To serve God is our true liberty. His servants live the noblest and freest lives in the world; *servire Deo regnare est* -- you never reign or command till you learn to serve God. His right is unquestionable: Acts 27:23, 'There stood by me this night an angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve.' It would help you much often to consider whose you are, and whom you ought to serve. If you were your own, you might live to yourselves; but since you are God's, you must live to him, and serve him.

[1.] His service will be your pleasure; for then you are in your due posture, when you have a power over inferior things, and are subject to God, using all things for his glory: 1 Corinthians 6:12, 'All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any;' and 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, 'Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.' You are out of joint, not in your proper posture, till it be so; and,

[2.] It will be also your honour, for all his servants are also his children, and heirs of eternal life: Titus 3:7, 'That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.'

[3.] The benefit of this service will be exceeding great. The world often inquireth, 'What profit shall we have, if we serve him?' Job 21:15; 'Ye have said, It is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?' Malachi 3:14. The whole reward of serving God is not altogether laid up for the world to come: God giveth a reward before he giveth the full reward. Obedience is a reward to itself, for holiness is the health of the soul; and if we grow more in grace and godliness, we have enough. The apostle saith, 'You have your fruit to holiness.' Besides, we have many spiritual and temporal blessings: 1 Timothy 4:8, 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come;' and, 1 Timothy 6:6, 'Godliness with contentment is great gain.' Once more, though the great blessedness of the saints be in the life to come, yet here we have the foresight and foretaste, there our full portion.

Now, that you may do so, I press you --

1. To give over the service of sin. None can be true servants of God till there be a change both of the heart and of the course of the life; till the power of sin be broken we shall neither be fit nor willing to serve God. Therefore we must first be freed from sin by a hearty {Page 363} renunciation of this slavery and bondage, wherein God will help the striving soul.

2. I would press you to a high esteem of God, and holiness, and everlasting life.

[1.] Of God; for till we have high thoughts of God, as an all-sufficient God, who is able to protect, and do all things needful for them that serve him, we shall not entirely trust ourselves in his hands: Genesis

17:1, 'I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect.' The incredulous world looketh on God's glorious titles as so many fine words.

[2.] Of holiness, purity of heart and life, a recompense worthy of your labours, how dearly soever gotten: Hebrews 12:10, 'They verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.'

[3.] Of eternal life. They are true servants of God who make it their work and business to serve and please God, and their scope to obtain eternal life: Philippians 3:14, 'I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;' and Philippians 3:20, 'Our conversation is in heaven, whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.' This is their happiness.

SERMON XXIII

And the end everlasting life. Romans 6:22.

Doct. That a blessed eternal life is the final reward of those that have their fruit to holiness.

What this eternal life is.

The reasons why this is our final reward.

First. What eternal life is. Though it be better industriously to seek after it than scrupulously to inquire into the nature of this excellent benefit; yet because unknown things have not such a power and efficacy to quicken our desires, let us know as much of it as we can. Indeed future things are but darkly spoken of ere they be accomplished; we are told, 'Prophecy is but in part,' 1 Corinthians

13:9. Our knowledge of these things is but imperfect; our apprehensions are suitable to the state we are in, which is a state of imperfection; but yet they are not altogether useless, but fitted to our benefit. Before the coming of Christ in the flesh, the mysteries of the Christian religion were but darkly revealed to what they were afterward; but yet they were such as were comfortable, and gave them some kind of sight of Christ before his exhibition to the world, enough to engage them to live in the expectation of the Messiah. So here we have apprehensions fitted to the use of travellers, and such as may encourage us in our heavenly course, and raise an expectation in us. Briefly I shall show three things: --

It is life.

It is a good and happy life.

It is an endless and eternal life.

1. It is life, both in soul and body. In soul: Psalm 22:26, 'Your heart{Page 364} shall live for ever;' and again, Psalm 69:32, 'Your heart shall live that seek God.' In body, 2 Corinthians 4:10, 'Always bearing in our bodies the dying of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the life of Jesus also might be manifested in our body;' that is, we are continually ready to be put to death for Christ's sake, that at length we may receive the effects of his quickening power in raising from the dead to the life of glory: so Philippians 3:21, 'Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself Well, this we know then, that the party must subsist and live after death, otherwise he is incapable to enjoy God, and the blessedness of that estate; and he must subsist in body and soul, otherwise he is not the same person, if he were all spirit, and had no body at all; for if his body were utterly perished, and his soul were changed into the nature of angels, which were never destined to be conjoined to bodies, this were not altogether the same being; for it is not he that is glorified or debased, but some other thing. Well then, he that now serveth God shall then live, but in another manner than he now liveth.

[1.] Compare it with life natural. This life is a fluid thing, that runneth from us as fast as it cometh to us; but that is eternal. Besides, here we are exposed to many troubles in an uncertain world: Genesis 47:9, 'Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been;' there is full rest and peace: Revelation 14:13, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.' The supports of this life are base and low; it is called, 'The life of our hands,' Isaiah 57:10; most men labour hard to maintain it, but there we are above these necessities. Once more, the capacities of this life are narrow, every strong passion overwhelmeth us; the disciples were not able to bear the glory of Christ's transfiguration: Matthew 17:6, 'When the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces, and were sore afraid.' Alas! strong winds soon overset weak vessels; if God should give us but a taste or glimpse of that blessedness which is reserved for us, we are ready to cry out, 'Enough, Lord! we can hold no more;' but there we are fortified by the glory we enjoy, and the object strengthens the faculty.

[2.] Compare it with the life of grace, which puts us into some degree of communion with God; but this doth not exempt us from miseries, rather sometimes exposeth us to them: 2 Timothy 3:12, 'Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' Yea, we often provoke God to hide his-face from us; all tears are not yet wiped from our eyes; our sins breed not only doubts of God's love, but put us under a sense of his displeasure: Isaiah 59:2, 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.' Though we have obtained the life of grace, we are not yet got rid of the body of death, and that is matter of continual groaning: Romans 8:23, 'And not only so, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, -- to wit, the redemption of our body.' Here we serve God at a distance, in some remote service; there we are present with the Lord, and immediately before{Page 365} the throne: Revelation 7:15, 'Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and

night in his temple.' Here we enjoy God in the ordinances at second or third hand, there face to face: 1 Corinthians 13:12, 'For we see but through a glass darkly, then face to face.' Here in part we do not enjoy so much, but more is lacking; but then we shall be satisfied with his image: Psalm 17:15, 'As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.' That which attaineth its end is perfect and blessed, there needeth no more to make us happy, for the most perfect estate excludeth all want and indigency; here is still some want, but there is none.

3. It is a good and happy estate. I prove it --

[1.] From the nature of it; they that live this life see God and enjoy God. There is some last end of man's life, and therefore some chief good. There are intermediate ends, therefore there must be a last end; we must stop somewhere. As, suppose I eat for strength, my strength must be employed to some end; is it for the service of others? or myself? or God? Not for myself, for then I eat that I may have strength to labour, that I may eat again; not for others, non nascitur aliis moriturus sibi; then for God, who is man's chief good: Genesis 15:1, 'Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward;' Psalm 16:5, 'The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup;' Psalm 36:9, 'For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light.' There is all good in God, and beyond God nothing is to be desired: without him the soul is never satisfied; but having him, we are perfectly satisfied, and our desires acquiesce, as in their proper centre of rest. Well then, our enjoyment of him is our proper happiness. Certainly man's felicity must agree with the noblest part of a man, his soul, that his noblest faculty may be exercised in the noblest way of operation about its most noble object. Every living creature desireth good, but their highest way of perception being sense, it is sensible good; but man, being endowed with reason and understanding, must have some spiritual good before his desires can be perfectly satisfied; a good it must be for our souls. Now the noblest object the soul is capable of is God, and the noblest faculties of our souls are understanding and will, the noblest

operations are therefore knowledge and love. Love is either desire or delight. Desire noteth a deficiency, or some imperfect possession; joy or delight is the repose of the soul in what is already obtained. So, then, the noblest acts are sight, love, and joy, which, assisted by the light, of glory, are now most perfect in degree, as, being assisted by the light of grace, they were true in their kind. Well then, put all together, a living reasonable creature is admitted to the sight and love of God in the highest way he is capable of.

[2.] The end must be somewhat better than the means. The means is having our fruit to holiness, the end is everlasting life. This life exercised in holiness is the way, that the home; this the race, that the goal; this the warfare, that the crown; this the labour, that the reward; this the means, that the end. Here we have the beginning and first-fruits, there the whole crop and harvest. Now a holy man is here united to God: 1 Corinthians 6:17, 'He that is joined to the Lord{Page 366} is one spirit; therefore there the union is greater and more close; for 'God will be all in all:' 1 Corinthians 15:28. Here a holy man knoweth and seeth God by faith: John 17:3, 'This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;' and 2 Corinthians 5:7, 'For we walk by faith, not by sight;' therefore there the vision is more clear: 1 John 3:2, 'We shall see him as he is.' Here he is renewed according to the image of God, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 'We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory,' therefore there shall be another manner of transformation: 1 John 3:2, 'Then we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' Here he enjoyeth communion with God: 1 John 1:3, 'Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ;' there it shall be more full and uninterrupted. Here he rejoiceth and delighteth himself in God: Psalm 27:4, 'One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple;' there more especially, when there shall be nothing to divert that delight, and the participation of his benefits shall be more full. Here he promoteth the glory of God, and setteth

forth his praise, either by way of design, making that his scope: 1 Corinthians 10:31, 'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God;' or of resemblance: 1 Peter 2:9, 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;' Ephesians 1:12, 'That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ;' there his whole work is to laud and praise God, and he doth more perfectly resemble him, there being nothing to obscure his image.

[3.] It is an endless and everlasting life. Such as are once possessed of it shall never be dispossessed again. If man be designed to enjoy a chief good, and this chief good must content all our desires, it must also be so firm and absolutely immutable as to secure us against all our fears; for a fear of losing would disquiet our minds, and so hinder our blessedness. Now that there is no fear of that, let us consider what may be said concerning the firmness of it --

1. On God's part.
2. On the part of the blessed.

(1.) On God's part it standeth on three strong foundations --

(1st.) The infinite love of God, which is from eternity to eternity: Psalm 103:17, 'The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear him;' before the world was, and when the world shall be no more.

(2d.) The everlasting merit of Christ, which never loseth. its force and effect: Hebrews 9:12, 'Having obtained eternal redemption for us;' not that Christ is always propitiating God by a continued sacrifice; no, the work was once done in a short time, but the virtue of it is of everlasting continuance.

(3d.) The unchangeable covenant: so Hebrews 13:20, 'Now the God of peace, that brought, again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting

{Page 367} covenant.' Though the covenant made with Israel was abolished, yet this continueth for ever, and shall never be altered, because it was able to reach the end for which it was appointed, which is the eternal salvation of man; that was a temporary covenant, this eternal.

(2.) On the part of the blessed, who being once admitted to the sight of God cannot any more cease from the love of God, or be subject to sin. Heaven is a paradise, where the flowers that grow are 'incorruptible and undented, and never fade away,' 1 Peter 1:4.

Secondly, The reasons of it, why this is our final reward.

Because this is the end to which they are appointed. Everything hath its end and final perfection, for God made nothing in vain. Now, inanimate things tend to such an end as they are appointed unto by God's overruling providence; such things as have a self-moving principle, as beasts, they are carried to their end by instinct, appetite, or natural inclination; those things which have reason and knowledge, foreseeing the end, order the means thereunto; they know the end, choose the means. As mere men, they seek to be happy; and Christians, who are holy men, seek to be most like him who is holy and happy. Now, then, since whatever acteth, acteth for an end, they that have their fruit to holiness have their end everlasting life. A capacity of an endless blessedness doth difference a man from the beasts that perish; a disposition to it doth difference the saints from the ungodly; and the fruition of it at length doth difference the glorified from the damned.

God's government requireth it. The wisest lawgivers could not devise any other means to make men good besides *pæna et præmium*, punishment and reward. For in the right dispensation of these two the life of government doth consist. Indeed many laws do more incline to punishments than rewards: for robbers and manslayers death is appointed, but the innocent subject hath only this reward, that he doth his duty, and escapeth these punishments. In few cases

doth the law promise a reward: the reason is, because fear is a greater and more commodious engine of human government than love; and inflicting punishment is the proper work of man's law, for its end and use is to restrain evil. But God's law propoundeth rewards equal to the punishments, because the use of God's law is to guide men to their proper happiness. It is legis candor, the equity and favour of man's law to speak of a reward; it commands many things, forbids many things, but still under a penalty, *ex malis moribus nascuntur leges*, to restrain evil is its natural work; but God's covenant, being ordered for another end, doth not only threaten sinners, but promises life to the holy, and these threatenings and promises carry a proportion to God's nature, eternal life on the one hand, and eternal death on the other: Deuteronomy 30:15, 'See, I have set before thee this day life and death, good and evil;' and Matthew 25:46, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.' There are nowhere such dreadful punishments and such bountiful rewards as are propounded to us Christians; eternal punishment is the reward of the disobedient, and eternal life is the privilege of the holy. Which, by the way, is a great shame, that we should be so defective in good, so fruitful in evil, less observant of the laws of the universal king, than the subjects of any prince. How often do we pawn our hopes of {Page 368} everlasting life upon less occasions than Esau did his birthright, and set Christ at a lower price than Judas did?

3. All that have their fruit to holiness are capacitated for this blessed estate.

1st. They earnestly desire this blessed estate, 'they hunger and thirst after righteousness,' after a larger measure of God's sanctifying grace, or likeness to God, Matthew 5:6. The thirst after honour, greatness, and preferment in the world are tortures to the soul wherein they are harboured; but they that thirst after more holiness shall be satisfied.

2dly. They are prepared for it. For purity of heart is the root whereof happiness is the fruit: Matthew 5:8, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'

3dly. They have the pledge and earnest of it, 2 Corinthians 1:22, 'Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of his Spirit in our hearts;' and 2 Corinthians 5:5, 'Now he which hath wrought thus for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.' The sanctifying Spirit is given us by God as the earnest of the glory which he will give us, for it is the seed of it, and breedeth an inclination thereunto.

Use 1. If this be the reward of the holy, then it informeth us that certainly there is such a thing as everlasting life and happiness; for God would not feed us with fancies, or natter us into a fool's paradise.

[1.] The nature of man showeth it? why else did he make a reasonable creature? Man of all creatures would be most miserable, if obnoxious to so many infelicities, and were not capable of true happiness some way or other. Certainly he made him to be happy. Is it to be happy here? In what? Here is no happiness. Is it in eating, drinking, and sleeping? These are to strengthen us for our service, which tendeth to our end. Better be without meat, if we could be without the need of it, as it will be hereafter: 1 Corinthians 6:13, 'Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them.' Beasts have not the cares and sorrows of mind that man hath to get and keep what they need. Wherein, then, lieth the dignity of men above the beasts? Surely there is a life to come.

[2.] The government of God showeth it. Why doth he use such methods, by his precepts and promises, but to bring us to our eternal end? Why hath he required moral duties of temperance, sobriety, contentation with a little; such evangelical duties of self-denial, obedience to Christ; such instituted duties as praying, hearing, sacraments, and seriousness in all, such constant diligence in his

service, but that by all these we might come to the blessed hope? Believers use them to these ends: Acts 26:7, 'Unto which promise the twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come;' and Philippians 3:14, 'I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'

[3.] The graces planted in us by his Spirit show it. What use is there for faith and hope, if there be no object to be believed and hoped for? Hebrews 11:1, 'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.' As the apostle saith, 'Our preaching is in vain, and your faith is also vain,' 1 Corinthians 15:14. Now, is faith {Page 369} and hope a dotage? and the whole doctrine of the gospel a forgery? and all the sufferings which God's servants have endured for him a mere frenzy and madness? Surely then there is a reward, and an everlasting reward, for the righteous.

Use 2. To persuade us:

[1.] To have our fruit to holiness. Heaven is the perfection of what is begun by sanctification, and the more we increase in it, the more our right is clear. Let us labour, therefore, to be thoroughly sanctified, and to fill our lives with the fruits of holiness. Heaven is described to be 'the inheritance of the sanctified by the faith which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,' Acts 26:18; the sanctified is there put for the perfected. Our blessedness is in a fair progress when we are drawn from caring for the body to the saving of the soul, from things earthly to heavenly, from the life of the world to the life of God; in a word, from sin to holiness.

[2.] To fix your hearts more in the hope of eternal life. It is the want of this hope that maketh men swerve from holiness; some want it in habit, some in act.

1st. Some want it in habit, because they want faith; for no men will look for that which they do not believe. Now these wallow in sin and filthiness: 2 Peter 1:9, 'He that lacketh these things is blind, and

cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.' He that is blind as to heavenly things which lie at a distance, can never purify his heart, nor walk holily; for they will not trouble themselves with it. On the contrary, 1 John 3:3, 'He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.'

2d. Some want it in act, do not revive upon themselves the remembrance of the blessed hope, or keep their hearts in heaven as much as they should do, because they lose their taste, or suffer it to be interrupted and deadened by worldly cares and voluptuous living. When the heart runneth out inordinately after secular ends and contentments, our affections are estranged from heavenly things. Alas! we presently find the inconvenience; we lose our taste of the powers of the world to come; so .also by negligence and carelessness. Now, a good Christian should always stand with his loins girt and lamp burning, looking for his master's coming; the pledge and earnest of eternal life which we have received is of more worth and value than all the pleasures and contentments of the world, and should not be lost for trifles. We did rejoice at our first entrance on Christianity in these hopes, now we must keep this firm to the end: Hebrews 3:6, 'If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end;' and Hebrews 3:14, 'If we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end.' Often draw up your hearts from things transitory to things eternal and heavenly.

Use 3. Direction to us in the Lord's Supper. We come to this duty to bind ourselves to two things:

[1.] To have our fruit to holiness, as those who are free from sin, and are become his by covenant with him. Here we resume and ratify the vow made in baptism, and so we are (1.) to arraign, accuse, and judge ourselves for our former neglect, that we have made no more progress in purifying our souls, and fitting ourselves for the eternal estate; (2.) to beg pardon of God, with promises of greater diligence for the future; {Page 370} (3.) to implore the special aid and assistance of God's Spirit for the better performance of what we

promise; (4.) we are to obtain it by the means of Christ's sacrifice and intercession, 'who by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' Hebrews 10:14; there needeth no other sacrifice. If we thus humbly apply ourselves to God, and desire again to bind our bond, the duty will be comfortable to us.

[2.] Our second general work is to revive afresh the hopes of eternal life, and to get our taste and relishes of that blessed estate renewed and confirmed upon our hearts, that we may be fortified against the troubles of the world, and inconveniences of our pilgrimage, that we may not only be encouraged to do well, but to suffer evil with patience. That this duty is a pledge of heaven appeareth by Christ's words: Matthew 26:29, 'I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.' It is an ante-past of that blessed and eternal feast, 'when we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,' Matthew 8:11. And the end of both sacraments is to prepare us for sufferings: Matthew 20:22, 23, 'Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with.' These terms show that the sacraments imply a preparation for sufferings; for there seemeth to be a plain allusion to both sacraments, drinking of his cup, and being baptised with his baptism. Now counter-ballasting our troubles with our hopes begets the true spirit of Christian courage and fortitude: Romans 8:18, 'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us;' 2 Corinthians 4:17, 'For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' Therefore here is your work; mind it, and God will bless you.

SERMON XXIV

For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23.

These words are the conclusion, confirming all that the apostle had said before in this argument, and more especially explaining those two clauses, that the end of sin is death, and the end of holiness is eternal life. It is so, but with this difference, the one as wages deserved, the other as a mere free gift: death follows sin by justice, but eternal life follows holiness by free favour. Both branches deserve to be considered by us conjunctly and apart.

1. Conjunctly, and there we shall see wherein they agree, and wherein they disagree.

[1.] Wherein they agree.

(1.) They agree in respect of their duration and continuance, the death and the life are both endless: Matthew 25:46, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal' {Page 371}

(2.) As they are the final issue of men's several ways; the one as well as the other is the fruit of men's foregoing course here upon earth. Sin is punished by death, and holiness rewarded by eternal life: Galatians 6:8, 'For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.'

(3.) They agree in this, that both are equally certain, for they depend upon God's unalterable truth; he will punish the disobedient as surely as he doth reward the godly. We must not fancy a God all mercy and sweetness; he is a God of salvation, but 'he will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses,' Psalm 68:21. The same truth and veracity of

God that confirmeth his promises doth also infer the certainty of his threatenings: Psalm 11:6, 7, 'Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous God loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright.' God is a perfect judge, and will take order in due time with the wicked who break his laws, and will not make use of his mercy; their destruction shall be terrible, irresistible, and remediless: but his upright servants shall certainly reap the fruits of his love and their own obedience.

[2.] Wherein they disagree. The text telleth you the one is wages, and the other a gift. God doth not punish men beyond their deserts, that is justice; but he doth reward men above their deserts, that is grace; therefore he varieth the word concerning sin, it is of our wages, which alludeth either to the hire due to the labourer, or the pay due to the soldier. Both are a just debt, the labourer is worthy of his hire, when his work is ended he receives his wages; and soldiers at the end of their service get their pay. But of the other he saith, 'It is the gift of God.' Sin deserveth hell, and therefore death is called wages; but if eternal life might in any sort be deserved or merited, the apostle would not have changed his word, as he expressly doth; he doth not say eternal life is *ὄψωνια*, the wages, nay, he doth not say *μισθός*, the reward, which sometimes expresseth the recompense of the faithful: as Hebrews 11:26, 'Having respect to the recompense of reward;' but because reward doth not always signify a reward of free bounty, he doth not use that word either; yea neither doth he use the word *δῶρον*, which properly signifies a gift, because one kindness doth deserve another; but it is *χάρισμα*, a gracious gift. The Vulgate renders it *Gratia Dei*. *Χάρις*, grace, signifieth the free favour of God, *χάρισμα* the impression or effect of it upon us. This is a word inconsistent with all conceit of merit. But what is the reason of this difference, that the one should be wages, the other a gracious gift?

[1.] Our evil works are our own, wholly evil, therefore merit death, as work doth wages; but the good we do is neither ours, nor is it perfect, and is done by them that have a demerit upon them, that have

deserved the contrary by reason of sin, and might look for punishment rather than reward.

[2.] There is this difference between sin and obedience, that the heinousness of sin is always aggravated and heightened by the {Page 372} proportion of its object; as to strike an officer is more than to strike a private person, a judge more than an ordinary officer, a king most of all. Thence it comes to pass, that a sin committed against God deserveth an infinite punishment, because the majesty of God is despised. But on the other side, the greater God is, and the more glorious, the greater obligation lieth upon us to love him and serve him; so that the good we do for his sake being the more due, God is not bound by any right of justice, from the merit of the action itself, to reward it, for here the greatness of the object lesseneth the merit and value of the action; for whatever the creature is, it oweth itself wholly to God, who gave us our being, and still preserveth it; so that we cannot lay any obligation upon him: Luke 17:10, 'When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.' Punishment is naturally due to evil-doers; but God is not by natural justice bound to reward us, but only inclined to do so by his own goodness, and bound to do so by his free promise and covenant. Aristotle telleth us children cannot merit of their parents. All the kindness and duty they perform to them is but a just recompense to them from whom they have received their being and education. Much less can we merit aught of God; it is his mere grace and super-eminent goodness that appointed such a reward to us; that grace which first accepted us with all our faults doth still crown us, and bestow glory and honour upon us.

Use 1. See how God doth beset us on every side. To fence and bound us within our duty there is a threatening of eternal death; to invite us to go on in our way, the promise of eternal life and glory. Surely both motives should be effectual; our whole life is a flight from wrath to come, and a running for refuge to take hold of the blessed hope set before us in our pursuit after eternal life: Proverbs 15:24, 'The way of

life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.' We are still running further from hell, and approaching nearer to heaven; the more we hate and avoid sin, the further we go from the pit of everlasting destruction; and the more we give ourselves to holiness, the nearer heaven every day, our right is more secured, and our hearts more prepared. More particularly we have by this conjoined motive a great help against temptations. The world tempteth us either by the delights of sense or by the terrors of sense; therefore God propoundeth this double motive, -- the terrors of everlasting death and the joys of everlasting life, that we may counterbalance terrors with terrors, and delights with delights: as Luke 12:4, 5, 'Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell, yea, I say unto you, fear him.' On the other side: James 5:5, 'Ye have lived in pleasure upon earth, and been wanton, ye have nourished yourselves as in a day of slaughter;' Luke 16:25, 'Son, remember that in this life thou receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented;' they are excluded from the pleasures at God's right hand for evermore. Or else quite cross, as the world tempts us by the hopes of some sensual contentment, so we may resist the temptation {Page 373} by the belief of everlasting death: Romans 8:13, 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.' Surely this should make us abstain from all sinful pleasures, how much soever we are addicted to them. So as the world tempteth us with the fears of some temporal vexation, the believing of everlasting life should help us to bear the evils of our pilgrimage, or sufferance for well-doing. 2 Corinthians 4:17, 'Our light affliction, that is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' Thus are we environed on the right hand and on the left.

Use 2. From this conjunction let us learn that God is both a righteous judge and a gracious father: 1 Peter 1:17, 'If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work.' He hath his gifts for the godly and punishments for the wicked. All

our claim is grace; the punishment of the wicked is due debt, the sentence of God's law hath made it their due; but yet our reward is not the less sure, though it be more free.

2. Let us consider these two branches apart.

First, The wages of sin is death.

What is meant by death?

How it is said to be the wages of sin.

First, What is meant by death? There is a twofold death, first and second, temporal and eternal.

Temporal death, that is also the fruit of sin: Romans 5:12, 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all men have sinned.' Death is an evil, for nature abhorreth it, as appeareth by our unwillingness to die. Now if it be evil, it must be either the evil of sin or of punishment. God threatened it as a punishment in case of disobedience: Genesis 2:17, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' It is an enemy; 'The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death,' 1 Corinthians 15:26. Would God give mankind into the hand of an enemy if he had not sinned against him? Now this evil remaineth partly that there might be some visible punishment and bitter effect of sin in this world. Unknown torments are despised, and many slight hell as a vain scarecrow; therefore God hath appointed temporal death to put us in mind of the evil of sin. Partly for a passage into our everlasting condition, that the righteous may enter into glory, and the wicked go to their own place. It would make religion too sensible if the righteous should have all their blessedness and the wicked all their punishment here: therefore there must be a passage out into the other world.

Eternal death, in opposition to everlasting life, which is the fruit of holiness. The opposite clause showeth what a kind of death it is. This is called the second death: Revelation 20:6, 'Blessed and holy is he

that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power;' and Revelation 20:14, 'Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death.' It is called death, because death in all creatures that have sense is accompanied with pain. Trees and other vegetables die without pain, but so doth not man and beast; and death to man is more bitter, because he is more sensible of the sweetness of life than the beasts are, and hath some forethought of what may follow {Page 374} after. Again it is called death, because it is a misery from which there is no release; as from the first death there is no recovery, nor returning into the present life. This second death may be considered as to the loss and pain.

[1.] As to the loss, it is an eternal separation from the presence of God, and so an exclusion from all bliss and glory: 2 Thessalonians 1:9, 'Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;' so Matthew 25:41, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.'

[2.] The pain is set forth by two notions: Mark 9:44, 'The worm that never dieth, and the fire that shall never be quenched;' by which is meant the sting of conscience and the wrath of God, both which constitute the second death, and make the sinner for ever miserable.

(1.) The sting of conscience, or the fretting remembrance of their past folly and madness in following the pleasures of sin, and neglecting the promises of grace. What a vexing reflection will this be to the damned to all eternity? And besides this,

(2.) There are pains inflicted upon them by the wrath of God, and the body and soul are delivered over to eternal torments: Matthew 25:41, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' There is no member of the body or faculty of the soul but feeleth the misery of the second death; for as no part is free from sin, so none from punishment. In the second death the pain lieth not in one place, head or heart, but all over; and though in the first death the more it prevaieth the more we are past feeling, yet

in this death there is a greater vivacity than ever; the capacity of every sense is enlarged, and made more receptive of pain. While we are in the body, vehementis sensibile comimpit sensum, the sense is deadened the more vehemently and violently the object striketh upon it; as the inhabitants about the fall of Nilus are deaf with the continual noise; too much light puts out the eyes, and the taste is dulled by custom; but here the capacity is not destroyed by feeling, but improved. As the saints are fortified by their blessedness, and happily enjoy those things, the least glimpse of which would overwhelm them in the world; so the wicked are enabled, by that power that torments them, to endure more; and all this is eternal, without hope of release or recovery.

Secondly, This death is wages, a debt that will surely be paid; for it is appointed by the sentence of God's righteous law. Now here we must consider --

The righteousness of it.

The certainty.

1. The justice and righteousness of it; for many make a question about it upon this ground, because between the work and the wages there must be some proportion. Now, how can an act done in a short time be punished with eternal death or everlasting torments? I answer --

[1.] We must consider the object against whom sin is committed: it is an offence done against an infinite Majesty. Now sinning wilfully against the infinite Majesty of heaven deserveth more than anything done against a man can do: 1 Samuel 2:25, 'If, one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, {Page 375} who shall entreat for him?' Sins against men are not so great as sins against God, and the reconciliation and satisfaction is more easy. [2.] Consider the nature of impenitency in sin. (1.) Their great unthankfulness for redemption by Christ, they forsook their owu mercies, and God's healing grace to the last: John 3:19, 'This is

the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil;' Hebrews 2:3, 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' And then when they are in termino, there is no further trial, their time and day of grace is past.

(2.) God offered them eternal life, and then their foolish choice is justly punished with eternal death. Every sin includeth a despising of eternal life; for rather than men will leave their brutish and sordid pleasures, that they may live a holy life, they will run this hazard, the loss of that eternal life which God offereth, and the incurring these eternal pains which he threateneth. This immortal happiness far exceedeth all those base pleasures for which they lose their souls. Well then, man wilfully exchanging his everlasting inheritance for momentary and transient pleasures, becometh the author of his own woe, whilst he preferreth such low things before God's eternal joyful presence.

2. The certainty. This debt will be paid, if we consider -- [1.] The holiness of God's nature, which inclineth him to hate sin and sinners: Psalm 5:4, 5, 'Thou art not a God that hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee; the foolish shall not stand iu thy sight: thou hatest all the workers of iniquity.' They that take pleasure in sin, God cannot take pleasure in them; and if they will not part with sin, God and they must part; and therefore, if they will do sin's work, all that sin bringeth to them, by way of stipend, is everlasting separation from the presence of God, that is, implacably adverse to all that is evil; and though he hath prepared a place where the holy may dwell with him, yet he cannot endure the wicked should be so near him.

[2.] His justice moveth him to punish it. As holiness belongeth to his nature, so his justice to his office: his holiness is the fundamental reason of punishing the wicked, his justice is the next cause; his holiness is indeed the fundamental cause, as appeareth by the fears of sinners: 1 Samuel 6:20, 'And the men of Beth-shemesh said, Who

is able to stand before this holy God?' And by the security of sinners: Psalm 1. 21, 'These things hast thou done, and I kept silence: thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself;' but the nearest cause is his justice as rector of the world, declared both in his laws and providence: Romans 1:32, 'Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death,' &c.; Genesis 18:25, 'Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?'

[3.] His unalterable truth, which is firmer than heaven and earth: if he threaten, will not he accomplish? The truth of his threatenings is as unchangeable as the truth of his promises, for in both God is one: 1 Samuel 15:29, 'The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent, for he is not as man that he should repent;' it is spoken in the case of deposing Saul for his disobedience to God. The doubt is this, God's {Page 376} threatenings do not always foretell the event; they show the merit, but not the event. I answer, the object is changed, but God remaineth for ever the same. If from impenitent we become penitent, we are not liable to his threatenings, but objects of his grace, and capable of the benefit of his promises. A man walking in a room upward and downward hath sometimes the wall on his right hand, sometimes on his left; the wall is in the same place, but he changeth posture.

[4.] His irresistible power. God is able to inflict these punishments upon them: Deuteronomy 32:39, 'There is none that can deliver out of my hand;' 2 Thessalonians 1:9, 'Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;' Romans 9:22, 'What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known.' We cannot conceive what God is able to do in punishing sinners, but the event declares it.

Use 1. Information.

[1.] That believers need to consider the fruit of sin, that thereby they may be moved to fears of God, and more careful avoiding of Bin. They are not to think of it in a slavish tormenting way, as if God

desired the creature's misery; no, they are warned of it that they may escape it. Though love must be the chief spring and principle of our obedience, yet fear hath its use; the threatenings declare the holiness of God, as well as his promises; and we need to know his hatred to sin, as well as his love to righteousness, to breed an awe in us.

[2.] It showeth the folly of them that bewitch themselves into a groundless hope of impunity in their sinful courses: Deuteronomy 29:19, 'And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst.' They take from God the honour of his holiness, justice, and truth; God's glory is advanced in the world by acts of justice as well as acts of mercy; and besides, they open a gap to all impiety.

[3.] That all sins are in their own nature mortal; for 'the wages of sin is death.' In comparison some sins are greater than others, and so more deserving punishment; but simply, and considered by themselves, all are mortal, if not in the issue and event, yet in their own nature. God pardoneth the penitent; their sins are not deadly in the event, but they deserve damnation in their own nature. There are sins of infirmity, and wilful sins; but nothing should be light and small to us that is committed against the great God. Some are lighter, some are heavier; but all are in their nature damnable; they are a breach of the law of the eternal God. Though the gospel reacheth out mercy to penitents, offering to them pardon of sins and eternal life, yet all deserve damnation; and were it not for Christ and the new covenant we should not be a moment out of hell. Use 2. Direction.

[1.] To the impenitent, that yet go on in their sins. Oh! repent of it speedily, and cast out sin as we do fire out of our bosoms, and sleep not in the bonds of iniquity; 'Your damnation sleepeth not,' 1 Peter 2:3. You are invited earnestly: Ezekiel 18:30, 'Why will ye die, O house of Israel?' Oh! then, pass from death to life. If you refuse this call, you do in effect love death: Proverbs 8:36, 'He that sinneth

{Page 377} against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.' By refusing Christ and nourishing sin you nourish a serpent in your bosoms, and embrace the flames of hell-fire; therefore betimes seek a pardon.

[2.] To the penitent believers; three things I have to press upon them.

(1st.) Consider what cause we have to admire and magnify the riches of God's mercy in our redemption by Christ, by whom sin is taken away, and the consequent of it, eternal death, and who also hath taken the punishment of it upon himself: Isaiah 53:4, 5, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our sins, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes are we healed.'

(2d.) Never return to this slavery again, for you see what a dangerous thing sin is. When you indulge sin, you lay hold on death itself; therefore fly from it as from the gates of hell, and from, all means, instruments, occasions, and opportunities that lead to it. And when Satan showeth you the bait, remember the hook, and counterbalance the pleasure of sin, to which we are vehemently addicted, with eternal pains, which are the fruit of it. Now, shall we run so great a hazard for poor, vain, and momentary delights? It is sweet to a carnal heart to please the flesh, but it will cost dear. Now, 'shall we sell the birthright for one morsel of meat,' Hebrews 12:15, and hazard the loss of the love of God for trifles?

(3d.) Take heed of small sins; they are breaches of the eternal law of God. They that do not make great account of small sins will make but small account of the greatest; for he that is not faithful in a little will be unfaithful in much. There are many forcible arguments to deter us from small sins; partly because it is more difficult to avoid them, they do not come with such frightening awakening assaults as the greater do; partly because, being neglected, they taint the heart insensibly,

and men look not after their cure; partly because they do prepare and dispose to greater offences, as the little sticks set the great ones on fire; partly because with their multitude and power they do as much hurt the soul as great sins with their weight; *minuta sunt, sed multa sunt*; lastly, because they are in their own nature mortal. Therefore dash Babylon's brats against the stones. In short, small sins are the mother of great sins, and the grandmother of great punishments. Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt; the angels were cast out of heaven; Adam thrust out of Paradise.

Secondly, 'But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Doct. That eternal life is God's free and gracious gift to the sanctified.

What eternal life is we showed before: it is the full fruition of eternal joys, without any possibility of losing them.

Here is,

The donor -- God.

The meritorious and procuring cause -- Jesus Christ our Lord.

The parties qualified -- Those that have their fruit to holiness.

{Page 378} 1. On God's part, a gift, not a debt, as wages is to the servant or soldier, but *χάρισμα*, a gracious gift. Though we should servo God a thousand years, we cannot merit to be one half-day in heaven. There it is a gift to those who do most exactly persevere in holiness; the best have no other claim, but the mercy of the donor.

[1.] It is the freest gift.

[2.] It is the richest gift.

1.] It is the freest gift; God payeth more than is our due. To punish men beyond their desert is injustice; but to reward men beyond their deserts is not contrary to justice, for it is an act of mercy.

(1st.) It is greater than any merit of ours, because it is the eternal enjoyment of the ever-blessed God, and so far beyond anything that we can do. Finite things carry no proportion to an infinite reward.

(2d.) Our works are many ways imperfect, and so we may expect punishment rather than reward. Mercy is our best plea when we come to consider the case between God and our consciences: Jude 21, 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.'

[2.] It is the richest gift. What can God give us more than himself?

2. On Christ's part it is a purchase. We have it upon the account of his merit and intercession, and it is conveyed to us by Iris free promise.

[1.] Upon the account of his merit and intercession we have both the preparations and the gift itself. Justification, which is the foundation of it: Romans 5:18, 'By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.' Sanctification is the beginning and introduction into it: Titus 3:5, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' The first we have by the merit of his death and obedience: Romans 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;' the second is wrought in us freely by his Spirit. Eternal life itself Hebrews 9:15, 'That they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.'

[2.] It is conveyed by his promise: 1 John 2:25, 'And this is the promise which he hath promised us, even eternal life.'

o. The parties qualified: 'Those that are sanctified.' The freedom of this gift doth not exclude qualifications. Holy men have a just title to eternal life; but they do not deserve it; none but the holy have it, but there is no intrinsic worth in what we do to deserve it, no such meritorious influence as may alter the freeness of it.

Use 1. With faith in Christ you must join holiness. What will encourage us to live a holy life, if this will not? Through many hindrances by the way from the devil, the world, and the flesh, yet thus we tend to eternal life.

Use 2. Acknowledge the freeness of it. It is most worthy of God, though we are every way unworthy of it; it is the effect, not of our holiness, but the Lord's grace; none obtain it without holiness, yet not for holiness.

Use 3. To show us how happy the children of God are.

[1.] Happy in the Lord whom they serve -- God and Jesus Christ.

{Page 379} [2.] Happy in the reward of their service -- eternal life.

[3.] Happy in the manner of their reward -- χάρισμα, which may be considered in three instances --

(1.) Their destination thereunto by election: Luke 12:32, 'Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'

(2.) In our conversion, regeneration, or effectual vocation, the beginning of eternal life.

(3.) In our coronation, when the full possession of eternal life is given to us. All these are the free gift of God in Jesus Christ, not procured or merited by any special acts depending on man's free will.

MONERGISM BOOKS

Exposition of Romans 6, by Thomas Manton, Copyright © 2020

All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. By payment of the required fees, you have been granted the non-exclusive, non-transferable right to access and read the text

of this e-book on-screen. No part of this text may be reproduced, transmitted, downloaded, decompiled, reverse engineered, or stored in or introduced into any information storage and retrieval system, in any form or by any means, whether electronic or mechanical, now known or hereinafter invented, without the express written permission of Monergism Books.

ePub, .mobi & .pdf Editions June 2020. Requests for information should be addressed to: Monergism Books, PO Box 491, West Linn, OR 97068