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# THE MORTIFIED CHRISTIAN

SHOWING THE NATURE, SIGNS,  
NECESSITY AND DIFFICULTY  
OF TRUE MORTIFICATION

CHRISTOPHER LOVE



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# The Mortified Christian

by Christopher Love

Showing The Nature, Signs, Necessity and Difficulty of True  
Mortification.

Resolving divers Cases about secret and bosom Sins.

With a discovery of sincerity: and special helps against men's special  
corruptions.

By that faithful Minister of Christ Mr. CHRISTOPHER LOVE, Late  
Minister of Lawrence Jury, London.

London, Printed for Francis Eglesfield, and are to be sold at the  
Marigold in S. Paul's-Church-yard, 1654.

This text has been initially updated from EEBO-TCP by Project  
Puritas (Logan West, with David Jonescue and Alex Sarrouf.)  
[www.puritansearch.org](http://www.puritansearch.org)

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Editor's Note – During the TCP Transcription Process, all  
the archaic text were hand transcribed according to visual  
representation; and as such, sometimes the letters s, l, f & t  
are misconstrued with each other, these letters regularly  
being almost illegibly similar in the original facsimiles.  
Though it is rare for these errors to remain post-edit,  
unfortunately they may if uncaught. My apologies in  
advance where this error does occur.

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## **CHRISTIAN READER,**

The Author of these Treatises is sufficiently known and approved, his works do praise him in the gates. He was indeed a workman that needed not be ashamed: He was not a blazing comet, to show his own parts, but a genuine star to lead men to Christ. It is the unhappiness of our age, that men desire rather to have their ears tickled, then their hearts affected; and it is the sin of many jingling Preachers, that they mind rather the humoring of their hearers fancies, then the saving of their souls, little considering that of Seneca, *Aeger non quaerit medicum eloquentem sed sanantem*, sick men are not bettered by Physicians sugared words, but by their skillful hands. Such an one was not the reverend Author of these Sermons; we that had the happiness to be better acquainted with him, can truly say that he did not preach himself, but Jesus Christ his Lord, and himself the Churches servant for Jesus sake.

Here are presented to thee old Doctrines which will not gratify that itch of novelty which is now become epidemical. Here are common Doctrines which will not humor that affected singularity of which most men are sick. Here are plain Doctrines that will not comply with the curious palates of this wanton age. How ever do thou remember that counsel of the Prophet, Enquire for the good old paths, so shalt thou find rest for thy soul; It may be thou hast wandered through all the points of the Compass, and hast perceived in thyself nothing but disquietness and unsettlement: It will

therefore be thy wisdom to return to the right point, to come to thy first husband, for then it was better with thee then now. Here thou wilt find if not placentia, yet sanantia, if thy palate be not pleased, thy heart may be bettered, if thou dost not willfully hinder it.

The first part concerns Mortification, in which the Authors judgment is the more to be valued, because his heart was a Commentary upon his Text, and his own experience was a seal to his Doctrine.

The second part is concerning Sincerity, a thing never more in men's mouths, and yet we have just cause to fear, never further from their hearts. If thou hast sincerity, here is a glass wherein thou mayest see thy face with comfort; if thou wantest it, here is a glass also wherein thou mayest see the beauty of it, and be enamored with it.

The third Treatise relates to that great duty of Thankfulness and sin of Unthankfulness: Here is a Book wherein thou mayest read thy engagements to be thankful, and thy doom if thou art not thankful.

Lastly, here are two short exercises concerning hearing the Word of God, which were delivered at the Morning Exercise, and so calculated to the shortness of the time allotted for that work.

We have only this to add, that these Sermons are not irregular births, but have been either Collected out of, or Compared with his own Notes, and taken from his own mouth by the pen of a ready Writer. Our desire is that thou wouldest candidly accept of them, diligently read, and conscientiously practice those great duties that are here pressed. This, as it will tend to the comfort of thy own soul at that great day of account, so will it exceedingly refresh and encourage

Thy servants in the work of the Gospel,

Edm. Calamy,

Simeon Ashe,

Jer. Whitaker,

Will. Taylor,

Matt. Poole.

## **SERMON, I.**

Romans 8:13

For if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. - Rom. 8. verse. 13.

What Moses said to Israel in Deut. 30.19. [I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live] is the sum and scope of this subject I am now to treat on, a Treatise that may not only invite, but crave your serious attention and consideration, for they are matters of great concernment, of life and death: If you live after the Flesh, you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

This Chapter out of which my Text is taken, contains in it the great Charter of a Christian, wherein are enrolled the many privileges of believers; and yet amongst them, are here and there mingled and interspersed many fearful threatening's and commination's: amongst the rest this is one in my Text, If you live after the Flesh you shall die. I shall not stand long upon the explication of the words, they being very plain and obvious to the weakest capacity.

If you live after the flesh] All men that are alive, live in the Flesh, but no man should live after the Flesh, if you live after the Flesh, (that is) after the sinful motions, and corrupt dictates of Nature; To live after the Flesh, implies these three things.



1. Continuance and constancy in a way of sin, it is not said, if you do after the Flesh, ye shall die; for so the best of God's children do: but yet they do not live after the Flesh, they do not make a trade of sin; to live after the Flesh, notes a continued act of sin.

2. It notes not only constancy and continuance, but also complacency and delight in sin; men are wont to rejoice in life, and so to live after the Flesh, implies a delight and complacency in sin.

3. It implies a great deal of industry and labor in the ways of sin; it is one thing for sin to follow after you, and another thing for you to follow after sin: in Gal. 6.1. says the Apostle there, Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one with the spirit of meekness. A godly man, sin runs after him and overtakes him; but a wicked man he runs after sin, and overtakes sin: it is one thing for corruption to dog thee, and another thing for you to run after sin, and the satisfying the desires of the flesh and of the mind: to live after the Flesh, denotes constancy, complacency, and industry in the ways of sin.

The corrupt dictates and motions of the body are called Flesh for these Reasons.

1. Because sin is in the Flesh, as well as in the Spirit; the members of the body are corrupt as well as the soul, Jam. 4.1.

2. Because sin is naturally as dear to a man as his own flesh, and hence it is that it is compared to the right eye, and right hand, &c.

3. Because sin is acted by the Flesh, and that being the instrument of acting sin, it is called by the name of it. Sin was in us as soon as we put on flesh, and will be in us as long as we live in the flesh: as in Psal. 51.5. says David, I was shapen in iniquity,

and in sin did my Mother conceive me, and sin will remain in us as long as we live in this world.

If you live after the Flesh, you shall die] Dye! that is good news, it were well for a man that takes his swing in sinful delights and pleasures that he might die like a beast, that there might be an end of him; but this must not so be understood as if the soul should die eternally, but you shall die, that is, you shall incur damnation, if you live after the Flesh.

Obj. But here some may ask, how the Apostle could say that they that live after the Flesh shall die, whereas the damned in Hell fire shall live in those torments perpetually, Mark 9.44.

Ans. Though the wicked shall live in hell, yet their damnation is called a death for two reasons: 1. Because that in Scripture phrase, that doth not deserve the name of life, that doth not enjoy comfort with it: and the Scripture doth express a doleful and dismal estate by the name of death. 2. It is called death, because they are estranged and separated from God who is life.

If you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live: If you [through the Spirit;] you may sin by your own strength, but you cannot mortify sin, but by the strength of the Spirit.

Do mortify the deeds of the Body ] that is, do keep under, and subdue the power and predominancy of sin, if you mortify the deeds of the body, that is, those sins that are acted in the body, then you shall live, not everlastingly here, but you shall live (that is) forever in heaven, you shall be saved: and this is that indispensable condition upon which God hath entailed salvation, If you through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

And now having thus opened the words, I may once more say unto you as Moses to Israel, Behold, I have set before you this day, blessing and cursing, life and death, therefore choose which you will

have. I have set before you life; if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live: And I have set before you death; if you live after the Flesh, you shall die: therefore now choose you whether you will be saved or damned, whether you will live or die.

The great scope of the Apostle in this Chapter, is to stir up and press believers to walk worthy of their justification; though Christ does all for us in point of Justification, yet we must do something too; though Christ justifies us from the guilt of sin, yet we must labor likewise to be freed from the filth of sin: and this exhortation the Apostle presseth home upon them by three arguments, in Rom. 8.12, 13. Brethren (says he) we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; no we are debtors to the Spirit, to live after the Spirit; we are indebted to God, to mortify our sins and corruptions, and it's a part of equity and common honesty to pay what we owe.

2. He presseth it upon them by the sad consequence of their not walking worthy of their justification: if you live after the Flesh, you shall die: And,

3. He presseth them to it, by the great benefit and advantage that will redound to them upon the performance of this duty: If you do through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

Before I shall come to the distinct handling of the words, and insist upon those points I intend principally to treat of, I shall only from the general view and aspect of the Text, draw out seven or eight doctrinal conclusions, that so you may see the strength of the Text, and how many observations this short Text will afford, I will but only name them.

1. From the considerations of the persons, who they were that Paul doth here write to, If you live after the Flesh, you shall die; they were not wicked men only, such as were in a state of Paganism, unbelievers, but those also that were in a converted estate, true

believers, to these does Paul use this commination. From whence I would note,

That commination's and threatening's are to be pressed upon converted, as well as unconverted men.

It is very observable, that the word of God is not only compared to milk, 1 Pet. 2.2. which is of a pleasant taste, but it is likewise compared to salt, Col. 4.6. for the godly have a great deal of rottenness and corruption in them, which must be eaten out by the salt of the Word, and they thereby kept pure and spotless.

2. The Apostle doth not only preach comfort to believers, justification to them, that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, but he likewise preacheth threatening's to them. From whence observe,

That doctrines of terror ought as well to be pressed upon believers, as doctrines of comfort and consolation.

And therefore they do but preach half the will of God, that do only handle doctrines of comfort, and never press to duty, and encourage men to the practice of godliness.

3. The Apostle doth not only preach terror and commination's, but he doth also join to these threatening's doctrines of comfort: from whence observe further,

That when Ministers do preach doctrines of terror and commination, they ought to mingle with them, doctrines of comfort and consolation.

And therefore as they are to blame that do always preach doctrines of comfort, so likewise they are blameworthy that do never preach comfort: a variety of doctrine, sets off a man's ministry with a greater luster, and beauty, and efficacy upon the hearts of the hearers.

4. From the method the Apostle useth here, he first preacheth terror before he preacheth doctrines of comfort, If you live after the Flesh you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live. From whence we may observe this doctrine,

That when Christians grow sensual, wanton, and careless, and remiss in duties, laying aside that holy watchfulness and care they were wont to have, at such times as these doctrines of terror are more needful and necessary then doctrines of comfort.

5. From the addition of this phrase in the Text, [through the Spirit:] if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, it is not said in the former part of the verse, if ye [through the power of the Devil] do live after the Flesh, ye shall die; but here these words are added, if you [through the Spirit:] from whence observe,

That a man may commit sin by his own strength, but he cannot mortify sin but by the help of the Spirit.

Thou that art a single man canst as soon destroy a whole army of men with thy own hand, as subdue one sin by thy own power: any man may wound himself, but every man cannot heal himself; you may commit sin, but you cannot purge out sin; a man may easily run down a hill, but it is very difficult getting up a hill; so a man may easily commit sin, but he cannot mortify sin but by the strength of the Spirit.

6. If you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the Flesh, observe further,

That in every regenerate man, there are some deeds, and remainders, and relics of sin and corruption still left.

And from hence we may learn further,

That Christians do stand in need of mortification as well as other men, they have some unbridled passion, or untamed affection, or

unruly lust, that hath need to be tamed, as well as other men.

Godly men need sometimes to be tamed, and hampered, and mortified as well as others, the worst of men in the world.

And lastly, we may observe from the words, this doctrinal conclusion,

That men may expect their condition to be in another world, answerable to what their carriage and conversation is in this world.

Art thou a man that givest way to the vain and sinful desires and corrupt motions of thy own heart? let me tell thee, that as sure as thou art alive this day, if you continue and go on in this course, you shall die, and be damned, and undone forever: if you live after the Flesh, you shall die: but if thou art a man that dost labor to bridle and keep under thy unruly lusts, and untamed affections, that grace may get the victory over your corruptions, and that sin may not rule and reign in your mortal bodies, you are in the ready way to obtain life everlasting: And therefore I beseech you my brethren, do not think nor reason thus with yourselves, If I shall be saved I shall be saved, though I live never so profanely; and if I shall be damned, I shall be damned, let me do what I will to the contrary; do not argue thus, for here you see the Scripture tells you expressly, that if you live after the Flesh you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

And thus I have given you these 8. Doctrinal conclusions from the general scope and aspect of the words, I shall now draw out 3. Doctrines more which I intend to insist upon.

If you live after the Flesh, you shall die: from whence observe this Doctrine in the first place,

That living to the world, after the sinful motions and corrupt dictates of Nature, without laboring to mortify and subdue them, is that which will bring men to death and damnation.

I add this phrase in the Doctrine, without mortifying of them, because living after the Flesh is put in opposition to mortifying the deeds of the Flesh, if you live after the Flesh without endeavoring to mortify and subdue the motions of it, this will bring you to death and damnation; in Gal. 6.8. says the Apostle, 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. By sowing to the Flesh, is meant the following after the desires of the Flesh; and such as do so shall thereby reap damnation; you that have your seed-time in sin, shall have your harvest in Hell, you shall inherit damnation, and Hell fire forever: if you sow to the Flesh, you shall of the Flesh reap corruption.

I shall speak to this Doctrine only in this one Sermon, because my intentions are principally to insist upon the other branch of the Text, if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live: and therefore I shall only answer one Query, and then give you a practical Use, and so have done.

The Question is this, may some say, If this be so, that those that live after the Flesh must die, then how may I know and be assured and satisfied in my own conscience, that I am the man that doth thus live after the Flesh, and that sin is not subdued and mortified in my soul?

Ans. I shall give you two general discoveries, how you may know whether sin be unmortified in you or no, by your carriage both before and after the commission of any sin.

1. By your carriage before the commission of any sin, when there is a longing and hankering desire in thy soul to commit sin, and a studying and contriving how to act it, hereby the Scripture describes an unmortified man, in Psal. 36.4. He deviseth mischief upon his bed, he setteth himself in a way that is not good: when a man studies and contrives how to act a sin, and to carry it on closely and secretly, this is an argument (when upon such deliberate debates and rational consultations, a man sets

himself in a way that is not good) that he hath an unmortified heart; and therefore if it be thus with you, that you do plot, and study, and contrive how to commit sin; it is a strong argument that the power of sin is not subdued and mortified in you.

2. A corruption is unmortified in the soul, when a man is more eager to commit the sin unto which he is tempted, then he is to resist it, when a man is all on fire as it were, and so eager in the pursuit of a lust, to the satisfaction of which he is tempted, that he casts away all thoughts of resistance: this argues such a man to have an unmortified heart. A godly man that hath the power of mortifying grace upon his heart, he may fall into the same sins as thou doest; but yet he encounters with them, and takes more care how to resist sin then to act it: but now (it may be) all thy thoughts are taken up how to satisfy thy lust, and act this sin with secrecy, but not at all to resist it: this is a sign of a very unmortified heart.

3. When men do never vent and put forth their strength in prayer against those corruptions to which they are most subject: when men are assaulted with one sin one day, and another lust another day, and yet never go to God by prayer, to beg for strength and mortifying grace to resist and keep under these corruptions: this is a sign of a very unmortified heart: In Psal. 51.15. says David, Oh Lord open thou my lips: one observes from hence, that as long as David lay under the guilt of his sin, all that time his mouth was shut, he could not pray to God; and therefore it is that after he had confessed his sin he begs, that God would open his lips, that he might show forth his praise: as long as your mouth is shut that you cannot pray against your corruptions, it is a sign that sin is not yet mortified in you.

4. When corruptions and temptations to such and such sins, do most of all trouble you and disturb you in holy duties, when a man is in an ordinance, and a lust shall tempt him there and fill his heart full of wickedness and worldly mindedness; when sin



and corruption so seizeth upon your heart, that you cannot tell what a Minister says in a whole hour together, this argues that you have a very unmortified heart: in Jer. 23.11. says God there, In my house have I found their wickedness. When you give way to sinful thoughts, and covetous imaginations even in God's house, in the midst of holy duties, this discovers not only an unmortified, but a very impudent heart, the Devil does (as I may so say) ravish thee, and deflower thee even in God's presence: as many young men come to Church, to look after and gaze upon handsome women, to cherish their lust and speculative wantonness in them; take heed of this, for it is an argument that you live after the Flesh, when you give way to such sinful temptations in holy duties, when you should be attending God in his Ordinances.

5. It is an argument that sin is unmortified in thy heart, when the recalling to mind of thy former sinfulness does not humble thee, but rather stir up thy corruptions afresh in thy heart, to plot and contrive how to commit the same sins again: it may be thou hast been a drunkard in former time, and now thou callest to mind this sin with delight, and studiest how to be drunk again: or an old fornicator or adulterer, and now thou rememberest it, and contrivest how to commit this sin again; this is a sign of a very unmortified heart: in Ezek. 23.19, 21. Thus thou calledst to remembrance the lewdness of thy youth, in bruising thy teats by the Egyptians, for the paps of thy youth. The children of Israel by calling to remembrance their adulteries in Egypt, they fell again to their sinful pleasures.

6. When a temptation to sin is quickly and easily closed with, when thou canst commit a great sin upon a small temptation, when thy heart is like Gunpowder to sin, touch and it takes, as it was with the young man that the Harlot met, in Prov. 7.22. it is said, he went after her straightway, this is a sign of an unmortified heart.

And thus I have given you 6. Characters (before the committing of sin) of an unmortified heart: now there are 3. Characters more (that I shall lay down of an unmortified heart) after the commission of any sin. As,

1. If you find more joy in the pleasure of sin after the commission of it, then you do of sorrow for committing of it; if you have more joy in regard of the sweetness of sin, then you have sorrow in the consideration of the evil of sin. And,

2. When you cannot endure a reproof for any sin you have committed, this argues an unmortified heart: when men are like nettles, that if you touch them never so little, they will sting you, so when you are told of your drunkenness or uncleanness, or the like, you cannot away with it, but do rage, and brawl, and wrangle; this shows that you are asleep and dead in sin, when you cannot endure a reproof, nor abide to be awakened out of it; it is a sign that you love sin well, when you cannot abide it should be spoken against: says the Apostle in Jam. 1.19, 21. Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. When the word of God doth reprove you for a sin, you should be slow to wrath, not apt to be enraged at every reproof, but to receive with meekness that engrafted word that is able to save your souls, verse. 21. an unmortified heart is very ready to storm, and fume, and fret when he is reproved.

3. When you take more care after the committing of a sin, to keep it secret from the view and knowledge of men, then to repent and be humbled for it in the presence of God, when you labor rather to hide it then repent of it; this proceeds from the predominancy of sin and corruption in thy heart.

And thus I have given you 9. Discoveries of an unmortified heart, the Lord give you all grace seriously to inquire into your own souls whether you are mortified men and women, or no.

The Use that I shall make of this shall be of reproof, [Use of reproof.] If it be so that those that live after the flesh shall die, Oh then how blameworthy are all you that do incur this dismal judgment of eternal death, that rather than you will kill your sins, sin shall kill thy soul: It is reported of the Basilisk, that if thou dost not kill him he will kill thee: and so it is here, if thou dost not kill thy sins, thy sins will be the death of thy soul; and therefore how blameworthy are you, that will rather suffer sin to kill your souls, than you will take any pains to mortify and subdue your sins?

I have read of a man that loved a Fox so well, that notwithstanding the Fox had pulled out the bowels of one of his children, yet he would not part with him: and so now I fear that there are many of you that harbor such ravenous lusts and corruptions in your hearts, that will destroy your souls, and yet will not part with them, but suffer them to rule and reign in you; never going unto God by prayer, to beg for mortifying grace to subdue and keep them under. And thus I have done with the first branch of the Text, If you live after the flesh, you shall die.

## **SERMON, II.**

Romans 8:13

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. - Rom. 8. verse. 13.

I Now come to fall upon the 2d. part of the words, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Mortifying the deeds of the body cannot be understood of the religious deeds of the body, for they are to be cherished; nor of the natural deeds of the body, as eating and drinking; but it is to be meant of the sinful actions that are done by the body, arising from the temptations and injections of Satan, or the corrupt dictates of our

own sinful nature: If you mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live: you see here (beloved) the Lord does walk in ways of contrariety to the judgments of flesh and blood; he bids us mourn and sow in tears, and then we shall reap in joy. He bids us die, and tells us this is the way to live, and no way can be more contrary to flesh and blood; and yet there is no other way to live but this: we must first die to sin and the world, before we can live a life of grace; and we must die a natural death, before we can come to live a life of glory.

There are two observations that I shall draw from this latter part of the Text.

1. That mortification of corruption is a necessary qualification required in every person that shall obtain salvation: If you mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live. And,

2. From the addition of this phrase, (through the spirit) if you through the spirit do mortify; Observe from hence,

2. That though a man can commit sin by his own strength, yet he cannot mortify sin, but by the strength of the spirit. These are the two points I intended to insist upon from this latter part of the Text. I shall by God's assistance speak to the first of them, in several Sermons; but shall only at this time lay down something by way of introduction, to this needful doctrine of mortification; and then I shall come to handle those things that are most useful and necessary to be known about this doctrine, I shall give you the nature and characters of it, and the false mistakes about it, and the jealousies of godly people, whereby they think they are not mortified when they are, &c. At present I shall only speak something introductory, to the clearer handling of the point, that mortification and corruption is a necessary qualification, required in every person that shall attain to salvation.

I shall first lay down 8 or 9 [precautionary] Rules to those that are unmortified, then so many more to such as are mortified; I shall

begin with the first to those that are unmortified.

1. Count not the restraining of sin from coming into act, to be a real mortifying of sin: restraining grace is not mortifying grace, as in Gen. 6.20. says God there to Abimelech, I withheld thee from sinning against me, therefore suffered I thee not to touch her: He had sin restrained but not mortified. As a Lion confined within the grates, is a Lion still, though he cannot go about to devour his prey; so though men are restrained from acting those sins to which they are inclinable, yet the restraint of sin is not to be taken for the mortifying of sin. A man may for a time lay a curb and restraint upon his lusts, that they do not come forth into act, without the power of mortifying grace: a man may bridle a lust for many years, and yet the lust remain unmortified; therefore I say, do not count the restraining of a sin to be the mortifying of a sin.

2. Another [precautionary] Rule is this, that a listlessness to any kind of sin, is no infallible demonstration that such a sin is mortified; count not a present listlessness to some sins to be a saving mortification of them: this is a great mistake that many men run into, because they have no desire to the committing of some sins which their very education makes them averse to, therefore they think they have a work of mortification and sanctification, wrought in them: whereas there are divers external causes that may make a man indisposed and averse to some sins, as sickness, old age, horror of conscience, education, or a man's own natural temper.

5 Causes.

1. A man may have a listlessness and unwillingness to some sins, arising from a fit of sickness, that though he hath been a drunkard, or an adulterer in former times; yet because he hath thereby distempered himself, and impaired his health, therefore he hath no lust or desire to those sins now; or if he hath renewed desires after those sins, yet it may be he wants strength of body

to act them; such a listlessness to sin flowing from a sick bed, does not proceed from mortifying grace. Or,

2. This indisposition to sin may flow from old age, wherein a man's strength is wasted and decayed, and so not able to act those sins of adultery, drunkenness, &c. which formerly he hath committed, and took pleasure in. And,

3. It may flow from a good education, and principles of morality in men, which restrains them from many gross and scandalous sins.

4. It may proceed likewise from horror and terror of conscience, when this seizes upon a man, that God casts the flashes of hell fire in his face, this may make him abstain from sin for a time, while the horror lies upon him: as a thundering storm sours the beer in our cellars, so when God thunders upon the conscience, it will sour and embitter sin to a man, that he hath no desires after it for the present, but yet this is not mortifying grace upon the heart, but the horror of conscience that doth gnaw, and gripe, and terrify the man, and makes him listless after sin, at such a time.

5. Another external cause of a man's listlessness to some sins may be his natural temper: for though every man hath seminally all sin in him, yet there are some sins which by nature he is more inclinable to then others, according to his complexion and constitution: as a man that is of a choleric complexion, he is most inclinable to anger; and if of a sanguine complexion, then he is most inclinable to uncleanness, and so of the rest; so that there are many sins, that by a man's natural temper he is averse from; as Luther professeth of himself, that he was never in all his life time troubled with covetousness: now this did not proceed from mortifying grace, but from the natural temper of his body, it was a gift of nature given him of God, and not a gift of grace; and therefore (beloved) you are not to impute that to

mortifying grace, that is merely the result of a violent sickness, old age, education, terrors of conscience, or a man's natural temper and constitution. Give me leave to illustrate this to you by this familiar similitude: suppose you should put a dog and a sheep together, and cast flesh before the sheep, and grass before the dog; neither of them will eat anything; the sheep will not eat the flesh, neither will the dog eat grass; which ariseth from the natural temper of the creatures: Why, so it is here, men's natural tempers do dispose them to some sins and not to others, which therefore is not to be imputed to the power of mortifying grace.

3. Another [precautionary] Rule touching this doctrine of mortification, is this: Let mortification be extended to inward and secret sins, as well as to outward and scandalous sins; not only the lusts of the flesh, but of the mind are to be mortified; not only the deeds of the body, but the thoughts of the heart, and corruptions in the inward man are to be subdued; you are to extend mortification to the subduing of vicious affections, as well as base actions, as in Col. 3.5. says the Apostle, Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness &c. You do think, it may be, that these two are both one; no, fornication is the sin in the act, uncleanness the sin in the affection and in the thought; now the Apostle bids them mortify fornication, that is, uncleanness in the act; but he does not stay there, but tells them they must subdue their sinful affections, and vicious inclinations to those sins. You must mortify the very first motions and secret propensions to any sin in your hearts.

4. Let mortification be especially directed to strike at those sins, that are thy master sins, that are most prevalent and predominant in thy heart, those sins that thou hast most prayed against and art least able to resist; those sins that do most strongly assault thee, and most easily beset thee and over-master thee. Thus David in Psal. 18.22. says he, I have kept myself from mine iniquity, that is, from my special sins, my constitution sins, my bosom iniquities: I might in this case give you the same advice the King of Syria gave his

Captains, in 1 Chron. 22.31. saying, Fight neither with small nor great, but only with the King of Israel; So may I say to you, fight not so much against any sin, as against your beloved darling constitution sins, that do most easily beset you and prevail over you.

5. Another [precautionary] Rule I would give you, is this, Think not to compass this great work of mortification, by a general superficial fight of sin, unless thou comest to a distinct and particular apprehension of them: if you take your sins and corruptions all together in the lump, you will never be able to break and mortify them. As when a bundle of rods are knit close one to another, the strongest man in the world is not able to break them, yet if they be taken asunder, any man may break them all one by one with ease; so here if you take sin apart, and labor to have a distinct view and fight of them, this is the way to overcome and mortify sin; if you shoot at random, you will never hit the mark; so if you look at sin in the general, in the lump, you will never be able to mortify them: as if a man were enjoined to carry a great tree a good distance off his house, home, the way to do it is not to go to hale and draw the whole body of the tree together, for this were impossible, but he must cut the tree in pieces, and then he may easily do it: So many men go about to subdue and beat down sin in their hearts, but they think to do it all at once, but this is not the way; you must labor to take sin in pieces, to have a particular view of them, to break and master them one by one, and thereby you shall be able to overcome the strongest of them.

6. Let your mortification extend not only to particular acts of sin, but to the whole bulk and body of sin; it is a great fault amongst many Christians, that if they be troubled with passions, they go about to mortify them; or if with unclean and sin full thoughts, they endeavor to subdue them, but yet in the meantime leave the whole body of sin unmortified; whereas whenever you go about to mortify any one particular lust, you should labor to bewail the whole body of sin that is in you, and to strike at the very root of sin. As when a man would keep a tree from growing, he must not only lop off the branches, for that will not do it, but he must pluck it up by the root; so you may cut



off one sin after another, and make those branches to wither; but if you do not pull up sin by the root, the other will but make your corruptions to rage the more; and if not the same sins, yet others, and it may be worse than the former will grow up in the room of them. David when he came to bewail his sin of adultery, he likewise bewails the sin of his nature; in Psal. 51.5. saith he, Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me: To show that when we go about to mortify any one particular sin, we must likewise bewail and labor to bring under the whole body of sin.

7. Another [precautionary] Rule is this, When you are setting upon the work of mortification, go about it in the strength of Christ, and not in your own strength. I told you before, you may commit sin by your own strength, but you cannot mortify sin by your own strength. If you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live: it is an arrow fetched from Christ's quiver, that can only kill and slay thy lusts, therefore do not depend upon thy own reason, understanding or knowledge in the managing of this great work of mortification, and grappling with sin; for though you may discover your sin, and your danger by reason of it, yet by your own strength you are not able to subdue and overcome that sin. We are kept by the power of God unto salvation; do not encounter with sin in confidence of thy own strength, for thou art but as a feather before a whirlwind, thou hast not power of thy own to resist the weakest temptation, or subdue the least corruption: and therefore do as David did when he was to encounter with Goliath, a great and mighty Giant, and himself but a poor little stripling, why what doth David do? says he in 1 Sam. 17.45. Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come against thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, and in the power of his might: So now if you go out against your sins in the power of God's might, this is the only way to subdue them, and keep under your unruly lusts.

8. Take heed of suffering sin to remain long in thy heart without control, but labor to mortify it, in the very first motions of it. When thy nature first begins to close with a sin, then labor to root it out; for

it's easier to keep sin out of our souls, then it is to drive out sin, when once it is gotten into our hearts. Sin is like a serpent, which if he can but get in his head into any place, he will soon wind in his whole body; so if we cherish and give entertainment to the first motions and inclinations, it will quickly insinuate itself into us. Sin is like the overflowing of a mighty river, when once the water hath made a breach in the bank, if it be not presently stopped, it will soon overflow the whole meadow; so if we let sin alone in the first motions of it, it will quickly over-run the whole man.

9. The last [precautionary] Rule I shall give you, is this, When thou hast through the strength of Christ, mortified one sin, or resisted one temptation, do not sit down, and think your work is done, but expect another combat; your corruption will come afresh upon you again, the Devil will still be plotting against thee, and sending one temptation after another, to foil thee if he can; and God does suffer him to do thus in a great deal of wisdom, to try us, and humble us, and to let us see what continual cause we have of standing upon our guard, and keeping a constant watch over our own hearts, and that as long as we live we shall stand in need of mortifying grace. As the branches of a tree, though you lop them off yet they will spring out again; so when you have mortified one corruption, another will spring forth; though thou hast cut off one lust today, yet it may be another will spring out tomorrow; if you have mortified pride today, passion may spring up tomorrow, or covetousness tomorrow, or worldly mindedness tomorrow, &c. so that we have continual cause of standing upon our watch-tower, and observing these deceitful hearts of ours, and always need of mortifying grace, to keep under our corruptions.

And thus I have done with these 9. Rules by way of caution, touching this doctrine of mortification, which will all of them be very useful, in the handling of many points that I shall treat upon in this subject. And because in what I have already said, (it may be) I have been near the bosoms of many of you, and touched your souls to the quick: and there may be some poor humble soul or other among you that hath

the power of mortifying grace upon his heart, and yet is ready to despond because he finds his corruptions to be so stirring and active in him, that he is not able to master them; therefore will you follow me in your thoughts a little, while I lay you down 7. comfortable Considerations in this particular? the first is this,

1. That the stirrings and risings of corruptions in the heart, may yet be consistent with true mortification; that very lust that is mortified, may yet make a great deal of stir and rising in the soul. And this Consideration would administer a great deal of comfort to many poor souls, were they but satisfied in this particular: in Rom. 9.9. says Paul there, When the Commandment came, sin revived: and yet Paul was a mortified man, and a sanctified man. It is with a godly man in this particular, as with a man sick of a violent fever, though the man may be very near death, yet the strength of the disease may be so powerful upon him, as to make him toss and tumble, that two or three men shall scarce be able to hold him quiet in his bed; but yet this cannot be imputed to the strength of the man, but to the strength of the disease that makes him do thus; and so it may be in many a poor soul, sin may be very near its death and mortification, and yet stir and rage more than ever; but this proceeds not from the weakness of the man, to resist sin, but from the strength of Satan's temptations. As it is with many birds, after their heads are pulled off they flutter more strongly than ever before; so thou mayest give a mortal wound to a sin, and yet when the head (as it were) of sin is off, it may keep a great deal of stir in thy soul.

But here (beloved) because I know there may be a great deal of ill use made of this comfortable consideration, therefore let me tell you that only in 2. Cases, the stirrings of corruptions, and the workings of it in thy soul, doth not argue an unmortified heart. As,

1. When as corruptions stir in thee, so thy resolutions and strivings against these sins, and humiliation for them, do stir in thee too; when as the suggestions of Satan, and solicitations to sin do increase, so thy hearty prayers to God, & resolutions

against those sins do increase too; when you can neither be quiet for sin, nor sin be quiet for you, in this case the stirrings of corruption do not argue an unmortified heart, but rather that sin hath already its death blow.

2. The stirrings of corruptions in thy heart, though they be very violent, yet they do not argue that thy heart is unmortified, in case that after such turbulent stirrings and struggling's of sin in thy heart, then these corruptions grow weaker and weaker. It is with sin in a godly man, as it is with men in hot diseases, that do distemper the brain when a violent fit seizeth upon them, it makes them so outrageous and unruly, that a man would admire, how a poor lean sickly man should be so strong; but now when the fit is over, and the strength of the disease past, the poor man by his former struggling, is become a great deal the more faint, and feeble, and weak; now if it be thus with you, that the struggling's of sin, do become the weakening's of sin; that when corruptions have stirred in thee, thou hast stirred against them, and overcome them so, that you find their strength abated and decayed; this is a very great evidence and argument of mortifying grace in thy heart.

2. Another [precautionary] Rule by way of comfort, is this, To consider, that mortification of sin doth not reach so far in any regenerate man, as to the utter abolition and extirpation of sin out of the soul. Never expect that it should extend thus far; it is with sin in the soul, as it was with the plague of Leprosy in some cases: If the plague had spread in the walls of the house, and was a fretting Leprosy, it could not be gotten out by scraping or washing, but the house must be pulled down and demolished: so the leprosy of sin will cleave to thee as long as thou livest in this world, till this body of thine be dissolved. I may compare sin in the soul, to the tree you read of in Dan. 4.14, 15. whose branches were cut off, but yet the stump and root still remained: so you may lop off the branches of sin, but you can never quite eradicate and pluck it up by the roots. Do what you can, sin will

vex you and disturb you, as long as you live in this world. And therefore (I say) do not expect that mortification should extend so far, as to a total abolition and utter extirpation of sin.

3. Take this for your comfort, That though God did never intend that mortification should reach so far, as to the utter extirpation of sin, yet God doth intend that it should reach so far as to the taking away of the domination of sin; though it doth not take away the being of sin, yet it doth take away the dominion and reigning power of sin. It shall be in your souls like those beasts spoken of in Dan. 7.14. it is said, Their dominion shall be taken away, but their lives shall be prolonged for a little season: So God will permit sin to live in you for a little season, but not to reign in you: as in Rom. 6.14. Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the Law, but under Grace; You are neither under the rigor of the Law, nor under the power of the Law; and therefore sin shall not have dominion over you, because you are not under the Law, but under Grace. You are not under sin as a law, but under the command and law of Grace; for the law is there taken for the law of sin, as in Rom. 7.23. it is the Apostles dialect to call sin by the name of a law, says he, I see a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, &c. sin shall not have dominion over you, though its life and being be prolonged for a little season.

4. Take this for your comfort, That an expulsive faculty, or a sincere endeavor in the soul to expel and mortify sin, is accepted by God as a real mortification: if the Lord sees thee stand as it were in battle array against thy lusts, and that thou dost grapple with every sin, and resist every temptation, and stand upon thy guard with thy weapons in thy hand, God looks upon this principle of resistance, as if it were a perfect resistance.

It is a notable place, that, in Lev. 11.33, 36. you read there, that it was a part of the ceremonial Law, That if any unclean thing fell into a vessel of water, both the water and the vessel were unclean; but if it

fell into a spring or fountain of water, that should not be unclean: and interpreters give this reason of it, because if any unclean thing fell into a vessel of water, that having no purging faculty to cleanse itself, must needs be unclean; but if any unclean thing, fell into a fountain or river of water, that should not be defiled, because by its continual gliding motion, it cleanseth itself from all filthiness that falls into it; and so here if thou hast no principle at all within thee, that stirs thee up to resist and withstand thy corruption, to cleanse and root sin out of thy heart, thou art then unclean; but if when sin falls upon thee, thou doest by a holy industry and continual striving against sin, from a principle of grace within, labor to cleanse, and purge, and free thyself from those sins; in this case thou art not to be pronounced an unclean and unmortified man: And oh what unspeakable comfort may this afford every one of you, that your resisting and encountering with sin is looked upon by God, as a total subduing and overcoming of it.

5. Another comfortable consideration, is this, To consider that thou hast God's promise and Christ's power to help thee in the managing of this great work of mortification, (beloved) there is never a Mothers Child of you that does belong to Christ, that does encounter and fight with the Devil alone, or bear their own burdens alone; there are none of you that have an interest in Christ, but have God's promise and Christ's power to help and assist thee in the mortifying of every sin: and therefore it is very observable, that, as in some places God commands us to mortify sin, as in Col. 3.5. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, mortification, uncleanness, &c. So in other places God hath promised to do it himself for us: as in Micah 7.19. He will subdue our iniquities for us. As God commands his children to obey him, so he conveys power and ability whereby to enable them to do what he commands: God bids them mortify sin, Alas, says a poor soul, I am not able to grapple with my corruptions, and to keep them under; why then, says God, I will help thee, and subdue and mortify sin for thee. Oh what a gracious Captain do we fight under, that does our work for us,

and yet gives us the honor of it; that fights our battles for us, and yet gives us the glory of the victory! and oh what a comfort is this, that we have such a good God to fight for us, and subdue our iniquities for us!

6. Another consideration is this, That sin and corruption may be more stirring and boisterous after a man is regenerate, then they were before conversion. Thus it was with Paul, in Rom. 7.9. I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, sin revived and I died: before I was converted, I was alive, no sin at all troubled me, I thought myself in a very good and happy condition, that I was a blameless man, and a mortified man; but when the Commandment came, sin revived: when the Command of God came, which is meant of the 10. Commandment that limits our very thoughts, that we must not have so much as a sinful thought, or a covetous thought; and if we have, this sin alone is enough to condemn us, though we were blameless in regard of all the other Commandments when this Commandment came, then sin revived, and I died, that is, I saw myself in a lost and undone condition, without a Savior: now these stirrings of sin after conversion, does not argue that there is more sin in the soul then there was before conversion, but only that it is more discovered, and more obvious to a man, so that he sees himself out of measure sinful; thou hadst not so quick an eye to discern sin before, as now thou hast. I might illustrate this to you by this similitude, Suppose any of you should be knocking or striking your finger against a stool, or chair, or any such thing; and upon a sudden by accident should cut it, why the least knock or touch after your finger is cut, will make it smart; but you might have knocked it again and again, before, and yet never felt it; whereas now everything that toucheth it troubles you: and so it is here with a man after conversion, the poor man cries out, Lord what is the matter that this sin, and that sin, and every sin troubles me? it was not wont to be thus with me before; why, the reason is, because thy conscience was not so tender before conversion, as now it is; and

you could not then discern small and lesser sins, as now you can, when the Lord Jesus Christ irradiates and shines forth with his bright beams upon thy soul, enlightening thereof, and discovering the secret sins that lie lurking there.

7. And lastly, take this for thy comfort, That in your endeavors to mortify sin, you may die by yielding to sin, but you shall never die by opposing and resisting of sin. It is not good to cry for quarter at sins hands; you can never die by grappling with sin, but you may die by yielding to sin. Those sins shall never damn thee, that thou hast labored and prayed against, and encountered with; but if you (like a faint hearted soldier run away and) yield to Satan's temptations and assaults, then you are undone; thou mayest be damned by yielding to sin, but thou shalt never be damned by fighting against sin: and therefore labor and beg earnestly of God to give you the power of mortifying grace in your hearts, that so you may be enabled to mortify and keep under sin, and bring the flesh to be subject to the spirit. And thus I have given you in all 16. [precautionary] Rules, as introductory to this great Doctrine of Mortification.

## **SERMON, III.**

Romans 8:13

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. -Rom. 8. verse. 13.

I Shall now fall upon the discussing of several Queries about this Doctrine. As,

1. I shall show you the nature of Mortification. And,
2. The necessity of it in reference to salvation.



3. The discoveries whereby you may know whether God hath brought you into a state of mortification or no. And,

4. I shall show the great mistakes, that many men fall into about this doctrine of mortification: as some to think they are mortified when they are not; others to think they are not mortified, when indeed they are. And,

5. I shall show you the great difficulty of this duty, and divers other necessary things touching this doctrine. I shall dispatch three of these queries at present, but do intend to insist more largely upon the latter.

I shall begin with the first, viz.

Qu. What is the nature of mortification?

Ans. I shall give you this plain description of it, It is a holy disposition in a regenerate man derived from the efficacy and virtue of Christ's death, whereby the strength of sin is weakened, and the dominion of it destroyed, being utterly disabled from having a commanding power or rule over the man anymore.

I say it is a disposition in a regenerate man, because that an unregenerate man is an unmortified man; and that it is derived from the virtue and efficacy of Christ's death, because the death of Christ does not only take away the guilt of sin in reference to its damning power, but it likewise takes away the dominion and power of sin, that sin shall not reign in us. And I express it further, whereby the strength of sin is weakened, and the dominion and power of it destroyed; not that I do extend mortification to an utter abolition and extirpation of sin, but only to the subduing and weakening of our corruptions; though the being of sin remains, yet the commanding power of sin is taken away.

2. The next thing I am to show you, is the necessity of this great work of mortification, which lies in these 3. things.

1. It is very necessary in point of evidence, to know whether you do belong to Christ or no, there is nothing in the world will more truly evidence your having an interest in God, than this, That the Lord hath brought you into a state of mortification: you can have no interest in a living God, if there be still living lusts and corruptions remaining in you. I might here make use of a story I have sometimes told you, of an Island that lies between Scotland and Ireland, and there being a controversy between the two nations, to which of them the Island did belong, the matter was decided thus, that they shall take a great many Toads, and Serpents, and unclean creatures, and put them into the Island, and if these unclean and venomous beasts did live, then the Island belonged to Scotland: but if they did die, then it must belong to Ireland; because no unclean beasts do live there. I may make this application of it, there is a great controversy between God and the Devil, to whom thy soul belongs, now therefore if venomous lusts, and unclean corruptions do live in thy heart, and rule and reign there, this is an argument that you belong to Satan; but if sin does not live nor reign in thee, this is an undeniable argument that you do belong to God.

2. The necessity of mortification consists in this, Because grace cannot live in thy soul, unless sin and corruption be dead there; before there can be the life of grace, there must be the death of sin: in Rom. 6.11. Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, (says the Apostle ) if corruptions live, grace cannot live in thy heart: as it is reported of Doves, they cannot live in smoky and nasty places; so the Spirit of God will not live in that soul that is full of nasty corners of sin and corruption.

3. The necessity of mortification, appears in this, because the soul cannot live in glory, till sin die in the heart: as grace cannot live in the heart, here, till sin be subdued; so neither can the soul live in glory hereafter, till sin is dead and mortified: as one says well, if sin does not die, the sinner must die; if God does not kill

thy sins, sin will kill thy soul: in 1 Cor. 15.36. says the Apostle, Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: as the grain does die and rot in the ground before it is quickened and springs up again, so thy soul cannot be quickened and made capable of living with God in glory, till thy corruptions be rotten, and dead, and destroyed in thy soul. And thus much shall suffice touching the necessity of mortification.

I shall be somewhat longer in the next Query, which is to lay down to you, in the third place, some discoveries whereby you may know, whether the Lord hath brought you into a state of mortification yea or no; which it may be some of you are very desirous to be satisfied in: I shall give you 6. discovering Characters of it, and go over them very briefly.

1. Would you know whether God hath brought you into a state of mortification, or no? you may know it by this Character, If thou art now more fearful of running into occasions and opportunities of sin, then you have been in times past, this is an argument that thou art a mortified man: an unmortified heart is bold, and venturous, and will rush upon occasions of sin; whereas a mortified heart is very careful to avoid all occasions of evil. One compares a mortified man to a Dove or Partridge; now such as use that game of hawking, report, that there is such an innate fear and dread implanted in a Dove or Partridge, of the Hawk, that they do not only fear the Hawk, but the very feathers of him: and so a mortified man does not only fear a downright sin, but also anything that may be a provocation or inlet to a sin; now if this holy fear of displeasing and offending God be found in thee, I may safely pass this sure judgment upon thee, that thou art a mortified man. When thou art in such a gracious frame and temper of spirit, as that in the Epistle of Jude ver. 23. that thou hatest the garment spotted with the flesh; it is a metaphorical expression in allusion to those that had the plague of Leprosy under the Law, in Lev. 13.45. The children of Israel did not only fear touching such a man, but they would not touch his garment, or come near his house or anything he had: so we should hate the garment spotted with the

flesh, that is, avoid everything that may endanger infection, or occasion a sin.

2. Another discovery is this, That when an occasion of committing a sin is fairly offered to a man, and all circumstances concurring, that might provoke him to that sin, yet he will restrain and bridle his appetite, and will not commit that sin, this is a sign of a truly mortified heart; and if God hath brought thee into such a frame, he hath thoroughly mortified thy corruptions. (Beloved) an unmortified man may abstain from a sin, when there is no opportunity or occasion offered to commit that sin: but this is an argument of a mortified heart, that though all occasion for the acting a sin do concur, yet he will abstain from it: you have instances in two men that did discover their mortification in this regard, one of them was in Joseph, in Gen. 39.9. he had a fair occasion offered him to commit the sin of adultery, he had opportunity, for he and his Mistress were alone; and he had importunity, she did urge and solicit him from day today to do it; and 3. he had secrecy too, the text saith, the doors were shut, there was none but they two in the house. 4. He might have gotten a great deal of preferment and advantage by it, she would have made him Lord over her house: you see here was opportunity, importunity, secrecy, and advantage; all these occasions were fairly offered, and did concur to invite Joseph to the sin of uncleanness; and yet for all this Joseph replies, How shall I do this great wickedness, and so sin against God? here you see the power of sin was mortified in Josephs heart; now do you try your own hearts by this pattern, that when there are all occasions offered to the committing of a sin, you can then say nay to your lusts.

Another instance is in David, in 1 Sam. 24.4. Saul came into the same cave where David and his men lay, and the text saith, That while Saul was in the cave, David came and cut off the lap of his robe privily: now David might with as much ease have cut off his head, if he would; and though Saul pursued David to take way his life, yet when David had an opportunity to have cut off Saul's head, he would not do it; and this did evidence the sin of revenge to be mortified in

David's heart. Now I beseech you, examine your hearts in these 2 particulars, and see how the case stands between God and your own souls.

3. Another discovery is this, If there be in thy heart a less tendency to, and a greater reluctancy against the Devils temptations to sin, then formerly; this is a good argument that the Lord hath brought thee into a state of mortification. It may be, heretofore thy nature was Gun-powder, apt to be in a flame upon any temptation; but now it is like unto green wood, that will lie a great while upon the fire before it burns; so a temptation can very hardly persuade you to yield to it; if it be thus with you, you have made a great progress in this work of mortification.

4. If there be a fair proportion between the death of sin, and the life of grace in thy soul, then thou art a mortified man. (Beloved) the Lord's work is not a half work, to kill corruptions in thy heart and no more; but if the Lord hath savingly subdued sin in thy soul, he will work a contrary work of grace in thee, that that shall live and act in thy soul; mortification & the death of sin, must hold equipage with vivification, and the life of grace; so that if sin be dead, grace shall live in thy soul: and therefore the Apostle joins them both together, in Rom. 6.11. Count yourselves dead unto sin, but alive unto God: and so in 1 Pet. 4.12. 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. Here the Apostle does not only enjoin us not to spend our time in fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, but to live unto God likewise: and therefore, (beloved) that is only a cessation, not a mortification of corruption, where there is a forcible restraint laid upon thy lusts, they only seem to be dead, but are not so really.

5. Mortification is discovered by this Character, where the keeping under of any corruption is the result of a deep humiliation: that mortification that never had true humiliation preceding it, is but a mere cessation from sin. Thy sins have never yet been truly

mortified, if thy heart hath not been truly humbled: many men do with their sins, as fencers do upon a stage, sometimes they give one another a slight blow or scar, but they never strike a deadly stroke; so some men will play with sin, but never give it a mortal wound: but now a truly mortified man, is like a warrior, he will either kill or be killed; he will kill his sins, or else his sin will kill him. Now examine yourselves in this particular, are you only fencers to sport and play with your lusts, or are you warriors that fight with an implacable opposition against sin? do you only give a slight scar to sin, or have you given it a deadly wound?

6. Mortification may be discovered by the generality of it, for it doth not consist in the killing of any one particular sin, but in the striking at the root and whole body of sin: and therefore the Apostle exhorteth us to mortify our members which are on the earth, fornication, uncleanness, &c. and to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts, and to keep under the whole body of sin. It is with the mortification of sin, as it is with the dying of the body: you know death is not a seizure upon the arm, or leg, or any one or two members, but upon all the members of the body, all must die: so mortification is not the killing of any one member of sin, but a seizure upon all the whole body of sin; the keeping under of some particular sins, doth not argue mortification, unless you have given a mortal wound to the very body and bulk of corruption.

And thus I have done with the doctrinal part of these 3. Queries already resolved. I shall now speak something by way of application, before I come to handle the other Queries, which I shall spend a great deal more time about, but for the present, the Use that I shall make of what I have already delivered shall be this.

It may be this Doctrine may gravel many a conscientious heart, and many a godly man may pass a very hard censure upon his own heart, and think that sin is yet alive in his soul, and grace dead; and therefore I have 7 comfortable words to lay down to such as you are, and then if the time will permit, I shall proceed to the handing of the

other Queries that are yet behind. The first comfortable word I have to say to those that complain that their corruptions are unmortified, is this,

1. That there may be a mortification of corruption in that heart where there is a strong irritation of corruption: the Devil may irritate, that is, he may strongly stir up corruptions in thy heart, and yet thou mayest be in a mortified estate; But I shall have occasion hereafter to speak more fully to this head, and therefore I shall only now add that place before quoted in Rom. 7.9. where S. Paul saith, when the Commandment came, sin revived, and he died: before, Paul thought himself alive and sin dead: he was in his own apprehensions, according to the Law blameless; but when the Lord gave Paul a spiritual insight into his own heart, then he perceived himself to die and sin to revive: so that there may be a stirring up of sin in the heart, and yet those very sins have their deaths wound.

2. Take this for your comfort, that the reiteration and after committing of the same sin, doth not argue thy heart to be void of mortification. I do but only name this to you, because I intend to make a distinct question of this, whether a man that hath a corruption truly mortified, may fall often into the same sin.

3. Take this for your comfort, that the mortification of corruption was never intended by God, to extend so far as to the total abolition and utter extirpation of sin; but if the domination of sin be destroyed, the Lord looks upon it as mortification; if sin be (as I told you before) like that tree spoken of in Daniel, whose branches were cut off, but the stump remained: so if the dominion and ruling power of sin be taken away, you are in a condition good enough.

Reverend Mr. Perkins useth a very clear similitude to explain this great work of mortification by, says he, as it is with the husbandman, let him wash his corn never so clean before he sows it, yet notwithstanding when it springs and grows up again, it will not come up clean, but there will be chaff amongst it, and there will be a stalk,

and a blade, and other things that appertain to the corn, though they were never sown with the corn; so though you wash your heart never so clean from sin, yet there will some corruption or other still spring in thy heart; God reserves the utter abolition of sin for the state of glorification, not of mortification.

4. You that complain your corruptions are unmortified, take this for your comfort, that God will never expose you to more violent temptations to sin, then what you shall be able to vanquish and overcome in the end, you may be sure to have no more laid upon you then you have strength to grapple with: what though temptations to sin be strong, if God give a sufficiency of grace and strength to withstand and encounter with them? It is a very good observation which some make from Gen. 26.2. compared with Gen. 46.3. where we read that there were two great famines in the Land wherein Isaac and Jacob lived: now when there was a famine in the land in Isaac 's days, then he inquired of the Lord whether he should go down into Egypt to buy corn, and the Lord told he should not; here God denied Isaac to go down: but afterwards when there was a famine in Jacob 's days, he likewise asked of the Lord whether he should go down, and God bid him go, Gen. 46.3. Now why did the Lord forbid Isaac, and yet suffer Jacob to go down into Egypt? They give a very good reason of it, which is this, God would not let Isaac go down, because he was but a weak believer, (says God) thou art but a weak Christian, & art not able to grapple with a temptation, and to withstand all the occasions and opportunities of sin, thou mayest probably meet with in Egypt; and therefore thou shalt not go: But now Jacob he was a strong Believer, and able to encounter with any temptation, and therefore God bid him go. Here you see the Lord will not lay upon his children more than they are able to bear: and oh what a great comfort may this be unto us, that we have so good a God to serve, that carries such tender bowels towards all his children! You have a passage to this purpose in Isaiah, When you are weak and young converts, the Lord will stay his rough winds, he will proportion the temptations according to your strength. So in Isaiah 28.26, 27. The fetches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a



cart wheel turned about upon the cumin; but the fetches are beaten out with a staff, and the cumin with a rod: as the smaller seeds, fetches and cumin, must not be beaten out with great weights, but with a rod and a staff; so weak Christians shall not be exposed to great afflictions and temptations, but proportionable to their strength; and strong Believers shall have temptations answerable to their strength, God will lay upon his children no more than they are able to bear.

5. Know this for thy comfort, that in some cases strong temptations to sin is not a sin in the person tempted, but in the person tempting: it may be a believer thinks that if the Devil does dog him from day today, and from place to place, and from time to time, continually urging and soliciting him to wickedness; he thinks that the Lord will charge all this upon him as his guilt; whereas temptations to sin do not always argue sin to be in the person tempted, but in the person tempting, for if a temptation to sin were always a sin in the person tempted, then Christ himself should have had sin in his nature (which were blasphemy to say) for he was tempted by the Devil to two great sins of murder and covetousness, but these were not sins in the person tempted, but in the person tempting: so now, when you do not close with a temptation, but do what you can to resist and repel it, when sin doth not arise from thy own nature and inward corruptions, but are merely of the Devils suggestion and instigation, these sins are none of thine, but shall be charged upon the Devil.

6. Take this for thy comfort, that a principle of opposition, a principle of undaunted and irreconcilable opposition against every corruption, is accounted by God as mortification; for mortification on our parts is but a standing out against, and encountering with sin; and here I cannot but make use of that place before quoted, in Lev. 11.33, 36. where the Lord made a Law, that if any unclean thing fell into a vessel of water, that water should be unclean: but if it fell into a river of water, it should not be unclean; and the reason is, because a vessel of water hath no purgative faculty whereby to cleanse itself from any filthiness that falls into it; but now a fountain or river of water, by its

continual running, doth purge and cleanse itself from any unclean thing cast into it; so here though corruptions be in thy heart, yet if thou art like a running river, that thou doest cleanse thyself from these sins, the Lord looks upon thee as a mortified man.

7. Take this for your comfort, that in the mortification of every sin, you have Christ's strength to help you as well as your own, and therefore as in some places he commands us to mortify sin, so in other places, he promiseth to do it for us. Oh what a good master do we serve, that does our work for us, and yet pays us our wages; that commands us a duty, and though he himself does all for us, and we do nothing, yet he rewards us, as if we had done it ourselves!

## **SERMON, IV.**

Romans 8:13

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. - Rom. 8. verse. 13.

I Come now to handle the 4. Quere, which is this,

Qu. What are those mistakes that men do run into about this great work of mortification?

Ans. I answer, there is a double mistake men are apt to fall into.

1. A mistake upon the right hand, which doubting and perplexed Christians do run into, when they conceive and are verily persuaded their corruptions are not mortified when indeed they are.

2. There is a mistake on the left hand, which presumptuous sinners run into, whereby they imagine their corruptions are mortified, when indeed they are not: I shall go through the first of these at this time: the mistake that doubting and perplexed

Christians run into, in concluding that their sins are not mortified when they are; and in the pursuit of this, I shall show you 3 grand mistakes in the hearts of God's people, that makes them think their hearts are unmortified. As,

1. Oh says a poor soul, that which makes me think that my heart is not mortified, is the strong motions and stirrings of sin in my heart, this makes me fear that my corruptions are yet unmortified.

Now to take off this mistake, I have only these seven words to say to you; Thou that makest this a ground of thy complaint, that corruptions are not mortified because of the motions and stirrings of sin in thee; You are,

1. To consider whether these motions to sin, do arise from the Devil, or from thy own heart; and if these motions and instigations to sin, do proceed merely from the Devil, from his malice and envy against thy soul, then you have no cause to fear, for these stirrings and motions to sin in thy soul, do argue that thy sins are mortified, and that because Christ himself had strong motions and temptations to sin, and that no small sins neither, but to sins of distrust and self-murder, to break his own neck, and to a sin of covetousness, he was allured with the glory of the world. Now therefore, though you are often pestered and troubled by the Devil, and followed at the heels by him, with one temptation after another, if you can truly say, these stirrings and motions to sin do merely arise from Satan, and do not proceed out of your own heart; if you can clear the case to be so, I will assure you that these are the Devils sins, and not thine, and the Lord will charge them upon his score, and not upon thine: in some cases temptations to sin, are not the corruptions of the person tempted, but of the Devil tempting.

2. Suppose it be true that these motions and stirrings in thy heart do not arise merely from Satan's injections, but from thy own heart, which is like a sea that casts forth nothing but mire and dirt: suppose thy heart be like a cage for every unclean bird, and a den for every

unclean beast to lie down in; suppose that the breathings of thy heart, be like the reeking of a dunghill, that cast forth an evil and stinking savor; yet if these motions be not yielded to with a ready and willing consent, but resisted and opposed, these sins will never be damning sins to thee, if thy heart does not close with these sins, it is no argument that thou art unmortified, but rather an evidence of the contrary; God will never damn thee for that which thou makest the matter of thy complaint, and humiliation, and opposition; thou mayest die running away from, or yielding to the Devil, but thou shalt never die fighting with him.

3. Take this for an answer, that the stirrings and workings of corruptions in thy heart, do not always argue, that thy corruptions hath more strength and life in them then heretofore, but that thou hast more light to discover and discern them then formerly. St. Paul before his conversion, thought himself according to the Law, blameless: but afterward, in Rom. 7.9. When the commandment came (says he) then sin revived, and I died: then he saw sin to have a greater power in his heart, not that he had more sin now, then before, but because now he perceived them which before he did not. A godly man that hath a work of conversion newly wrought upon his heart, though he hath a spiritual insight into his own heart, yet at first he only sees gross and outside evils, for it must be a very expert Christian that can discern inward and secret evils, and smaller sins; and many men after long conversion do see more of the workings of sin in their hearts, then ever they did discover before, or at their first conversion: now such men, they have not an increase of sin, but an increase of illumination and light, as it is in a gloomy day, though the air be very full of dust and small atoms, yet we cannot discern them; but if the sun shine, then you may see them clearly, they are there when the sun does not shine, though you cannot perceive them. This is a third Answer, the motions and stirrings of sin in the heart, do not always arise from the increase of strength and life in sin, but from the increase of light that God puts into the soul.

4. The stirrings of sin in thy heart may not always argue thy corruptions to be unmortified, but thy conscience to be more tender then heretofore: as suppose any of you had a cut finger, when it is sore, anything that toucheth it troubles you, but before it was cut, you could knock your finger against anything, and yet never take notice of it, it would neither smart nor trouble you; now this does not argue that since you cut your finger, you do touch it oftener against things that hurt it, then before it was cut; but because now you are more sensible and affected with every touch: so it is in this case, your conscience being now enlightened, you are more apprehensive and sensible of the least sin, then heretofore.

5. You are to judge yourselves unmortified by the stirrings of corruption now and then, upon an extraordinary and violent temptation in thy soul; though a corruption be let loose upon thee by some violent temptation sometimes, yet you are not to take an estimate of your mortification by this; but you are to judge yourself by the constant temper and ordinary frame of thy heart: Is it ordinary with thee for thy heart to be like a cage of unclean birds, or like the sea continually casting forth mire and dirt? if it be so, then you have cause to fear that sin is yet unmortified in your heart; as, were you to give your judgments concerning the depth of a river, you are not to pass your verdict of its depth, by its breadth after a great rain or flood, but you are to judge by its ordinary course, running in its own channel: so here, you are not to judge of the mortification of your corruptions, by some extraordinary stirrings of sin in thy soul after some violent temptation, but by the ordinary frame and temper of thy heart.

6. Take this for thy consolation, that inward stirrings and workings of sin in thy soul may in some cases, rather argue that sin is near to its dissolution, then thou void of mortification; and that in these 3 Cases, (will you follow me with your thoughts a little?) I say in these 3 Cases the working of sin in thy heart, may rather argue sin to be near its dissolution, then you to be void of mortification.

1. In case the workings of sin, do make you more watchful against all occasions of sin, and against the first motions of sin in thy heart: as a wanton eye is a glance of a lustful heart, so a watchful eye is an evidence of a mortified heart.

2. In case the irritation of sin, do provoke thee to humiliation for those sins, and resolutions against them, and strong supplications to God to enable thee to subdue them; such a frame of heart does rather argue strength of grace than strength of sin.

3. In case that after such violent motions and stirring of sin in thy soul, thy corruptions do grow weaker and feebler every day; it may be the stirrings of lust, or pride, or passion are very great and unruly in thy heart, and thou doest bemoan them, and pray and strive against them, and yet canst not keep them under; but if within a little while you perceive these stirrings of sin hath enfeebled it, and makes it decay in strength, and grow weaker and weaker, in this case you have no need to fear that your sin is unmortified. I told you before, that the stirrings of sin in some men, is like a dying man sick of a fever; when he is in the heat of his disease and a violent fit upon him, the poor sick man will so rage and tumble, that three or four men shall scarce be able to keep him in his bed: now this does not proceed from the strength of the man, but of the disease; for as soon as the fit is over, the man is so weak, there is scarce life in him, he is not now able to stir or move himself: so when sin shall be in thy soul, like a burning fever upon a man, that no exhortations, reproofs, or threatening's can restrain or withhold thee from sin, and from running after the fulfilling and satisfaction of the lusts and desires of thy heart; yet if you find that after these violent motions to sin, thy corruptions have been weakened and enfeebled, you have cause to bless God, that hath begun this work of mortification in thy heart, and hath given Satan an irrecoverable blow.

7. Take this for thy comfort, that the stirrings of sin in thy heart may be so ordered by God, as to make them a means to engage thee to a more full mortification of thy sins; should not sin stir in thy soul, but lie there still and quiet, you would be apt to grow secure and careless, and take no notice of the sinfulness of thy heart; but now when the stinking savor and noisome smell of thy lusts, shall rise up in thy heart, this may be a means to encourage and quicken your endeavors to the mortification, subduing, and rooting out these corruptions within thee. And thus I have done with these 7 particulars by way of comfort, to those that complain their hearts are unmortified, because of the stirrings and motions to sin in their hearts.

I now pass on to the second mistake, which makes a godly soul fear his heart is unmortified, and that is this:

2. Oh says another godly man, I have not only the stirrings of sin in my heart, but (the Lord show mercy to my soul) I am in a worse condition a thousand times, for I find that I have prayed often, again and again, and bended all my endeavors against such a particular corruption, and yet notwithstanding all my prayers and endeavors, sighs and groans, that very sin hath got head in me, and prevailed over me, which could not be but that sin is unmortified and hath a great prevalency over my heart. Me thinks I hear such breathings as these coming from a godly soul: Oh woe is me, I have made many a prayer, and renewed many a purpose in my heart to keep out such a sin, but yet I cannot, sin prevails and gets the victory over me, and I am not able to encounter with it; and therefore this makes me fear whether ever I had the power of mortifying grace upon my heart.

Ans. Beloved, your condition is very sad, yet I have four words to say to you.

1. Thou that makest this complaint, it may be the evils thou complainest of, that thou canst not keep under; it may be these evils are great and gross evils, but inward and unavoidable; and if so, you have less cause of jealousy that your corruptions are

unmortified: indeed if the sins thou complainest of be great and crying sins, then you have cause to fear; but if they be only inward and unavoidable corruptions, such as are vain thoughts, distempered passions, spiritual pride, vain glory, or the like, such as these you may make 1000 prayers against, and never be able to overcome and root out.

2. Suppose the corruptions be great that thou hast purposed against, and prayed against, and you cannot subdue them and bring them under; yet know this for thy comfort, that this is as much as God requires of thee, that thou shouldest resist and resolve against, and labor to withstand thy corruptions; and if thou doest do thy duty in this particular, though thou art overcome, God will not hold thee guilty. It is in this case as it was in the Law that God made concerning a virgin in Deut. 22.25, 26, 27. the Law was this, That if a damsel were walking in the field alone, and a lustful man meet her, and lie with her, the man only that lay with her may die, but they were not to meddle with the damsel, for he found her in the field, and the damsel cried, and there was none to help her: (Beloved) it is so in this case, it may be the Devil may commit a spiritual rape upon thee, and be so forcible with a temptation, that you may yield to him; but yet if you do both before and after the commission of that sin, bewail it, hate, and detest, and strive against it, the Lord will lay the sin on Satan's score, and require it of him and not of thee.

3. You that complain your corruptions are unmortified, you have prayed often against them, and yet they are not subdued, take this for thy comfort, that thy praying and purposing against sin, is an undeniable argument that they are a dying, though they are not quite dead. Were thy corruptions living, thy heart would be dead, and unfit, and unable to pray; for if thy praying do not make thee leave sinning, thy sinning will make thee leave praying: you that do continually strive and pray against sin, it is an undoubted evidence that your corruptions are a dying,



though they are not dead: As some birds will flutter more strongly after their heads be pulled off then before, which yet is an undeniable argument that they are a dying, though not quite dead; so when thou findest such violent motions and stirrings of sin in thee, notwithstanding all thy prayers and endeavors to the contrary, yet you may be sure your corruptions are a dying, though not yet dead.

4. Mark this for your comfort, that corruptions may have its deadly wound in the general, and yet a particular lust may be very vigorous, and lively, and active in thy soul. It is a rule among Divines, that as all corruptions are not equally alive in a man, so neither are all corruptions equally dead in a man: now here is thy comfort, if thou canst prove, that a general work of mortification is wrought in thee, that the body of sin is destroyed, though you have some particular corruptions yet remaining in you, yet this doth not argue that you are unmortified: as it is with a dying man, one of his limbs may die before another, his heart may have life, when his leg or arm is dead, and if any one of his members is dead, it argues that the man cannot live much longer; so if one sin be dead, it argues that the whole body of sin is mortified, though this or that particular lust prevail in thy heart, yet the general work of mortification may be wrought in thee, notwithstanding some particular sins are not yet quite subdued. Thus much for the second mistake.

3. Another mistake that a godly man runs into is this, Oh says a poor soul, it is true, I have cause to fear upon these two grounds before mentioned, but alas, it is not the stirrings of sin only in my heart, and my often falling into sin after prayers, and promises, and resolutions against them; but that which makes me fear my corruptions are unmortified, is this, that if corruptions were a dying in me, I should find grace to live and act in me more than it does, grace would hold an equipage with sin, as one decreaseth, the other would increase;

now because I cannot find nor perceive grace to be vigorous and lively in my soul, it is I fear because sin is not yet dead in my heart.

Answ. To you that make this complaint, I have only 3 or 4 words to say for your comfort.

1. You must know that all the whole work of grace and sanctification, is not to be done upon thee at once, indeed you are justified at once, and elected at once, but you are not sanctified at once; you must not expect the whole work of sanctification to be wrought in a moment, but as a child comes to maturity and manhood, not presently, but by degrees: so the work of sanctification comes on slowly and by degrees.

2. Take this for thy comfort, that there may be a dying and decaying of common gifts, when yet there may be a quick and lively acting of true and saving grace in thy soul; common gifts may be a dying, when yet true grace may be very vigorous in thy soul: it may be thou hast lost that volubility of tongue, readiness of utterance, and strength of memory, &c. in thy old age which thou didst excel in, in thy youth: these may be decayed, when yet there may be a lively and vigorous growth of grace in thy soul.

As a Divine observes, that though a Musician can play better upon an instrument in his younger days, and can sing more harmoniously, and make a more pleasant melody, then when he comes to be old; yet he hath more skill and judgment in music now then he had before: so it may be thou mayest lose the varnish and flourish of thy graces, and yet grow more in understanding, and judgment, and experience, &c. now then ever you did.

3. Thou that complainest and fearest thy corruptions are not dead, because grace is not so lively and active in thee: know this for thy comfort, that ordinarily God gives a greater income of vivacity and quickness of grace at a man's first conversion, then

he gives ever after, because he would allure men to Religion and the practice of godliness.

## **SERMON, V.**

Romans 8:13

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. - Rom. 8. verse. 13.

I Come now to handle the mistakes on the other hand, of those that think their corruptions are mortified when they are not: The heart of man is deceitful above all things, a bundle of deceit, and man himself, is a proud creature, and very apt to have high conceits of himself: and there are 3 grounds of mistake in wicked men, which makes them apprehend their corruptions are mortified, when indeed they are not. As,

1. Because they find an opposition against sin, therefore they conclude there is a mortification of sin in them.
2. Because they find in themselves the power of restraining grace. And,
3. Because there is a leaving and forsaking of some sins in them: as it may be he was an adulterer in former time, but he is not one now: or a swearer, or drunkard, &c. in former time, but he is none of these now. These are the 3 grounds of wicked men's mistakes in reference to this work of mortification. And I shall spend two hours in answering these 3 mistakes, and showing you the weakness and insufficiency of these grounds, to evidence a work of mortification upon their hearts. To begin with the first,

1. That because they find in themselves an opposition against some sins, therefore they conclude a work of mortification upon their hearts. I answer, that an opposition of sin, may proceed from the light of a natural conscience, which may convince a man what is sin, and what not: even wicked men may have a law within them, that may make them averse and opposite to some sins, as uncleanness, and drunkenness, &c. and their consciences may accuse them when they do ill, and excuse them when they do well: but this only in the general, I shall now speak to it more particularly, and I beseech you lend me your thoughts a little, for I do not think there is a man or woman amongst you, though never so wretched and vile, but have some time or other withstood some corruptions and sinful motions in your hearts. Now I shall show in 8 particular cases wherein you may oppose corruptions, and yet be an unmortified man: as, 1. he may oppose them Jestingly, 2. Sparingly, 3. Partially, 4. Hypocritically, 5. Slavishly, 6. Constrainedly, 7. Faintly, and lastly, Politically. For the first,

#### 1 Jestingly.

1. A man may oppose corruptions jestingly. He may do as fencers use to do upon the stage, they pretend to hurt one another, but they never give a deadly wound, though they may seem to hack and hew one another, yet they never draw one drop of blood, being only in jest all the while: so though a wicked man does oppose and resist sin, yet he will be sure not to hurt his sin; but now a mortified man, he opposeth sin in good earnest, and encounters with it, not as a fencer, but as a warrior opposeth his mortal enemy, and knows he must either kill or be killed; so a godly man opposeth sin, as the deadly enemy of his soul, he knows that he is now a grappling for his salvation: why now consider of it, I believe there is not a man amongst you, but does now and then oppose sin, but if you do it only jestingly, this opposition is nothing worth.

#### 2 Sparingly.

2. In case likewise you do it sparingly. It may be some of you do resist and oppose corruptions, you see sin to be sin, and do labor to oppose it, but withal you do it sparingly, you will not do sin too much hurt, you deal with sin as David did with Absalom, (says he) deal gently with the young man Absalom; so it may be you deal gently with your sins, and oppose them very sparingly: but now a mortified man, he does accost his lusts with a holy cruelty, he will show sin no mercy, nor give any quarter to his lusts: his sins will not spare him, and therefore he will not spare them.

### 3 Partially.

3. Thou hast an unmortified heart in case thou opposeth sin partially, resisting some sins, but sparing others, your beloved lusts. It may be thou opposeth drunkenness, and yet wilt favor thyself in other sins, as false weights or measures, cozening and deceiving in thy shop, and trading's: It may be thou doest oppose adultery and uncleanness, and yet doest yield to and indulge other lusts in thy bosom: but now mortification is like death upon the body, which seizeth upon all the vitals and parts of the body; so if you do not oppose all sin, you are a stranger to mortification, you that do with your sins as Saul did in case of the Amalekites, Though he killed the Amalekites, yet he saved Agag their king, and the best of the sheep and cattle, whereas he should have destroyed them all: So you, though you do oppose some sins, yet if you do harbor and indulge others in your hearts, as Saul by his partiality lost his Kingdom, so you by your indulgence, and partiality to some profitable or delightful sins, will lose your souls: as Saul's sparing of Agag, cost him the loss of his Kingdom; so the sparing of any one lust in thy soul, will cause thee to lose the Kingdom of heaven.

### 4 Hypocritically.

4. If you oppose sin hypocritically, or upon false ends and grounds; when a man opposeth sin not because it hinders him in good, but because it hinders him from good; he never opposeth any sin,

because this or that lust hinders him in prayer, and interrupts him in holy duties, as hearing, reading, &c. but because it hinders him from good, because it keeps him from heaven, and happiness, and glory; it hinders him from the good he hopes for and expects; he doth not oppose sin because it is repugnant to the glory of God, but because it doth impugn and cross his expectation: so that a man may oppose sin in these 4 senses and yet be an unmortified man.

#### 5 Slavishly.

5. If you do oppose sin slavishly, if merely the fear of Hell and of wrath to come, does make thee resist a present corruption, you would not care what sins you did commit if Hell and punishment did not follow after them. Then a man opposeth sin slavishly, when he does it merely because God punisheth sin, not because he hates it; because sin hath a condemning power, not because it hath a defiling power with it; because sin is against the revenging justice of God, not because it is against the holiness and purity of God; because there is a Hell for sin, not because there is a Hell in sin. But now a godly man he opposeth sin filially, if there were no Devil in hell, and no punishment for sin, yet a godly man would hate it because of the filthiness of it, because there is a Hell in sin, which he sees to be worse than Hell itself.

#### 6 Constrainedly

6. If you oppose sin constrainedly. Many men oppose corruption in their hearts, but it is because they have terrors, and gripes, and gnawing's of conscience upon them, they have so much light in their natural conscience, that they cannot yield to sin without some reluctancy; they would gladly shake off the gnawing's of their conscience, and lull it asleep that it might not do its office, but that they might sin securely and peaceably, such an opposition as this is no argument at all of mortification.

#### 7 Faintly.

7. If you do oppose corruptions faintly, and slowly. It may be thou didst resist corruptions resolutely at first, but afterward you grow faint, and weary, and remiss in your oppositions: heretofore you could not endure drunkenness or uncleanness, but now you are more pliable and yielding to sin. Many men in opposing of sin, are like unto the French men in battles, of whom it is related, that there are no men in the world, will give a fiercer onset and charge, but if they meet with a good repulse from the enemy, then their courage is cooled and daunted, and no men more cowardly and fearful then they; so it may be some of you are very resolute at first against sin, but if the Devil come upon you with a fierce charge, then you grow faint hearted, and yield and comply with sin: just as Balaam did, in Numb. 22.13, 18. when Balak sent for Balaam to curse Israel, at first he refused to go, in verse. 13. says he to the Princes of Balak, Get you into your land, for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you: and again in verse. 18. (says he) If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more. Why now you would think Balaam to be a very good man; but yet when the King sent for him the third time, then he would needs go. But you may say God bid him go, and therefore he is excusable, verse. 20. And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up and go with them: and yet when Balaam went in the morning, God's anger was kindled against him because he went. Now how can this be, can God be angry with a man for doing that which he bids him do?

I answer,

1. God bid him go conditionally, If the men come to call thee, rise up and go with them, but we do not read that the men cold him. And,

2. God bid him go, but as you bid an untoward child do a thing when he will have his own will, Well do it if you will, take your own course, and see what will come of it. So says God to Balaam, If you will needs go, if you love their money, the wages of

unrighteousness so well, go with them, and see what will come of it.

3. God bids him go, not to curse, but to bless Israel: now the text says, God was angry with Balaam because he went, God bid him go to bless Israel, but he went with an intent to curse them, and that was the reason that God was angry with him.

Thus it may be some of you may with Balaam refuse to satisfy your lusts once, and a second time, and yet embrace them the third time, though you oppose sin resolutely at first, and yet cowardice and grow faint afterwards, it is a sign thy heart is not yet mortified.

8 Politically.

8. If you do oppose sin politically. My meaning is this, a man may be said to oppose sin two ways,

1. When a man opposeth sin more because an outward judgment does follow that sin, more upon this ground, then because a spiritual judgment does attend that sin.

Thus Abimelech did in Gen. 20. When he was in danger to have abused Sarah Abraham's wife, yet when he knew her to be Abraham's wife he let her go, and sent to Abraham, and said, Why is it that thou didst not tell me she was thy wife? thou mightest have caused me to have brought evil upon the Kingdom by it. A wicked man may oppose sin, because it may bring evil upon his body, or house, or Kingdom, but not because sin is a dishonor to God: a man opposeth sin politically, when it is merely upon a carnal consideration. And,

2. When a man does oppose one sin, that so he may harbor another sin with less suspicion. It may be, thou hast left thy drunkenness, that so thou mayest keep other sins without being suspected. Herein thou doest play the politician to damn thy own soul. And thus I have done with these 8 particulars, wherein you see, you may oppose sin Jestingly, Sparingly, Partially, Hypocritically, Slavishly, Faintly, and



Politically; and if you go no further in the opposition of your lusts, you cannot conclude a work of mortification upon your hearts.

And thus much shall serve for the taking of the first ground of mistake in wicked men the opposition of corruptions.

2. Oh but says another, I do not only oppose corruptions, but (blessed be God) I do restrain and keep them under, that they do not break forth into act, in my life and conversation, and therefore I hope my heart is mortified, and all things well with me, seeing I have a power enabling me to restrain and keep under my corruptions.

Answ. For answer to this, I must acknowledge that this is a good step in the way to heaven, for a man both to oppose and restrain his lusts from coming forth into act. But yet I have 3 words to say to you, that so you may not be mistaken. The first is this,

1. That a man may restrain a sin merely from the principles and dictates of nature, the power of nature may restrain a man from the commission of some sins: we read of Socrates that he professed of himself that he was addicted to chastity, that he never had a lustful thought and wanton glances with his eye, nor a lascivious carriage of his body all his life time, and yet he was but a heathen man. And so Cato, he was so afraid of drunkenness, that he professeth he never drunk so much but he could have drunk more even to refresh nature. Why such men as these may go beyond many Christians.

2. Lusts may be restrained from the force of religious education and example: we read in 2 King. 12.2. of Jehoash, the text says, He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, all the days of Jehoiada the Priest: all the while he lived, he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but when he was dead, then Jehoash did wickedly. Sin was restrained in him all the while he lived under the tuition of a good man, but afterwards it broke out.

So it may be, you that are under masters and tutors, that have a strict eye over you; all the while you are servants, sin may be restrained in you, but when you come to be your own men, to go whither you will, and do what you will, then it may be you will run out into many sins, which now are restrained by education, not through mortification.

3. A man may restrain his lusts, and abstain from some sins, merely because of the terror and trouble of conscience that lies upon him. His conscience tells him that there is a Hell prepared for him, if he goes on in such a course, or commits such and such sins; he hath the flashings of Hell fire as it were in his face, so that he dares not commit such a sin.

As it is with a dog having a bone lying before him, and his masters stick over him, if he goes to snatch at the bone, his master knocks him, and makes him let it alone: the dog fears his masters staff, or else he would have it. So it is with a wicked man, were it not for the gnawing's and terrors of his conscience that does trouble and afright him, he would make no bones of falling into any sin or wickedness whatsoever. Such a restraint as this, does not any way argue that thy sins are mortified. And here I shall show you further, that there may be a restraint of sin in three particular cases, and yet that sin not mortified though it be restrained.

1. If thy restraint from a sin, be a burden to thee, if it be not voluntary but burdensome, and full sore against thy will, that thou art restrained from thy sins. It may be through sickness and weakness of body, thou canst not commit some sins, and this is a grief and burden to thee. If it be thus, thou hast a very unmortified heart.

But now a godly man, he is restrained from sin willingly, he counts it his happiness and a great mercy to have sin restrained, and therefore examine your own hearts, if it be a grief of heart to thee to have thy

sins restrained, that thou canst not follow thy whores, or thy drunkenness, and the satisfaction of thy lusts, to run out into all manner of sins; if it be thus with thee, believe it, thou hast no spark of mortifying grace in thee.

2. In case your restraint from a sin does make thee run out with a more vehement eagerness after that sin, when the restraint is removed, then ever thou didst before: It may be thou art restrained by a watchful eye that is over thee, that thou canst not follow after whoring or drunkenness, or Sabbath breaking, &c. or it may be thou art sick, and so not able to do it.

But now in case that after these restraints are removed, you then run out after these sins, it is a sad sign thy heart is unmortified, and that thou art at the next door to damnation and reprobation, when the restraint of a sin makes you more violent and eager after it when the restraint is removed.

3. In case the restraint of sin, reaches only to outward and grosser acts of sin, but not unto inward and secret evils: for as I told you before, you may abstain from, and keep under great sins, by the very light and instinct of nature, as Socrates, and Cato, which were heathens; and therefore, unless thy restraint of sin, does extend to inward and bosom sins, as well as to open and notorious crimes, thou canst not conclude the power of mortifying grace upon thy heart. The very light of nature teacheth and convinceth a man, that he should not lie, nor steal, nor swear, nor be drunk, or unclean, and the like; but yet though a wicked man may keep under great crying sins, he cannot keep under small and lesser sins, for they do not discern these sins in themselves: they do not look upon inward evils, to be any evil at all. And therefore we read of Aristotle that he counted many things to be virtues, which the Scripture condemns as vices. Heathens looked upon jesting to be a virtue, which Paul tells us is a sin, and therefore counsels us to avoid foolish talking and jesting, as things not convenient.

So Aristotle he accounts it magnanimity for a man to be highly conceited and opinionated of himself, as deserving great places of honor and repute in the world, but Paul he looks upon it as pride of heart, for a man to think highly and nobly of himself. I only hint these things to you by the way, that so you may see that the light of nature is too dark and dim to discover many sins, especially if they be small and inward evils; you may keep under open and notorious sins, and yet never have the power of grace upon your hearts; mortification lays a restraint upon inward and secret sins, that a man's whole endeavors are bent against them, as well as against grosser evils.

And thus I have done with the 2 first grounds of mistake in wicked men, whereby they think their corruptions are mortified, when indeed they are not.

## **SERMON, VI.**

Romans 8:13

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. - Rom. 8. verse. 13.

I Now come to the 3. prop and ground of mistake that makes deluded men think their sins are mortified, when they are not, and that is this, Another man will tell you that he goes further then both the two former; (says he) I do not only oppose corruptions, and restrain some outward acts of sin, but am a man that have quite left my sins. I was a man (it is true) given to uncleanness in time past, but I am a chaste man now. I have been a drunkard heretofore, but I am a sober man now, &c. and therefore I hope my corruptions are mortified in me.

Answ. I confess this is a very fair plea that thou makest; and I may say to thee as Christ said to the Lawyer, Thou art not far from the

Kingdom of heaven; but yet let me tell thee, that if thou goest no further, and doest no more, thou wilt never come thither; and therefore that thou mayest not deceive and delude thyself herein, I shall show you, that there may be in many particulars a dereliction and leaving of many sins unto which a man hath been formerly addicted, and yet that man a stranger to mortification, as in these 3 following cases.

1. If he leaves sin from a wrong principle.
2. If he leave them in a wrong manner.
3. If he leaves them to a wrong end.

1. In case you leave those sins whereunto you were formerly addicted, from a wrong principle, and those are four.

1. A man may leave a sin, because he is left void of strength and ability to act that sin, this is from a wrong principle: as when a man that hath been given in times past to uncleanness and sinful pleasures with women, but now when he is grown old and sickly he leaves it off, why this is not mortifying grace, but he leaves this sin because his body is disabled, and the vigor of his spirits are gone, so that he cannot act this sin any longer: and therefore this is no thanks to the man at all.

And, it may be another man, that hath been strongly inclined to drunkenness in times past, but now his means is spent, and his money falls short, and he wants wherewithal to follow his old course, and therefore he leaves it off. Be thy sin what it will, if thou leavest it upon such a principle as this, thou art a stranger to mortification.

2. If you leave a sin, because you are left void of an opportunity to commit that sin; you have not secrecy, nor security, nor conveniency for the committing of such a sin, you cannot do what you would do; you cannot walk in those ways you have a

desire to walk in. This is another wrong principle of forsaking sin.

3. In case you leave sin, because motions and temptations to such a sin leave you. (Beloved) the Devil does not always suggest the same temptations to a man, it may be he prompts and solicits thee to lust today, and to drunkenness tomorrow; the Devil does not always harp upon the same string in tempting of you. Now it may be you have left some sins, but it is because the Devils temptations to those sins have left you, and this is not thanks worthy; for you may leave sin upon this principle and yet be a stranger to mortification. Some men have been much given to wantonness and uncleanness in their youth, and afterwards in their middle age the Devil suspending his instigations a while, they have been wholly averse and opposite to that sin, so as not to endure a lascivious look or an unchaste affection; and yet afterwards through renewed temptations from Satan, have been enticed to run after the same sin with as much greediness and delight as ever. The Devil may leave thee, and thou mayest leave acting a sin for a long time, and yet afterwards upon a fresh temptation fall into the same sins again.

4. A man may leave sin upon this ground, because he knows if he does not, the terrors of conscience will not leave him. He knows that if he should still go on in a course of swearing, lying, cheating, and defrauding in his shop; Sabbath-breaking, writing the Sermon he hears on that day in his book, and writing them in the Devils book all the week after; if he does still follow after the satisfaction of his lusts, he knows that his conscience will accuse him and affright him more and more; and therefore he will restrain and bridle his corruptions a while, till his conscience is bridled and pacified: and therefore it is very observable the Scripture compares an unmortified man to a dog that returns to his vomit, in 2 Pet. 2.20, 22. the Apostle speaks of some there that had gone so far in Christianity, as that they had escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge

of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but yet were again entangled therein, and overcome: and the text says it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The Dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. What is the meaning of this? there is much of the mind of God in this place. A man that hath once left his sinful course, and yet afterwards follows after it again, is like a Dog that returns to his vomit, and a Sow to her wallowing in the mire. Now you know a Dog when he hath a pain or a qualm upon his stomach (which that creature is often subject to) he does disgorge himself: so a wicked man when his conscience does trouble him and accuse him, he leaves and forsakes his sin; but as the Dog when he is rid of his pain, returns and licks up his vomit again: so a wicked man, when his conscience is quiet, and the horror of it over, he returns to his old sins again, and commits them with greater delight and complacency than ever.

And thus you see in 4 particulars, if you leave sin upon any of these wrong grounds and principles, you are strangers to mortification.

2. In case you leave your corruptions in a wrong manner, (which may be done these 6 several ways) you are strangers to this work of mortification. As,

1. Thou doest leave sin in a wrong manner, when thou doest forsake one sin, to allow thyself in another.

I have read of one that was much given to drunkenness, yet by reading the Lectures of Plato, which much condemn, and speak against that sin, he was never drunk afterwards, but yet he fell into other sins as bad as that. So if you forsake one sin and embrace another, this is no mortification: for that, as I told you before, is a seizure upon the whole body of sin.

A man in his youth may be given to the sin of wantonness, and when he is old he may change that into the sin of worldly

mindedness: again, some part of a man's life he may be given to prodigality, and at another time, he may leave that, and fall into the sin of [ungenerousness] and parsimony: one while he may be guilty of the sin of Hypocrisy, and another fall into the sin of Apostasy, and open profanation. Naturalists tell us that every year the Serpent casts his skin, but yet he hath another comes in the room of it, he is a Serpent still: so (it may be) some of you cast off your old sins, but yet you embrace others in the room of them; this is only sin exchanged, not mortified; the exchanging of a sin, is not the subduing of it: that sin which heretofore thou wert much addicted to, may be now asleep, and another sin alive, as vigorous and active in thy heart; this exchanging of your sins, falls very short of mortification.

2. A man may be said to leave sin in a wrong manner, when he only abstains from the gross acts of a sin, but does not leave the inward hankerings and desires of his soul after that sin. Augustine for a season left the sin of incontinency, but yet he confesseth he had still secret hankerings in his soul to that sin. If you do not extinguish in your souls those longing desires after a sin, you do not leave the sin: as for example, a man may leave the outward act of uncleanness, and yet harbor in himself adulterous thoughts, wanton looks, obscene words, and lascivious gestures; his heart may be like the Devils Anvil, whereon he fashioneth abundance of speculative wickedness's, and therefore this is not mortification, for that makes thee leave not only the outward act of sin, but also that secret delight and complacency thou tookest in that sin, so that this is a second wrong manner of leaving sin.

3. Then a man leaves sin in a wrong manner, when he only leaves open, outward and crying sins, & yet indulgeth himself in some inward and secret evils. This is but leaving sin by halves. We read of many heathens, that have restrained themselves from falling into gross acts of sin: as Socrates a man so free from uncleanness, as that he was never observed to have a wanton



glance with his eye, or a lascivious gesture with his body, and yet a heathen still: so Cato, a man so averse from drunkenness, that he would never drink so much as would satisfy his nature: so Aristotle, though he knew, and did abstain from the grosser acts of sin, yet he was a stranger to small and lesser sins, he could not discover them: For that which he accounts to be a virtue, Paul reckons to be a sin, as foolish talking and jesting, Paul looks upon them as things not convenient, though Aristotle esteems them as virtues.

And so for a man to think highly of himself he counts magnanimity, which Paul looks upon as pride, and the reason of this is, because that though they knew by the light of nature, what was bad in the act of gross sins, yet they did not know, neither were they acquainted with smaller sins, so as to discover and avoid them.

4. A man leaves his sins in a wrong manner, when he does it unwillingly, when he leaves his sins, as the mariners do their goods, when they are in a great storm, and the Ship heavy laden with rich commodities; the Master tells them, that unless they will throw over some of their goods they will lose all, and be cast away; now those that own the goods, will be as ready as any to cast them overboard, not because he does not love them, but because he loves his life better. So when wicked men see Hell fire and a river of brimstone before them, which they must be cast into, unless they leave and forsake their sins: upon these grounds they do it, though it be very unwillingly.

5 Then a man leaves a sin in a wrong manner, when he does it with a reservation and purpose of mind, to commit that sin again at another time: it may be he reasons thus with himself, I have delighted much in drunkenness and good fellowship, but now I am sick and weak, and not able to follow it, but if ever I am well again, I will take my old course, and go to my good company again. And another (it may be) may think thus with

himself. I have now left the sin of uncleanness by reason of my weakness of body and disability to act it; but if I recover, I will to that pleasure again. Now when a man leaves his sins in such a manner as this, his sins will break in again upon his soul, like an inundation of mighty water, with more power and force then ever it did before in times past.

6. A man leaves his sins in a wrong manner, when he leaves them without any sound humiliation and sorrow for the sins he hath forsaken: It is an observation that Mr. Boulton makes, who having been with one (as he thought) lying upon his death-bed, a man much given to wine and women, an extreme drunkard, and a very lascivious man; and as he lay upon his bed, Mr. Bolton asked him, whether he had any hopes of heaven or no, Why (says he) it is true, I have been a drunkard, but now I am none, I have been an adulterer, but now I have left it: but Mr. Bolton observes that he did not express any grief, or sorrow, and humiliation, for the sins he had been guilty of: and therefore he asked him whether (if God should restore him to his health again) he would not be the same man still as he was before, he answered, No, he would not for all the world. But it pleased God within a little while this man recovered, and not many months after he was well, he returned to his old sins again as bad as ever.

Hence we see, that a bare forsaking of sin for a time, is no true mortification; such a man is not mortified, though he leaves his sins, if he be not truly humbled and grieved for them: it may be many of you have left off your swearing, and lying, &c. but have your sins left humiliation behind them? hath sin left a scar behind it, that you do still mourn and grieve for them? if it be not thus with thee, thou canst have no assurance in thy heart, that thou art a mortified man or woman.

And thus I have done with the second particular, In case you leave sin from a wrong principle, and in a wrong manner.

3. The leaving of sin, is not an argument of mortifying grace in thy heart, if you leave it in a wrong manner: and herein (it may be) I may be near the bosoms of many of you; there be these 6 wrong ends a man may leave his sins for, and yet be a stranger to mortifying grace.

1. A man may leave his sins, that so the peace of his conscience may not leave him. He knows that unless he does leave his sins, the peace of a good conscience will leave him; whereas were it not for breaking his own peace, he would not leave his sins, though he did break God's heart (as I may so say) by his sins. When a man shall leave his sins merely because the peace of his conscience may not leave him, this is one wrong end.

2. When a man shall leave his sins only because temporal punishments may leave him; not because God hates sin, but because he punisheth it. When sin is left, not because it hath a defiling power, but because it hath a destroying power with it; because of its penalty, not because of its depravity. As some men forbear from outward acts of villainy, not because the Law is against, but because it punisheth such facts: so they leave sin not because God hates it, but because he punisheth it: this is another wrong end of leaving sin.

3. When a man leaves a sin because it stains his honor and reputation before men, and not because it is a dishonor to God, because it brings a spot and blemish upon his own name and credit, and not because it is a blemish to the glory of God.

4. When a man leaves his sins, that so the Torments of Hell may not follow him; he knows that if he continues still in a course of wickedness, his sins will at last find him out, and the torments of hell will inevitably seize upon him. A wicked man leaves sin because there is a Hell follows sin, and not because there is a Hell in sin; he leaves sin because it is against the avenging wrath of God, and not because it is against the holiness and purity of God; not because God hath commanded him to leave it, but

because there are curses denounced in the Word of God against it: now this is a very false and slavish end for a man to propound to himself in leaving sin.

5. When a man leaves a sin upon this ground, that so he may harbor another with less suspicion; this, as I told you before, is to leave sin politically, to forsake some sins, that he may be the less suspected in indulging himself in others.

6. When a man does leave and abstain from sin merely because he may be accounted a holy, blameless, and a religious man in the world. As I have read of one that left an ill course that he was much addicted to, because a friend of his by whom he hoped and expected an inheritance to be given to him, might have a good opinion of him. A man may leave gross sins, that so he may be accounted a new man, and a holy man amongst his neighbors, which is a very base and servile end, to leave an evil, that others may have good thoughts of him.

And thus I have in these two Sermons taken off the mistakes that many men run into, concerning this great duty of mortification.

I have only now a word of comfort, [Use of comfort.] and I have done: it may be what I have said touching this particular, hath graveled many a godly and conscientious heart, that he thinks his corruptions are not yet mortified, but that he hath left his sins, from some wrong principles, or in a wrong manner, or for some false ends, when there is no such matter, and therefore for your comfort, oh you that are the sons and daughters of God, lift up your heads with rejoicing and gladness, in case your hearts can bear you witness, you have left your sins from other grounds, and in another manner, and for other ends then wicked men do; you that can say you have left your sins not because you want abilities or opportunities, for you have as many of these as ever Joseph had; but through the power of sanctifying grace in your hearts: you that can say, I have forsaken my sins, not because my conscience snarled upon me like a dog, and cast

the flashes of Hell fire in my face; but because the love of Christ constrained me, because Christ shed his blood, and paid a dear price for my sins. And I have left my sins in a right manner, I have not left one, that so I might live and allow myself in another; but I would leave all sins, if I could: I do not leave sin by force and constraint; but the Lord knows that never a poor slave was more willing to come out of the gallies, then I am to come out of my sins; there was never a poor prisoner more willing to come out of prison, then I am to leave my sins; there is never a lousy beggar that goes along the streets, is more willing to come. out of his rags to be clothed in rich apparel, then I am to part with my sins, those menstruous rags, that so I may be clothed with the long robes of Christ's righteousness. Oh thou poor soul whose heart can bear thee witness that it is so with thee, do not go home with a sad heart, for thou art in a happy condition. And if thou canst say, thy heart hearing thee witness, that thou hast left sin too for a right end, not because there is a curse against thy lusts, but because there is a command against them; that you leave sin not because it is against the revenging justice of God, but against the holiness and purity of God; not because there is a Hell for sin, but because there is a Hell in sin; because of its depravity and defilement, not because of its penalty, and destroying nature; if it be thus with you, you may lift up your heads with joy, and go away with a sea of comfort upon your hearts, in the assurance that God hath brought you into a mortified estate.

And thus I have in these 6 Sermons showed you many weighty truths concerning this great doctrine of mortification. In the next place I shall give you some general means and directions how you may attain to this duty of mortification, not in particular how you should mortify every particular sin, (for that would be a work too tedious to go through) but only in general how you may mortify any lust; and then I shall handle some other cases of conscience, as whether a man may fall into a sin after it is mortified or no, and several other cases.

## **SERMON, VII.**

## Romans 8:13

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. - Rom. 8. verse. 13.

I Come now to proceed to one Query more touching this doctrine of mortification, and that is this; me thinks I hear a poor perplexed soul say, (that hath heard all the Sermons that I have preached upon this Text) I confess all that you have said and spoken in reference to this duty of mortification, is but as a looking-glass to let me see into my own heart, and whereby I discover that my heart is not yet mortified, and that I have a great many lusts and corruptions still unsubdued in me; and therefore I would gladly know, how I might be enabled to mortify my sins and to keep under, and overcome my corruptions.

This therefore shall be the next Query that I shall handle, namely, to show you what means and helps you may make use of, in mortifying and keeping under those corruptions that trouble you and prevail over you: and in the prosecuting of this, I shall not only run into particulars, how to mortify every particular lust; but shall only give you some general helps and means to keep under sin, be the sin what it will be. I shall name to you 7 or 8 in all.

1. The first means you should use is this, Be very careful to shun and avoid all occasions to that sin, to which thou art most strongly addicted: as when a man lies under a feverish or aguish distemper, though he may eat some kind of slender meats, yet the Doctor tells him he must take heed of strong meats: now if he does not abstain from them a while, (which will feed and heighten the distemper) he can expect no help or cure: so here, you must shun all these things that may stir up, or give any occasion to your lusts. You must take heed of going upon ye, as well as of stumbling blocks, if you would not fall, you must avoid all occasions of evil, as the Apostle says in the Epistle of Jude verse. 23. hating the garment spotted of the flesh.

It is a remarkable place to this purpose, that in Numb. 6.3, 4. where the Lord makes a Law that the Nazarites must drink neither wine nor strong drink, and in order to this, the Lord forbids them to eat so much as the kernel or husk of the grape: they were forbidden not only to drink of the juice, but not to eat of the husk of the grape, because that might be an occasion or incitement to taste of the wine of the grape, they were to avoid all occasions of committing that sin: so the people of God should not only have a care of a downright sin, but of all occasions or provocations to any sin.

You know it was Pharaoh's instigation to Moses (when he and the children of Israel were going out of Egypt) that he should leave his children and servants behind him; but when he was resolute, and would have them with him, and Pharaoh bid him go, but to leave his cattle, his sheep and oxen behind, Exod. 10.24. But Moses told him there should not a hoof be left behind: for he knew if they had left anything behind, it might have been an allurement, to have made the children of Israel hanker after Egypt again. The way to mortify a sin is to avoid all occasions that may induce you to the committing of that sin to which you are addicted.

2. Another general means to mortify sin is this, Withstand a lust or corruption in the very first risings and workings of it in thy heart. If thou givest way to a sin, the more power it will have over thee, and the more difficult it will be to subdue it: therefore crush the Cockatrice in the Egg. It is an easier matter to keep out an enemy, then to thrust him out, when he is once gotten in. You should keep your souls as it were in a garrison, and not give way to sin, but resist it, and oppose it in the first motions of it.

3. Another means is this, Bend the greatest strength of thy heart in importunate prayer to God, against that corruption that does most of all trouble thee, as Paul in 2 Cor. 12.8. when he had a thorn in his flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, for this (it is said) he besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him; in Psal. 56.9. says David there, When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn

back. So when we call and cry unto God, it is the way to make our lusts turn back from us. There is never a mortified man, but hath been a praying man: the real subduing of a lust can never be obtained without prayer, for prayer is the sword of the Spirit, whereby we can only conquer and overcome our corruptions; at that time when you grow most remiss, and careless, and formal in prayer, then are you most of all troubled with unmortified lusts and corruptions. Isaiah 64.6, 7. the Church there complains, we do all fade as a leaf, our iniquities like wind have taken us away, and there is none that calleth upon thy name; Say they, we are carried headlong by our lusts, as the dust is hurled by the wind: and what is the reason of it; but because there is none that calleth upon thy Name?

It is a rule that a modern Author hath, says he, either thy sins will make thee leave praying, or thy praying will make thee leave sinning; if thou doest continue still to pray against sin, in time prayer will mortify and kill thy lusts and corruptions. This is the third means.

4. If thou wouldst keep under thy corruptions, then keep in thy memory some special sentences of Scripture, which do most expressly and vehemently forbid those sins unto which thou art most strongly inclined: this is an excellent way to fence thy heart against any corruptions. Thus David did in Psal. 119.11. says he, I have hid thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee, that is, I have hid thy special word in my heart, against my beloved and darling sin, that so when I am tempted to commit them, I might consider thy express command against that sin.

And thus when our Savior Christ was tempted by the Devil, he told him, it is written thus and thus, that thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, he convinced him from Scripture of his sin. Now if you had in your thought some express places of Scripture against those sins you are most inclined to: this would exceedingly help you in subduing your sins. And therefore look over the whole Bible, and choose out those places of Scripture, that do most dreadfully



threaten that sin, as if you be given to uncleanness, consider that place, He that goes in to a Harlot, he shall not take hold of the paths of life; and that whoremongers and adulterers God will judge, and such like places: and so for any other sin you are addicted to; recollect and gather together the most direct Scriptures, that speak against it and condemn it.

5. Exercise thyself in and enjoin thyself to solemn fasting, for that particular sin thou art most inclined to: in 1 Cor. 9.25, 27. says the Apostle, He that striveth for the mastery, he is temperate in all things: so fight I, not as one that beateth the air, but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection by temperance; the way to tame an unruly heart is by fasting and prayer, a conscionable use of these duties will be a great means to give corruptions its fatal blow. Fasting and prayer, they are the slaughter-houses of sin.

I may say of sin as Christ said of the Devil, in Mat. 17.21. all kinds of Devils are not alike, says he, this kind will not go out but by fasting and prayer: so some sins will not go out of us by ordinary means, but by fasting and prayer.

6. If all these means will not prevail for the subduing of thy lusts, then use this help, lay thyself under a solemn covenant unto God, that thou wilt (through the strength of Christ) forbear those sins that do reign and rule in thee, I say, resolve in the strength of Christ, for all your covenants and promises must be made in the strength of God's Covenant and Promise; there is no man, that makes a vow or promise to God (in the strength of Christ) to subdue his lusts, but he will do it first or last. If thou hast used all other means for the bridling of thy lusts, and they prove ineffectual: in this case we should bind ourselves to God in an oath, that in the strength of Christ we will forsake our sins.

Object. But may some say, if we break this vow as we are no way able to perform it, this will be a double sin.

Answ. If thou art weak and unable to perform this duty, thou art as insufficient to do any other duty that is required of thee. But,

2. If God does help thee, and carry thee on in this work by his strength, then you may perform it, and a vow is God's ordinance, and if you make a vow in Christ's strength, he will assist you in it, to accomplish it.

7. When thou goest about this work of mortification, do not bend thy strength against one particular act of sin, but set thy whole strength against the whole body of sin.

The way to keep a tree from growing, is not to cut off the branches, but to pluck it up by the roots. And so if ever you would mortify a lust indeed, you must strike at the whole body of sin, and labor to bewail and subdue that, and therefore David in Psal. 51. when he came to humble his soul before God for the sin of adultery; he does not say, Lord forgive me this sin only, but in the beginning of the Psalm he laments the whole body of sin that was in him, Oh Lord, says he, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me, &c.

8. Wouldst thou mortify and keep under sin in thy heart? then meditate much upon Christ's death and upon thy own: these are effectual means to kill and keep under sin.

## 2 Meditations

1. Meditate upon Christ's death, consider thus with thyself, Shall I live in those sins, that the Lord Jesus Christ died to redeem me from? shall I harbor those lusts in my heart, that shed the heart blood of my dearest Savior? shall not I kill those sins that killed Christ, and see the blood of those lusts that spilled the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ? Such considerations as these will make a man refrain from sin, and subdue and keep it under: the meditating of the death of Christ is a most effectual means to put us upon the crucifying and killing of our lusts. And then,

2. Not only the thought of Christ's death, but of thy own death too, will stir thee up to mortification: consider thus with thyself, I must not live always here, I must die either sooner or later, and after death comes Judgment, when I must give an account for everything done in the body, whether it be good or evil: and those sins that are now sweet and delightful to me, when I come to die, will be as gall and wormwood to me then, and as gravel in my belly; it will certainly be bitterness in the latter end: which if we did seriously consider of, it would be a great means to keep under sin.

And thus I have briefly run over these 8 particular directions how to mortify sin: it remains only now, to wind up what hath been said, with a comfortable Use, a Use of consolation: it may be there is many a conscientious soul that hears me this day, whose consciences bear them witness they have not been enemies to their own souls in this particular, but have labored to oppose and mortify their lusts: but do yet find the workings of corruption to be very strong in their hearts, to such as you are, I have these 5 words to say.

1. Take this for thy comfort, that though you use the utmost of your endeavors to mortify sin, yet you cannot withstand the being of sin in you, but only hinder the reigning of it in thy heart. Sin will be in thy soul (as I told you) like those beasts spoken of in Dan. 7.14. whose dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a little season: so the being of sin will not be taken away; though the reigning power of it be taken away, the Apostle in 2 Cor. 4.7. compares our bodies to earthen vessels, and the filth of sin that is in us can never be fully cleansed and washed away, till these vessels be broken in pieces, and our bodies are laid in the dust, till we shake off these bodies of flesh, we shall never shake off our bodies of sin. And therefore this may be a great comfort to you, God doth not expect, that you should root out the being of sin, but only keep down the reigning of sin in you.

2. Take this for your comfort, that if you do use all conscionable means to bridle your lusts, you may be confident, that sooner or later grace shall get the victory over sin; sin may be a combatant, but it shall never be a conqueror. Grace in Scripture is compared to oil, and corruptions to water: and as oil will swim to the top, do what you can, you cannot keep it under the water, so grace will in time get the victory over your corruptions: and Christ will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax till he hath brought forth Judgment into victory: here by a bruised reed and smoking flax are meant weak Christians, and Christ will not discourage such, though their graces do not burn into a flame, yet if they do but smoke he will not quench them, till they have brought forth judgment into victory, that is, till those sparks and small beginnings of grace in them, do burn into a flame, and become victorious over their corruptions; a reed is weak of itself, but a bruised reed is weaker, but yet this shall not be broken, till the work of grace be perfected in thy soul, and become victorious over all the oppositions and temptations of Satan.

3. Remember this for your comfort, that if you do conscionably walk in a due improvement of those means, that the Lord hath sanctified for the mortifying of your sins, though notwithstanding all, your sins do yet prevail over, and overcome you; in this case the Lord will hold you guiltless. I might urge that place to you which I quoted the last Lord's day, concerning the Law of God touching a damsel, in Deut. 22.25, 26, 27. which was, that the Adulterer should be put to death, but says God, If the damsel were walking in the field, and a man came to her and defiled her, if she strove against him and cried out, then (says God) the damsel shall be guiltless, but the man shall die the death.

So when the Devil does make a spiritual rape upon thee, if thy soul can bear thee witness, that thou didst cry out to God for help; and struggle and strive against the corruption with all thy might and strength to suppress and keep them under, and yet thou couldst not prevail, but the Devil did overmatch thee; in this case know for thy comfort, that God will account thee guiltless.

4. Take this for thy comfort, that God will never damn thee for that sin which in the whole course of thy life thou usest all possible means to subdue and destroy. Thou mayest plead thus with God when you come to die, Oh Lord, wilt thou condemn and throw me into Hell for that sin which I have labored all my life time to throw out of my heart? I might in this case of resisting corruptions, make use of what Naturalists tell us concerning the Crocodile, which is a serpent of that quality, that if it sees a man afraid of him, and run from him, it then takes courage, and runs after the man, and kills him; but if a man opposeth and fights with the Crocodile, it will then grow faint hearted, and run away, and the man kills him. So here, if thou art faint hearted, and yieldest to every temptation, and wilt not grapple with those incursions that sin make upon thee, then sin will overcome thee and kill thee; but if thou doest oppose and pursue sin, and bend all thy strength against it, that hadst thou more tears to shed, or more prayers to make, or more strength to put forth, you would employ them all against sin: if it be so, my soul for thine oh man, thy corruptions shall never be thy ruin: though the Devil does force sin upon thee, yet if thou usest all possible means to resist it, the Lord will hold thee guiltless.

5. Take this for thy comfort, that the disturbing and troubling of thy heart by a sin, does rather argue that sin to be mortified then unmortified; provided that as thy sin stirs in thy heart, so thy resolutions, and supplications against those sins, do stir in thy heart too: if as sin does fight against thee, thou doest strive against it in thy resolutions and protestations against it. Though it may keep a great deal of stir in thy heart, yet it may rather argue that sin is dying, then living and reigning in thee, and prevailing over thee.

And thus I have done, in the dispatch of the first Doctrine, namely, that the mortification of corruption is a necessary qualification required in all that would attain salvation.

# SERMON, VIII.

Romans 8:13

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Rom. 8. verse. 13.

I Come now to make further entrance into the 2. Doctrine, If you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live. From whence I noted to you, that the mortification of corruption is wrought in us, by the strength of Christ's Spirit, not our own.

Before I come to handle the cases of conscience necessary to the prosecution of this point, I shall first prove it to you, by two demonstrations, if you through the Spirit do mortify, that mortification of corruption is wrought in us by the Spirit of God. And that,

1. Because the sanctification of a man's nature is the proper and peculiar work, or office of God's Spirit: and hence the Spirit of God is called the holy Ghost, because its proper office is to make a man holy.

Now mortification is but one part of sanctification, for sanctification consists of these two parts: mortification or a dying unto sin, and vivification or a living unto God; and therefore if sanctification in general be the work of God's Spirit, then mortification must needs be the work of the Spirit also.

And hence it is that you often find this phrase added to the Spirit of God, the sanctification of the Spirit, as in 1 Pet. 1.2. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit. So in 1 Cor. 6.11. And 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.

If mortification be a part of sanctification, and the Spirit of God does carry on the whole work of sanctification, it must needs carry on this part of it, mortification.

2. This appears to be so, because it is only the Spirit of God that can savingly enlighten a man's mind, and convince his judgment to make him see the evil of sin, and a man will never go about to kill sin, till he be persuaded of the evil and danger of it. And therefore you read in Joh. 16.18. That for this cause God hath sent his Spirit into the world, that he might convince the world of sin. A man will never seek after a cure till he is sensible of his disease; so you will never go about the extirpation of sin, till you are sensible of the danger and guilt of your sins: and you will never be convinced of the danger and evil of sin, unless the Spirit of God does enlighten you. So that the work of mortification is wholly to be ascribed to the Spirit of God, because that only can so convince us of the evil of sin, as to make us hate and abhor it and strive against it.

I shall now fall upon the discussing of 3 or 4 needful cases of conscience touching this point. As,

1. Seeing the Text here says, if you through the Spirit: the words do imply, that there is another kind of mortification that is not wrought by the help of the Spirit, but by the power of a man's own good nature or education, and therefore I shall show you the difference between corruptions mortified by the power of the Spirit of God, and corruptions merely restrained by the power of nature.

2. I shall show you, how you may be satisfied in your own consciences that you have mortified your corruptions.

3. I shall show you whether the falling often into the same sin may be consistent with mortification. To begin with the first,

1. Wherein lies the difference between a corruption merely restrained by the power of nature, and a lust truly mortified by the Spirit of God?

I shall lay you down these 8 apparent differences.

1. A corruption merely restrained by the power of nature, does only make a man forbear the act of sin for the present, but does not put into the heart a hateful disposition against that sin: as it is with a thief in prison, he may be restrained from a sin because he cannot act it, but yet he loves the sin (it may be) as well as ever he did: so a man may for a time refrain from the act of sin, and yet have no inward hatred implanted in his heart against that sin.

As Balaam, he gave two peremptory answers to Balak's messengers, that he would not go down to curse Israel, and yet at last he went, because he loved the wages of unrighteousness,

But now where there is a real mortification wrought by the power of the Spirit of God, this is so powerful in thy heart, that it implants in thee a contrary and hateful disposition to that sin which thou doest not act. So that he doth not only leave sin, but abhor it: there is not only a cessation from sin, but an indignation against it, and therefore try yourselves by this difference.

2. The restraint of sin by the power of Nature, doth reach only to more gross and palpable sins, but not to inward and bosom lusts; by the power of nature a man's conscience may give him a curb and control for gross and visible acts of sin, but it does not extend so far as to secret and bosom sins.



Whereas mortifying grace wrought in us by the Spirit of God, reacheth so far as to a seizure upon inward sins as well as outward, as in Col. 3.5. says the Apostle, Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, &c. not only fornication in the act, but uncleanness in the thoughts, concupiscence, and inordinate affections. Mortification by the Spirit, reacheth to the crucifying of the inward man, and therefore examine yourselves in this particular.

In 2 Sam. 24.10. it is said there, that David his heart smote him after he had numbered the people. Divines can hardly tell what was David's sin in numbering them, unless it were pride, or carnal confidence, and yet his heart smote him for it. Tender consciences their hearts smite them for little small sins; so his heart smote him likewise, for cutting off the lap of Saul's garment, 1 Sam. 24.4. which was no sin at all, and yet he was troubled for it. But now a wicked man he is never troubled for small sins; those sins that almost break a godly man's heart, never break his sleep: small sins that are as gravel in a godly man's bowels, are but as gravel in a wicked man's gloves that never troubles him.

3. Corruption restrained by the power of nature is a violent and compulsive action, a man undergoes it unwillingly and involuntarily: in Gen. 20.6. says God to Abimelech, I also withheld thee from sinning against me, which implies that there was a strong inclination in him to commit that sin, but God withheld him from doing it. A natural heart though he doth not act a sin, yet he is kept from it unwillingly; but now when a sin is mortified through the strength of the Spirit, then a man does willingly surrender up his lusts: a wicked man may leave sin, but it is as a friend leaves his friend, with a great deal of unwillingness, and may shed tears at parting; but a godly man leaves his sins as a poor prisoner leaves his stinking dungeon, or a poor beggar his filthy rags, or as a gally-slave is glad to leave

plying the oar in a gally. God's people shall be a people of willingness in the day of his power, and shall say unto their Idols in their indignation, Get you hence.

4. When a man is restrained from a sin only by the power of nature, when that restraint is taken off, he runs after that sin with greater eagerness and greediness then ever he did. Hos. 7.6. Wicked men are compared to an oven: now you know fire in an oven, being confined within so small a compass, burns very violently; so a wicked man, the more he is restrained from a sin, the more he burns with heat, and rage after his lusts: like a river that is dammed up, when the bank is broken down, it runs out with a great strength, and a mighty torrent. Thus Joash, 2 Chron. 24.2. all the while that Jehoiada the Priest lived, he fell into no great sin, but after he was dead, his lust brake out and run down like a mighty torrent, into all manner of sin and wickedness. So Balaam though his sin was restrained for a season, yet afterward he was more greedy to commit it then ever.

But now a mortified man that hath mortifying grace wrought in him by the Spirit of God, his sins are continually dying and decaying, though they be not quite dead, sin shall never carry that strength and prevalency with it as it hath done, and never make that seizure upon his heart as formerly.

5. A man that is restrained from sin only by the power of nature, it is merely upon carnal considerations. As,

1. A man may forbear a sin because of the presence of men, and not because of the omnipresence of God; but now Joseph when he was tempted to sin, he went higher, (says he) How shall I do this great wickedness, and so sin against God? And,

2. A man may be restrained from a sin upon this carnal consideration, lest that sin should bring upon him temporal judgments. Thus Abimelech did forbear sin, in Gen. 20.6. when he knew that Sarah was Abraham's wife, says he to Abraham, Why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife, for I might have sinned and so have brought evil upon the Kingdom? this was that which restrained him from sin, and not because God would have been offended by it. But now he that mortifies a sin by the Spirit of God, he abstains from sin, upon spiritual considerations. Such as these; if I commit this sin, I shall thereby dishonor God, and scandalize the Gospel, and my profession, and encourage other sins to break out afresh in me, and the like.

6. A man that restrains his sins by the power of nature, he does it more because of that eternal punishment that is annexed to his sin, then because of that internal evil that is in sin. He abstains from sin, not because God is a holy God, but because he is a just God; not because God hates sin, but because he punisheth sin; not because there is a Hell in sin, but because there is a Hell for and after sin.

But now a truly mortified man, he forbears sin, more for the internal evil there is in sin, then for the external punishment that does accompany sin: as one said, that if Hell stood on one side of him, and sin on the other, upon a deliberate debate with his own soul, he would rather leap into Hell then into sin.

7. A man that hath corruptions merely restrained by the power of nature, though they may be restrained for a time, yet if any temptation, allurements, occasion, or opportunity be offered him to commit that sin, he will easily close with it and embrace it: as in Prov. 7.22. you read there of a young man that passed through the streets in the evening, and there met him a woman in the attire of an Harlot, and tempted him, and it is said he went after her straightway, without any rational debate, never considering

whether God saw him, or whether God would condemn him for that sin or no, but he straightway followed her.

But now a man that hath mortified his corruptions by the power of God's Spirit, he is still opposing sin, and never commits it but against his will; sin it may be sometime overtakes him, but he runs from it as fast as he can.

8. A man that hath sin restrained by the power of nature, this restriction is irksome and burdensome to him, but the letting out of his heart after the commission of a sin, is joyous and gladsome to him: the restraining of a lust is very tedious and troublesome, as in Prov. 13.19. It is an abomination for a fool to depart from evil.

And on the other hand it is matter of joy and gladness to him to be let loose to sin, that he may take his fill with his sinful pleasures, as in Jer. 11.15. When thou doest evil thou rejoicest; And in Hab. 3.14. their rejoicing is to devour the poor.

But now on the contrary, a godly man he rejoiceth and blesseth God that he is restrained from committing a sin: thus David did in 1 Sam. 25.32. When Abigail came to David and kept him from spilling innocent blood, David blessed the Lord that had sent her to meet him, and blessed Abigail for her advice, which kept him from shedding blood: and as the restraint of a sin is gladness to a godly man, so the falling into a sin is matter of trouble, and sorrow, and tears to him.

As it is with those fishes that breed your orient pearls, those pearls that do grow in the fish, they are the torment and disease of the fish, but when these pearls are put upon a man, they are an ornament and grace to him: So those sins that are matter of joy and delight to the wicked, are the burden, and sorrow, and trouble of the godly. Oh therefore search into your own bosoms, and see whether you can distinguish yourselves from those men that have their corruptions

only restrained in them by the power of nature, and not mortified by the Spirit of God.

And thus I have done with this first case of conscience, showing you the difference in these 8 particulars, between a man whose sins are restrained in him only by the power of nature, and a man that hath sin truly mortified in him, by the Spirit of God.

I come now to a second case of conscience, which I hope to dispatch at this time; which is this,

2. Oh but may a poor soul say, How shall I be satisfied in my own conscience, that my sins are truly mortified, and my corruptions subdued through the strength of the Spirit?

Answ. I shall give you 2 clear and infallible evidences of a mortified man.

1. If so be, those corruptions that heretofore have been very stirring in thee, and prevalent over thee, if now when occasions and opportunities of acting those sins be fairly offered thee, and yet thou doest no way close with them; this is a certain evidence that those sins are mortified. Formerly thy nature was as tinder to a spark, no more but touch and take: but now though thou hast opportunity, secrecy, security, and all the advantages that may be for the committing of a sin, and yet you do abstain from it: this is an unquestionable evidence that sin is mortified.

This was that which did declare Josephs sin to be mortified, in that when he had opportunity, importunity, secrecy, the doors were shut, there were none else in the house but he and his Mistress; and he had hopes of advancement and preferment too, she would have made him a great man in her house; yet all these allurements could not persuade him to embrace the sin, and so offend God.

I hope there are many amongst you that hear me this day, that although you should meet with as many temptations to this sin as Joseph did, though no eye should see you, yet you would not for all the world commit this sin; why this doth argue a work of God's Spirit in your inward man; without which you could never go so far.

2. Another evidence is this, When thou doest make conscience of, and art troubled as well for inward and secret sins, as for open and gross transgressions: when there is in thy heart a reluctancy against, and true sorrow for small and secret sins, as well as for open and scandalous offenses; this is an undoubted evidence, that God hath wrought a work of mortification (in thee) by his own Spirit; when those sins that are no bigger than mole hills, lie as heavy upon thy heart as if they were mountains; and when your conscience can bear you witness, that there is no secret lust that makes an incursion upon your soul, but you do strive against and labor to oppose it.

## **SERMON, IX.**

Romans 8:13

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. - Rom. 8. verse. 13.

There are yet three Cases of conscience more, which I intend (God willing) to speak to: the next shall be this.

3. Whether a man whose lusts and corruptions are truly mortified by the Spirit of God, may commit and fall often into those sins that are mortified. And,

4. What symptoms may be given of a bosom and beloved sin that is most unmortified in a man. And,

5. What helps may be prescribed towards the mortifying of some particular corruptions which a man is troubled withal.

I shall begin with the 3. Whether a man that hath truly mortified a sin may fall often into that sin that is mortified.

I shall lay down to you these 5 particulars by way of answer.

1. We have some examples in Scripture of some men that have not fallen again into those sins that are mortified in them, as first in Gen. 38.26. where it is said of Judah, that after he was convinced of his sin in abusing Tamar his daughter-in-law, that he acknowledged his offense, and he knew her again no more: after he saw his sin, he confessed it, and fell no more into that sin afterwards.

Another example you have in good Jehoshaphat in 2 Chr. 20.37. When the Prophet Eliezer came to him and told him of his sin, of making a league, and joining himself with Ahaziah, and that the Lord was angry with him for it; after he was reprov'd, he would not bring the guilt of that sin upon him anymore: as you may see in 1 King. 22.49. When Ahaziah spake unto Jehoshaphat, that his servants might go along with Jehoshaphat's servants in the ships, it is said Jehoshaphat would not.

2. Take this by way of answer, that we have no express example in all the Bible, that ever a mortified man did fall again into that sin which he had been humbled for, and which was subdued and mortified.

It is not my observation only, but the observation of judicious Perkins, that in all the examples of the Old and New Testament, he does not take notice of any one instance throughout the whole Book of God, that ever a man that had mortified a sin, did fall into it a second time; and therefore if thy sins be mortified, and yet you fall often into the same sins, you are a man without a pattern.

3. Know this further by way of answer, That though there be no example in all the Scripture, of a man that did fall again into the

same gross sin which before he had mortified; yet there are divers examples of good men, that have fallen often into the same sin, before they knew it to be a sin, before they were sensible of their sin, and truly humbled and grieved for it, and seriously considered between God and their own souls, what evil they had done. Thus Solomon fell twice to do wickedly before the Lord: and so Peter he fell thrice one after another into the sin of denying his Lord and Master: and the children of Israel, they fell 10 times into the sin of murmuring against the Lord, in Numb. 14.22.

Before a man hath mortified and is truly humbled for a sin, he may fall often into the same sin.

4. Though there be no example for this in all the Scripture, yet according to reason and experience this may be true, that a man that hath mortified a sin, may fall into the same sin again, that he hath repented of and been humbled for: and this answer is given by learned Mr. Perkins, says he, there is nothing in reason and experience, that can assure you that a corruption mortified, especially if it be an inward and secret sin, may not break forth again, after you have repented of it. As suppose the sin be passion, though you do strive against it and pray to God every day to enable you by his Spirit to subdue and keep it under, yet notwithstanding upon some special occasion or provocation offered, thy passion may break out again; and so inward and bosom lusts they may break out again after repentance for them.

5. Though there be no example in all the Scripture, that a mortified man hath fallen into the same sin again after they were mortified, yet there is nothing in the whole Book of God that doth say against it, that does say expressly or by consequence that you cannot fall into the same sins after they are once mortified, and therefore this is somewhat for your comfort.

6. Take this by way of answer, that a falling into a corruption a second time, the committing the same sin after it is mortified, argues



a great deal of the strength of sin to be in the soul: though it doth not argue there is no grace in that soul, yet it argues that sin and corruptions are very strong there. And here I shall only add a word or two by way of caution, and then proceed to the other cases of conscience.

Consider first, that the falling often into the same sin, does extremely expose you to obduracy and hardness of heart: and therefore I dare aver it, that you that do fall often, again and again into the same sin, you lie under a state of hardness of heart, you have no tender and sensible hearts in you.

2. Consider, that the falling often into the same sin will cost thee many tears and prayers before thou obtainest peace of conscience; thou mayest obtain pardon, and yet want peace of conscience, and assurance of thy pardon a great while.

3. It is a deadly and a dangerous symptom, for a man to fall often into the same sins; I do not say it is a damnable, but it is a dangerous symptom, and it is a deadly symptom, a sign of death upon thee: it is in this case as it is with a relapse into the same disease, when a man is first sick, the disease feeds upon his ill humors, and if he recover he is the better and healthier for it afterward; but if the man falls again into the same disease, then the distemper feeds upon the vital spirits, whereas before it fed upon the corruption and ill humors in his body: So it is no less dangerous (to relapse into the same sins often) in regard of thy spiritual health.

4. I now proceed to the next case of conscience which is this, What symptoms may be given of a man's bosom and darling sin, and which of all other is the most predominant and unmortified in his soul? This is a very needful question, 10 symptoms by way of discovery, and I shall give you whereby you may know which is your beloved or master sin.

1. That sin is thy bosom or master sin which thou doest most frequently act or fall into in the course of thy life.

As those actions you are most conversant about, do seize most upon the heart, so that sin you do most frequently commit, that is the most unmortified and beloved sin; and therefore consider what sin it is you oftenest fall into, whether uncleanness, or drunkenness, or deceiving in your trade, spiritual pride, &c. that sin you do most frequently fall into, that is your darling and unmortified sin.

2. That sin which thou doest most easily consent and yield to upon every temptation, that is thy bosom sin: those sins which thou doest oppose, and art hardly persuaded to, those are not thy bosom sins: but that which does easily beset thee, (as the Apostle says) that is thy master sin: (why now) art thou easily drawn aside to drunkenness, then that is thy master sin; or if to uncleanness, then that is thy master sin, and the like: and therefore I beseech you, beloved, take a survey of your own heart, that so you may find what sin is most unmortified in you, and then bend the greatest of your strength against that sin, look about you, and see what sin it is that doth most easily beset thee, and is like fire to toe to thy nature, that is thy master sin.

3. That sin is most unmortified in you that you are most unwilling of all others to part withal, and therefore a bosom sin in Scripture, is compared to the right eye, and the right hand, which implies that a man's master and beloved sins are as dear to him as the members of his body, and therefore when you are unwilling to leave a sin, conclude that that sin is thy master sin.

4. That sin is most unmortified in thee, which of all other sins does most vex and gall thy conscience; for the conscience is God's messenger in thee, to check thee when thou doest ill, and speak peace to thee when thou doest well: if thou doest go on in ways of sin, and haunt a sinful course, thy conscience will haunt

thee and dog thee, and never let thee be quiet. Now take a view of your own hearts. I dare say there is not a man or woman amongst you, but now and then your consciences do check you, and convince you that this is an evil course that you follow, or the like: now observe what sin it is thy conscience does most of all check thee for, and what is thy bosom and master sin.

5. That sin which of all others does most insinuate its self into thy heart, when thou art in the service of God, and performing holy duties: when a sin can be so impudent as to intrude upon thy heart, when thou art in the presence of God, that is thy unmortified sin. And therefore beloved, examine your own hearts, what sin it is that of all others does most haunt thee on the Sabbath day, and does most of all trouble thee, when thou art performing thy duty to God; what sin is it that does especially dog thee to Church, and to Sermons, and on fasting days, that sin is thy master sin.

6. That sin which thy enemies does most upbraid thee for, and thy friends most persuade thee against, and yet thou hast no power to leave, that is thy bosom and beloved sin. As one says well, says he, I am more beholding to my enemies than to my friends, for when they are angry with me, they tell me of all my faults, and twit me in the teeth with every known sin I am guilty of.

Now what sin is it that wicked men do most upbraid thee for, and cast in thy teeth, and thy friends most persuade thee from, Oh friend walk no more in this path, be not guilty of this sin anymore, &c. that sin which thy friends do most persuade thee from, that is thy master sin, and most unmortified sin; and therefore I beseech you, beloved deal impartially with your own souls. In this regard there are a great many men and women here before the Lord this day, now let me ask you this question, Do not your enemies sometimes upbraid you with such, or such a sin, and do not your friends persuade you from it, saying, For

the Lord's sake follow this sinful course no longer, or the like? you may be confident this is the sin that is most unmortified in thy heart.

7. That sin that does come most fresh in thy mind to trouble and perplex thy conscience when thou art in the extremity of any affliction upon thy sick or death-bed, or when thou art in prison or poverty, or the like: that sin which does then most of all trouble thy conscience, that most commonly is thy master sin.

You know the story of the sons of Jacob, in Gen. 42.21. they were never troubled for their sin against Joseph their brother, till there being a famine in their own land, they went down into Egypt to buy bread, and there Joseph their brother knew them well enough, yet would not disclose himself to them, but told them they were spies, and were come thither to see the nakedness of the Land, and cast them into prison: and when they were in prison, then they said one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us and we would not hear him, therefore is this distress come upon us. They never thought of this sin for twenty years together till they were cast into prison and affliction, and then they remembered it, and were troubled for it. That sin which doth most of all gall thy conscience in afflictions, that is thy master lust.

8. That sin for which of all others thou canst least bear a reproof, that is thy master sin: it may be thou mayest bear a reproof for some sins, but when a man hits the nail upon the head, and reproves thee for thy master sin, thou canst not endure that, and hence it is that some Divines observe concerning John the Baptist, that had he reproved Herod for any other sin, but for that of Herodias his brother Philip's wife, that it was not lawful for him to have her: had he reproved him for any other sin, it is probable Herod would have let him alone. So if Ministers do reprove sin only in the general, men can bear this well enough,

but when they come to speak home, and tell this man, thou art a drunkard, and another, thou art a whoremonger, or a deceiver, or the like; they cannot endure this reproof, which shows that these are their master sins.

It is observed from Mat. 21.41. where Christ asketh what shall be done to those wicked husbandmen that had killed their masters servants, and slain his son: the chief Priests and Pharisees made answer themselves, that he would miserably destroy those wicked men, and let out the vineyard to other husbandmen, &c. but when they perceived that Christ spake this of them, that they should be destroyed, then they cried out God forbid, Luk. 20.26. When he only told them in general, that these wicked men were worthy to be destroyed, they did acknowledge it to be just and right, that they should be destroyed; but when they knew he spake this of them, they could not endure it, and from thenceforth they labored to kill Jesus.

9. That is thy bosom sin that a man does most indulge, and knowingly allow himself in: thus Naaman's indulging himself in that sin, in 2 King. 5.18. His bowing in the house of Rimmon, declared that to be his master sin. That sin which thou doest most indulge and allow thyself in, and use least means against, that is thy master sin.

10. That sin is thy bosom sin, to which all other sins do give supplies and yield contribution: as suppose Pride be thy master sin, then thou wilt use deceit in thy trade, false lights, and false weights, &c. and all these sins you commit to uphold your pride, and so of any other sin.

And thus I have done with the 4. Case of conscience. I have only now a short Use which shall be by way of Caution, from the discoveries that hath been made to you of your bosom lusts.

1. And first I beseech you all in the fear of God, take a survey over your own heart, to discover which is your master sin. And,

2. When you have found it out, though you should be watchful against all other sins, yet especially bend your strength and care against this sin, be very vigilant and circumspect over your own hearts, that you do not fall into this sin: thus David did, says he, I have kept myself from mine iniquity.

(Oh beloved) that part of thy soul against which sin and the Devil makes the strongest assaults, there be you sure to put forth the greatest part of your strength against them: fight not so much against small or great, as against your master sin.

3. Know and consider that it is the greatest hypocrisy in the world, to go about to mortify other sins, and yet leave thy bosom, thy beloved sin unsubdued: Would not that man abominably dissemble, that should go about to stop a little leak in a ship, and leave a great gap unstopped? no less hypocrisy is it for thee to strive against small sins, and let thy great and master sins alone.

4. Take heed of being mistaken about your bosom lust, in conceiving it is mortified when it is not: it may be wantonness was thy bosom sin in thy youth, and now covetousness or worldly mindedness in thy old age; one sin may be thy bosom sin in thy youth, and another in thy old age: take heed of thinking thy bosom or master sin is mortified when it is only changed.

5. When you have found out your bosom lust, then labor to root it out of thy heart and subdue it: when thy bosom lust burns in thy breast like fire, you should more especially labor to quench that, and strive against it, and mortify that lust.

## **SERMON, X.**

## Romans 8:13

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. - Rom. 8. verse. 13.

I Come now to give you some special helps against some special corruptions: the last Lord's day I gave you some helps in the general how to mortify sin, but now I shall give you some particular helps against 3 particular corruptions, namely, How to mortify unclean lusts, spiritual pride, and reigning anger or passion. I cannot think of any other corruptions, that do make a more ordinary incursion into the minds of men, then these three. One of these I was desired in particular to speak to, and I shall speak very briefly to them all, I shall begin with the first, and will here lay down to you 5 or 6 Helps how to mortify and keep under unclean lusts.

1. A special help to mortify unclean lusts, is to live in a continual and serious mindfulness of the All-seeing Eye of God upon thee: indeed this is a universal remedy against all sin: but yet the Scripture applying this help to this sin, I therefore make use of it, as in Job 31.1.4. says Job there, I have made a covenant with my eyes, why then should I think upon a maid: and in verse. 4. says he, Does not the Lord see my ways and count all my steps? There is nothing will more give a control to our lusts then the consideration of God's omnividency, that he sees and takes notice of all our ways.

I have heard a story of a maid that was earnestly solicited by a young man to uncleanness, and she told him, that if he could bring her in a place where no eye might see them, she would yield to his desires; so the young man led her out of one room into another, and at last when he thought they were most secret and retired, he would have had his desire of her: oh but says she, the Eye of God is upon us still, he sees us, and takes notice of us: and upon this very consideration they continued chaste all their lives afterward.

2. Lay a special fence and safeguard upon thy outward senses: the Apostle speaks of some in 2 Pet. 2.14. That they had eyes full of adultery, and they could not cease from sin; therefore you should set a watch over your eyes, take heed of wanton and lascivious looks, it is a window that lets in a world of lust into the heart. In Lev. 14.9. the Lord made a Law, That the Leper that was to be cleansed, should shave off the hair of his head and of his eye brows: so there is no way so effectual to root out and cleanse yourselves from fleshly lusts, as to set a watch over your eyes that they may not look upon vanity, as Job says, I have made a covenant with my eyes; you should keep your eyes from wanton glances, if you would control fleshly lusts: and hence it is that you read that Abimelech in Gen. 20.16. when he surrendered up Sarah Abraham's wife to him, he said to her, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver, behold he is to thee a covering of the eyes unto all them that are with thee, and with all other: to note that a wife should cast her eyes upon none in a lustful way, but upon her husband, he must be a covering of her eyes unto all that are with her.

3. Use a moderation in meats and drinks: there are some kinds of food, and indeed excess in any kind of food, do much provoke unto lust: as in 2 Pet. 2.13. says the Apostle, They have their eyes full of adultery while they feast with you, and this is the reason of Paul's expression in 2 Cor. 9.26, 27. says he, I therefore so run, not as uncertainly, so fight I, not as one that beateth the air, but I keep under my body and bring it into subjection.

4. If you would keep under fleshly lusts, then make conscience of curbing your thoughts when lust first begins to make entrance there; when a man lets contemplating thoughts lodge in his heart with complacency, it is a thousand to one but they break out into act. It is a great provocation to uncleanness, for a man to cherish in himself speculative wantonness's, to behold in his thoughts some lascivious object: as in Ezek. 23.19. She multiplied her whoredoms in calling to remembrance the days of her youth, wherein she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt. The restraining and curbing our



thoughts, is a great help to keep under this sin, I have made a covenant with my eyes, says Job: he does not say, why therefore should I look upon a maid, but why therefore should I think upon a maid?

5. If thou wouldst mortify and subdue fleshly lusts, use this help, consider that there is a great deal more real evil then there is seeming goodness in this sin of uncleanness. When a Harlot would persuade and entice a young man to be unclean with her, she says, as in Prov. 7.17. I came forth to meet thee, diligently to seek, thy face, and I have found thee: I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt: I have perfumed my bed with Myrrh, Aloes and Cinnamon: mark here says an author, how she joins together two bitter things and one sweet. I have, perfumed my bed with Myrrh, Aloes, and Cinnamon, now Cinnamon is only sweet, the other two are very bitter things, which notes to us that there is twice as much real misery and evil, in the sin of uncleanness, as there is of seeming joy and delight in it; there is Myrrh and Aloes, two bitter things to one sweet, more real evil and bitterness, then seeming goodness in it.

6. Revolve seriously and frequently the evil concomitances, that do attend and accompany this sin of uncleanness, as first there is thievery in this sin, thou robbest a body that is not thy own in Joh. 8.4. it is said there, this woman was taken in adultery in the very act: now in the original it is, she was taken in the very theft, to note that adultery is no better then theft: so in Prov. 9.17, 18. committing adultery with a woman, is called stolen waters, Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant: (this is clearly spoken of a Harlot ) it follows, but he knoweth not the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of Hell.

2. This sin brings infamy and reproach upon a man too, in Prov. 6.33. He that committeth adultery, a wound and dishonor shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

3. It procures poverty in a man's estate, a man is brought to beggary by it, as in Prov. 29.3. He that keepeth company with Harlots spendeth his substance: and in Prov. 6.26. By means of a whorish woman, a man is brought to a morsel of bread.

4. It will consume thy flesh and thy bones, it will corrupt thy blood and weaken thy whole man, as in Prov. 5.11. Solomon speaking there of a Harlot, says he, Remove thy foot far from her, and come not near the door of her house, lest thou mourn at last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.

5. It makes a man a very magazine of all manner of diseases.

6. It brings stupidity upon the heart, a man that is an unclean man he is a stupid sinner, and void of understanding, in Hos. 4.14. Wine and women they take away the heart of a man. And thus I have done with the helps against this first sin of unclean lusts.

2. But says another man, alas, I were happy if I had no sin to fear but unclean lusts, but the Lord be merciful to me, I am troubled with spiritual pride, that I cannot act any grace, or perform any duty, but I am lifted up with spiritual pride.

Answ. I shall give you 4 Helps against this sin.

1. If you would keep under spiritual pride, consider, that the best of you have a great deal more cause of abasement and humiliation, then you have of pride; the best of you have more of sin then of grace in you: as there are more pebbles then diamonds in the quarry, and more thorns then roses in the field; so there is more sin then grace in any of your hearts: whereof then should you be proud? though you have many good graces in you, yet you have a very bad, polluting and sinful nature.

2. Live in a continual and serious consideration, that all the gifts and parts thou hast, whereof thou art proud, they were all

bestowed on thee as a gift, as a mere act of donation from God: now if all the gifts thou hast were freely given thee of God from his bounty, why then should you be proud of them? Would you think it seemly for a beggar to be proud of the clothes that another man hath given him? just so it is with you, all that you have, they were mere alms, gifts and acts of grace and mercy from God bestowed upon you, as the Apostle says in 1 Cor. 7. What hast thou oh man, which thou hast not received? and therefore this should humble us.

3. If thou wouldst keep under spiritual pride, consider, that of all things in the world, this is that which will most abate and decay thy gifts: as in Jam. 4.6. The Lord giveth more grace to the humble, but he resisteth the proud. He fights against him as a warrior in battle; he giveth grace to a humble heart, but not to a proud heart; therefore take heed of being lifted up in spirit, and if you are, this should be matter of great humiliation, for you to consider, that pride will stifle and strangle grace in your soul, as the low valleys are fruitful, when the high mountains are barren; so the most humble Christians are most fruitful in grace. Moreover, Philosophers give a clear reason of the evil of this sin above others, because other vices do but oppose and fight against their contrary virtues; but now pride that fights against the whole body of virtue and grace: other vices do but oppose their contraries, as fear that opposeth hope, and sorrow that overwhelms joy, and covetousness that contemneth liberality, and the like: but now pride is a vice that sights against every virtue, and every grace.

4. A great means to mortify and keep under pride in thy heart, is a serious consideration of the great disproportion there is between God and thee, and between thyself and others, and between thyself and thyself.

1. To consider the great disproportion there is between God and thee, how infinitely excelling thee; he is like the glorious Sun, thou like a

clod of dirt; he the righteous Judge of heaven and earth, thou poor sinful dust and ashes, &c. And then to consider the great disproportion between thyself and others, it may be others that have had less time, and enjoyed less means of grace then thou hast done, are yet a great deal better proficiencie in the School of Christ then thou art, and therefore this should abate and keep under thy pride.

3. Consider the great disproportion between thyself and thyself, thou art proud of the gifts thou hast now, but oh man consider what thou wast in Adam, I am sure thou comest far short of the gifts and abilities, thou hadst in him: and then look upon the disproportion that is between what thou art now, and what thou wert at first conversion, it may be thou wert then a man full of grace, fervent in prayer, full of affection to God and zeal for him, &c. but now your zeal is grown cold, and now you are dead and formal in duties, now you want a great many of those graces which then you did exercise, you are like some people I have read of, that the first year offered gold to their gods, and the next year silver, and the third year nothing at all. So you at first were fruitful in grace, and then afterwards you began to wither and decay, and now you are worst of all, and yet more proud than ever. Me thinks these considerations should mightily keep under pride in your hearts. And thus I have done with the second sin, the sin of spiritual pride.

I come now to the third sin of reigning anger, commonly called passion.

3. Oh but says another man, neither of these two sins before mentioned, troubles me so much: but alas, I am a man of a froward and hasty disposition, and much addicted to passion, and therefore I would gladly know how I might mortify and subdue this sin in me.

Answ. I shall give you 6 Rules or directions whereby you may bridle your passions when you are provoked, by an injury offered you, or the like.

1. Consider that you have given God greater occasion to be angry with you, then ever any man gave you, to be angry with him; should the Lord be strict to mark what thou doest amiss, and requite every injury done to him into thy bosom, thou hadst been long ago thrown into Hell, and therefore let this allay and keep under thy passion.

2. Consider all the injuries that are offered thee to provoke and stir up thy passion, they come by the mere providence of God, and this was that which did allay David's passion, when Shimei railed upon him and cursed him, Let him alone, said David, for God hath bidden him do it.

3. When there is an occasion of anger offered, labor to delay, and put off the [execution] of thy wrath, let there be some preconsiderations before you execute your wrath and passion. Says Solomon in Prov. 12.16. A fools wrath is presently known, but a prudent man covereth his shame: a fool cannot conceal his wrath, but it breaks out presently; but a wise man will cover his shame: it is a shame to be angry, and therefore a wise man will cover and conceal his passion.

4. Another great help to mortify passion, is this, Depart out of the company of that man that is angry with thee, or would provoke thee to be angry with him. The way to subdue thy passion, is to go out of the company of that man that injured thee: thus you read, (and it is very observable) in 1 Sam. 20.34. that when Saul was angry with Jonathan, it is said, that Jonathan arose and went out from the presence of his father. And so Abraham and Lot, because they would not fall out they departed one from another. So says, Solomon, in Prov. 22.24. Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go, lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul: if thou art with a furious man, and he snarls at thee, and thou at him, this is the way to increase your passion.

5. If thou wouldst keep under passion, then when any injury, or provocation is offered thee to be angry, labor to put up the occasion or injury in silence, do not utter a multitude of words about it, for in this sense words are wind, and as wind do kindle a fire, so words will kindle wrath, as in Prov. 26.21. As coals are to burning coals and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife. A multitude of words will provoke to passion, and therefore when you are angry keep it in, and do not utter word after word, and reproach after reproach, for that is the way to increase your anger.

6. To dissuade you from passion, consider, that this is a sin that carries many other sins in the womb of it; other sins you may, commit alone, but you cannot be angry but you must commit many other sins with it, as in Prov. 29.22. says Solomon, A furious man aboundeth in transgressions: sometime pride is mixed with anger, and sometime murder is a consequent of it, as in Gen 49.6. Simeon and Levi in their anger they killed a man: there are abundance of sins wrapped up in the womb of anger, which if you consider, it may be a great help to suppress and keep it under.

And thus I have done with the particular helps against those 3 particular sins: which I hope if seriously considered may be of some use and benefit in the mortifying of them.

I have only now a word or two by way of Use, to wind up all that hath been said touching this Doctrine of mortification, and then I shall conclude the Text: And the Use that I shall make, shall be only to give you 3 or 4 plain cautions or directions about this doctrine. As, [Use of direction.]

1. When you have subdued and mortified one sin, be sure you expect another to rise in the room of it. Beloved, a Christians life is a continual warfare, he must combat with spiritual wickedness's in high places: the Devil will never let you alone,

but if one temptation does not prevail, another shall; and when one lust or corruption is mortified, another will presently rise up in the room of it, therefore you must continually stand upon your guard, that is the first thing by way of counsel.

2. Content not yourselves with a small beginning of mortification; many men because they have a cessation with their lusts, therefore they think they are mortified, and some are contented with a mutation of their lusts, they have been young adulterers, and now they are old worldlings, and therefore they are satisfied, and some are contented because they play and jest with their lusts, as fencers, they pretend to kill their lusts, but never hurt them.

3. Take this caution, when you are about to mortify sin, be sure that you bend the chiefest of your strength against your bosom sins, thy master sins: where sin does make the greatest ineursions upon thy soul, there do you make the greatest opposition and resistance. Do not do as Saul did with the Amalekites, in 1 Sam. 15.9. He spared Agag their King, and the best of the sheep and oxen, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: so many men they kill their ordinary corruptions, but spare and indulge their great and Master and beloved sins.

4. Labor that your mortification do reach as well to inward and secret evils, as to gross and palpable sins; and that because inward and secret sins are most dangerous, and more hard and difficult to be discerned and descried in the soul, then greater sins are. Oh my beloved, when there are whole swarms of inward lusts that you never mind, and take no pains to subdue, and no care to suppress and keep under, you do not perform half the work of mortification.

And lastly, In mortifying your corruptions, take in Christ's strength along with you, for you are not able to do it of

yourselves, therefore beg his help and assistance in whom you shall be enabled to do all things: If you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

## **SERMONS ON SEVERAL SUBJECTS.**

### **SERMON, I.**

The True Israelite

Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. - Joh. 1.47.

These words are a lively portraiture of sincere Nathanael, in which Christ does as it were Anatomize his heart, turning his inside outward, that you might see what was in him.

Julius Drusius, a Senator of Rome, was so confident of his own integrity, that he wisht his house were so contrived that all might see how he lived. And another wished that his breast were a window of crystal, that all men might look into his very heart. Such a man was Nathanael: Christ saw into his inward parts, and gives him this ample commendation, that in him was no guile.

I shall not spend time in prefacing to the words, but shall fall immediately upon the words themselves, and first explain them, and then draw out some Doctrinal Conclusions from them.

For the Explicatory part two things are to be done.

First, I shall show you who this man was that Christ here speaks of.  
And,

Secondly, What it is that Christ does here commend him for; Behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile.



First, Who this man was? Ans. His name was Nathanael, a Hebrew name, and signifies as much as the gift of God: But that you may know particularly who this man was, though there be much strife among Interpreters concerning it, yet from the probablest Reasons that I can gather from Scripture, I find, that this Nathanael was Bartholomew, one of the Apostles. And I shall give you these three Reasons for it from Scripture.

1. Because here you see in the Verse preceding my Text, that this Nathanael was converted by Philip: in Vers. 45. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Now this argues that Nathanael was Bartholomew, because where ever Bartholomew is named, Philip is named with him; as in Matth. 10.3. Mark 3.18. Luke 6.14. In all these places Philip and Bartholomew are named together, that is one Reason.

2. Another Reason is this, Because of the promise which Christ made to Nathanael: In Joh. 1.50. Jesus said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the Fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things then these, hereafter thou shalt see Heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. Now if this Nathanael were not Bartholomew, the promise could not be made good to him, for only the twelve Apostles saw Christ go into Heaven; and if Nathanael were not one of the Apostles, this promise could not be made good to him.

3. Another Argument to prove, that this Nathanael was Bartholomew, is from that Text in Joh. 21.2. There were together (when Jesus showed himself to his Disciples) Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael: Here Nathanael is named among the Apostles; and this may be another Reason of it. Et hoc est grave argumentum, saith Salmeron; This is a weighty argument, because none were named there but Apostles.

Object. But some may say, If this Nathanael was Bartholomew, one of the Apostles, how comes it to pass he is never reckoned or named in the catalogue of the twelve Apostles?

Ans. I answer, Most of the Apostles had two names in Scripture, and they are never called by both of their names at once; Peter was called Simon, and Thomas was called Didymus, &c. Now if other Apostles had two names, why might not Bartholomew have two names likewise, and be called Nathanael and Bartholomew, Nathanael his proper name, and Bartholomew his surname.

Secondly, What it is that Christ commends this man for, namely, that he was an Israelite indeed, a man in whom there was no guile.

I shall first explain this term here, Behold, which denotes three things in Scripture:

1. This word Behold, when it is prefixed to any matter appertaining to God, it is then a note of admiration and wonder; as in 1 Joh. 3.1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: Behold, that is, admire and wonder at it.

2. When it is set before anything concerning wicked men, it is a note of detestation; as in Psal. 52.7. Behold this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches: Behold him, that is, detest and abhor him.

3. When it is set before any matters concerning goodmen, it is then a note of imitation, and thus it must be taken here in the Text, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile; that is, imitate and follow him.

Alas, many Israelites were children of falsehood and deceit, in whom much guile was found: Many were Jews outwardly, but not inwardly; they had the circumcision of the flesh, but not of the heart; their praise was of men, not of God, Rom. 2.28, 29. Dives called Abraham

father, and yet nevertheless was the son of perdition. Many were Israelites by a natural descent, that were not so by a spiritual birth: But Nathanael was not one of these.

Behold an Israelite, that is, not only so by natural descent from Jacob; but an Israelite indeed, that is, so by regeneration, and in truth, as well as so by name; For all are not Israel that are of Israel; they which are the children of the flesh are not the children of God. Nathanael was not an Israelite by natural generation only, but by spiritual regeneration likewise; Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile: He doth not say, in whom there is no sin, but in whom there is no guile. Now though it be true, what is spoken here of Nathanael, that he was a man without guile, and the same is said of Christ in 1 Pet. 2.22. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; yet you must know (though the terms be the same) that there is a vast difference between Christ's and Nathanael's being without guile: It is said of Christ, there was no sin in him, neither was guile found in his mouth; but it is not said of Nathanael, that there was no sin in him, for he had sin in him: but Christ was without sin, his nature was like a pure crystal glass of clear water, though the glass was shaken, yet there was no mud or dirt of sin at all appeared; but our natures are like a glass full of muddy water, if you stir but the glass, the mud will appear presently.

Quest. What is it to be a man without guile?

Ans. A man without guile is such a one as is a sincere Professor of the Gospel, and can approve his heart to God that he endeavors to perform all those duties the Lord requires of him, both from a right principle, in a right manner, and to a right end, and labors to be better before God than he seems to be before men. An Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile: the words carry an allusion to that commendation that is given of Jacob, which was called Israel, in Genes. 25.27. it is said there, that Jacob was a plain man, and dwelt in Tents: and it is said of Noah, that he was a perfect man, and walked with God in his generation: A plain or perfect man, that is, a

sincere man, without deceit, a man in whom there is no guile: Psa. 32.2. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

I have been somewhat long in opening the words: it is my usual course, at the first entrance into a Text, to take some liberty in expounding of it, before I come to draw out any Doctrinal Observations from it: And yet before I shall do that, I would have you take notice of these four things.

1. Christ does not say here, Behold an Israelite in whom there is no guile, but Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile; for all are not Israel that are of Israel: A man may be an Israelite by natural generation, and yet be full of deceit, hypocrisy, and guile; therefore Christ does not say, Behold an Israelite, but one so indeed.

2. He does not say, Behold an Israelite in word, or show, or profession only, but one so in deed and in truth. There are many men that are so in word and profession, but in their deeds and actions are far otherwise. Not words and professions, but practice and actions, are demonstrations of true conversion.

3. Christ does not say, Behold an Israelite indeed, with whom is no guile, but in whom there is no guile: Hypocrisy may be with us, but it should not be in us; Hypocrisy was not in Nathanael. There is a vast difference between doing a thing in hypocrisy, and doing it with hypocrisy. Godly men do many times perform duties with hypocrisy, but they do not perform them in hypocrisy. A man doth things in hypocrisy, when he indulgeth himself in sinister aims, and performeth duties for corrupt ends; as if a man frequent Ordinances that he may have an esteem among good men, or that he may raise himself to preferment, this man acts in hypocrisy: But now a man acts with hypocrisy, when it makes an assault and violent invasion upon man, when, like flies, it comes upon a man, though he endeavor to beat it off.

4. Though Nathanael was not a guileful man, yet he might be a sinful man; and therefore Christ does not say, he was without sin, but without guile.

I come now to draw out some Doctrines from the words, which I shall do from a double consideration of the Text:

1. From a relative consideration of it, as it relates to what was spoken of, and found in Nathanael.

2. From an absolute consideration of them as they are in themselves.

1. From the words, as they relate to Nathanael: This Nathanael was a very ignorant man; for when Philip told him, that they had found Christ, says he, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? He conceived no good thing could come out of Nazareth. And then again (secondly he did doubt of Christ's Omniscieny; for says he to Christ, How knowest thou me? He was ignorant both of Christ's Goodness and Omniscieny; and yet of this Nathanael that was thus ignorant Christ says, that he was a man without guile: From whence observe this Doctrine,

That a godly man may have much Ignorance in his mind, and yet in the account of God have no guile in his heart.

And then, taking the words as an entire consideration, you may learn this Doctrine,

That it is a good commendation for a man that is a professor of Religion to be such a one as in whom there is no guile.

We shall begin with the first of these, That there may be no guile in the heart, where there is a great deal of ignorance in the mind. Weakness of grace is consistent with sincerity of grace: The children of God are sometimes compared to Doves; now a Dove is not only a harmless and innocent, but a silly creature likewise; so a man may be an harmless man, a man without guile, and yet be an ignorant man.

The Disciples of Christ themselves were ignorant of many things; as in Matth. 15.16, 17, 18. Christ there speaking of the great Doctrine of Original sin, that whatsoever cometh forth from the heart, that defiles the man, and not that which goeth into a man; and that out of the heart proceedeth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, &c. these are they which defile a man. It is said, the Disciples did not understand these things, though they were plain and obvious truths, yet they did not understand them. So in Matt. 16.6. where Christ bid them take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, they reasoned among themselves, saying, it is because we have taken no bread. And so again, when Christ rose from the dead, they would not believe it, they were ignorant of the Doctrine of the Resurrection. In Luke 24.45, 46, 47. and so in Acts 19.2. when the Disciples were examined about the Holy Ghost, they answered, They did not so much as know that there was a Holy Ghost: And yet all these men were the Disciples of Christ, and men without guile. From whence you see it clearly made good, That godly men may have much ignorance in their minds, and yet in the account of God have no guile in their hearts.

The Use I shall make of this, shall be first by way of caution. If it be so, that men may have much ignorance in their minds, and yet have no guile in their hearts, Then take heed that upon this ground you do not Indulge Ignorance in yourselves, and yet think yourselves sincere; for though in some cases men may have much ignorance in their minds, and yet have no guile in their hearts; yet in all cases it is not so. In Prov. 19.2. says Solomon, Without knowledge the mind is not good; as I shall show you in these three particulars: As first,

1. If you are ignorant, and yet do not desire and labor after knowledge, this is inconsistent with sincerity: If you are like those spoken of in Job 21.14, 15. that say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: Such an ignorance cannot be in a sincere heart. So 2 Pet. 3.5. This they willingly are ignorant of; they were ignorant, and desired to be ignorant; they did not care for, nor labor after the knowledge of that great Truth.

2. To be ignorant, and yet obstinately to remain ignorant, this is likewise inconsistent with sincerity, when you are like those in Psal. 82.5. They know not, neither will they understand: Godly men they know not, neither do they understand; but only a wicked man knows not, and will not understand.

3. To be ignorant, and yet to hate knowledge, to be perversely and opposingly ignorant, this is inconsistent with sincerity; like those in Prov. 1.29. They hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: And therefore though this Doctrine be true, yet this should not embolden you to indulge and nourish yourselves in a state of ignorance.

Secondly, I infer from hence, That you are not to conclude all knowledge in the mind to be an infallible demonstration of the truth of grace in the heart; for there is a form of knowledge, as well as a form of godliness: therefore do not conclude abundance of knowledge to be a sufficient demonstration of sincerity. There are many men that have very knowing heads, but yet have only deceitful hearts. As,

First, When they know things notionally only, and in the mind, but not experimentally in the heart. Psal. 51.6. says David, In the hidden parts thou shalt make me to know wisdom: When knowledge is only notionally in the brain, this can be no demonstration of sincerity.

2. To know conceitedly; for a man to be self-conceited, and thinks he knows much, this is no demonstration of sincerity; as in Habak. 2.4. His Soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him. As tumors or swellings in the flesh are a sign of rottenness and corruption; so when knowledge puffeth up, it is a symptom of an unsound heart.

3. To know things notionally, but not practically; to know, and do not; to know, and practice not; this is likewise no evidence of sincerity in the heart.

Thirdly, Take this Caution; You that are sincere Nathanaels, do not conclude against yourselves, that because you have some ignorance, therefore you have no truth and sincerity in you. Christ, you see here, tells Nathanael, that was a man grossly ignorant, both of Christ's Goodness and Omniscieny, and yet Christ says of him, that he was a man without guile: And therefore I beseech you that you would not pass hard censures upon your own Souls; do not say, you have no truth in your hearts, because you have little understanding in your heads.

Fourthly, Take in this Caution, That sincerity of heart is consistent, not only with ignorance in the mind, but also with many infirmities in the practice. David is said to be a man after God's own heart, 1 Sam. 13.14. and that he was a perfect man, but only in the matter of Uriah; and yet he had many other failings and infirmities; he was guilty of rash anger and fury against Nabal, one that dealt unjustly with poor Mephibosheth, and in numbering the people and many other things he was to blame. So Jehoshaphat he is said to be a perfect man, and to do that which is right in the sight of the Lord, and yet his sins were very great; he joined in battle with Ahab at Ramoth Gilead, though he had warning from God that he should not go, yet he went: and he gave his son in marriage to a wicked and an Idolatrous woman, and yet the Scripture says, he was a man upright before God all his days.

Thus much shall serve for the first Use, the Use of Caution.

I now proceed to a second, and that shall be of Examination: and I beseech you lend me your thoughts a little while: Is this so, That there may be much ignorance in a man's mind, and yet no guile in his heart, Then let this Doctrine put you upon the trial, whether upon Scripture grounds you can every one of you say for yourselves, your consciences also bearing you witness, that you are men without guile.

And the better to help you in this, I shall here lay down several Marks, and I shall reduce them to these three general heads; and



shall discover to you an Israelite indeed, a man without guile:

First, In regard of his sinning against God.

Secondly, In regard of his performing Duties to God. And,

Thirdly, In regard of his carriage and conversation among men.

These are the three general heads, and under them there will be some twenty particulars, as so many Discoveries of a man without guile.

First, A man without guile may be discovered in regard of his sinning against God; and under this head I shall give you eight Discoveries of him.

1. Such a one does not allow or indulge himself in the practice of the least known sin; as in Psa. 119.1, 3. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, that walk in the Law of the Lord, they also do no iniquity: that is, they allow themselves in no iniquity. The evil that I do, I allow not, says the Apostle: That which a man does not allow himself in, that he does not do. In Prov. 16.17. The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; (that is) it is his ordinary and constant and usual course. So in Isai. 56.2. An upright man he keepeth his hand from doing any evil; that is, he does not do evil willingly. And hence it is the Apostle Paul saith of himself, that in simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation here in the world: And again saith he, I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified. There were some that did censure Paul, and condemn him for such and such things; but saith he, I thank God, I know nothing by myself; that is, I do allow myself in no known sin; but yet I do not plead Heaven for this, I am not hereby justified. Such a one is an upright man, that can appeal to Heaven that he allows himself in the practice of no known sin: thus David did; Search me, O Lord, says he, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me: This is the first badge of a sincere heart.

2. A man without guile he does make conscience to abstain from small and secret sins, as well as from gross and open transgressions; as in Psa. 19.12, 13. says David, Cleanse thou me from secret faults; keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let not them have dominion over me, so shall I be upright. A godly man keeps the Law as he keeps the apple of his eye, Prov. 7.2. The least moat or dust will offend the eye as well as a great flaw: When secret evils, the least moat and dust of sin, does trouble you, as well as mountainous sins; when you strain at a Gnat, as well as at sins as big as a Camel; this is a sign of an upright heart. A sincere Nathanael, upon the conviction of a sin committed, is troubled in conscience for the commission of small and secret sins, as well as for open and scandalous sins. Thus David's heart smote him after he had numbered the people; yet Divines can scarce tell wherein his sin lay, unless it were in his pride and high-mindedness: So his heart smote him for cutting off Saul's lap. It is a token of a sincere heart, when it smites a man for breaking the least iota or tittle of God's Command.

3. He does not only abstain from sin of all sorts, but he likewise makes conscience of abstaining from all allurements or occasions to sin, that might provoke him to any sin. Daniel was a sincere man in this particular: in Dan. 1.8. it is said of Daniel, who was a comely young man, in whom no blemish was found from top to toe, that he was appointed to have the Kings portion, but he purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the Kings meat, nor drink of his wine; and what was the reason why he would not eat of it? Interpreters do much vary about it: some say, he would not eat of it, because it was forbidden under the Law as unclean; but the generality are of opinion, that he would not eat of the Kings meat, nor drink of his wine, because had Daniel lived at a full Table, and fed upon the Kings dainty fare, he might have hereby ensnared himself, and been drowned in sensuality, and so have neglected his duty and service to God, and forgotten the calamities of the Church: It would have been a provocation to him to sin against God, and therefore he would rather content himself with water and Pulse, then to defile and ensnare himself with the portion of the Kings meat. This

is a mark of an upright heart, He will hate the garment spotted by the flesh, Jude 23. He alludes to leprous garments under the Law; He that would avoid the leprosy, must avoid all those things that are apt to occasion the leprosy. Now all you, whose hearts can bear you witness that you make conscience of avoiding all occasions of sin, you are the men that are without guile.

4. A man without guile, he prays as vehemently and impartially against sin, because of the evil of it, as because of the punishment of it. I shall give you a clear Text for this in Psal. 19.12, 13. Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, says David: But why does he make this prayer to God? So (says he) shall I be innocent from the great transgression: He does not say, Keep me from presumptuous sins, that so I may be free from Hell; but that so I may be innocent from sin, from the great transgression: He doth not say, So shall I be free from the great Correction; but, So shall I be free from the great Transgression. If therefore, when you pray to be kept from sin, you do it because you would not sin, lest you offend God; if you can appeal to Heaven, that you pray against sin, more because of the evil of it, then for the punishment of it; then you pray uprightly, and this is a token of a sincere heart.

I might illustrate and set out this discovery to you by this familiar comparison: (Beloved) Suppose a child and a man of discretion were both together by a fire, now neither of them would touch one of the coals, but yet they do refrain from it upon different grounds; the child will not touch the coal, because it is hot, and will burn him; but the man of discretion will not meddle with it, because it will defile his fingers.

So here, wicked men sometimes refrain from sin, and will not commit it, because there is a fire in sin; he thinks he shall die, and be damned for it, and therefore he will not commit it: But now a godly man he will not sin, because though it does not damn his Soul, yet it will defile his Soul, and dishonor God, and make him displeased with

him, &c. An upright man hates sin as impartially for the filth of it, as for the punishment of it.

5. A man without guile discovers his sincerity in reference to sin, in that he does make conscience to bend most of his strength and endeavors against his constitution sins, the sins of his calling, and condition and complexion: this is an argument of a sincere man, as you may see in that place I have often quoted in Psal. 18.26. I was also upright before him, and kept myself from mine iniquity: Why, were not all the sins David committed his sins? yes; but he kept himself from that sin which he was most addicted to. An upright man he keeps himself from his own evils, that is, those evils that he is most inclinable and addicted to. It is an observation I have from a late Writer that is yet alive, speaking about this subject, he gives a badge of sincerity in Job, in Chap. 31. of that Book, says he, To depart from sin is not sincerity; for many men their natural tempers do make them averse to some sins: but this is sincerity, to abstain from a sin that suits with a man's natural humor and constitution: And thus Job did; He abstained from the sin of his age, calling, and constitution; says he in Job 31.1. I have made a Covenant with my eyes, why then should I look upon a maid? There he abstained from the sin of his youth. 2. Says he, While I sat in the gate, I never oppressed the poor and needy: There was the sin of his Calling, which he abstained from. 3. If, saith he, I have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof, let God do so and so to me: There was the sin of his Condition; he was a rich man, and yet did abstain from Covetousness. That man that does bend the strength of his endeavors against those sins that suit most with his age, calling, condition, and constitution, he is the man in whose spirit there is no guile.

6. A man in reference to sin discovers his sincerity, if he doth grieve for sin, as much because it wars against grace in his heart, as because it wars against the glory of his Soul; as much because it indisposeth him to good, as because it deprives him of good. There are many that can mourn for sin, because it hinders them from that which is good,

but not because it indisposeth them to do that which is good: But now Paul he mourned for sin, because he could not do the good that he would, Rom. 7.19. A sincere man mourns for sin, because it interrupts and hinders him from doing the good that he would do: and therefore you that can appeal to Heaven, that you mourn and grieve for sin, because it interrupts you in duties, and hinders you in prayer, reading, hearing, &c. you are sincere men indeed.

7. A sincere man he can mourn for the sin of his nature, as well as for the sin of his life: This is a sincere man indeed, that can as well mourn for the body of sin he carries about him, as for the sin of his body. This Hildersham takes notice of, and challengeth all the men in the World to bring one Text to prove, that ever an Hypocrite did bewail the sin of his nature; that concupiscence, and lust, and inclination to vanity and wickedness, that is in his heart naturally. And therefore, you that carry bad and polluting natures about you, that do defile you and all your services, and yet can never mourn or shed one tear for them; this is a sign that you are not sincere and upright men. But when you look upon that body of sin you carry about you, as the grief and burden of your Soul, as a clog that hinders you in your duties and services of God, this is an argument of a sincere heart.

8. A man without guile is very apt to carry a suspicion and jealousy over his own heart: So in Mat. 26.21, 22. when Christ told his Disciples that one of them should betray him, those that were most free from it began first to suspect their own hearts, and cried out, Master, is it I? None are more jealous of themselves then godly men are: None pray more against hypocrisy: Psal. 51.10. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. O you, whose Souls can bear you witness that you are afraid of sin, and jealous lest your false hearts should betray you to it, and that you do pray and strive against hypocrisy, know, these are certain Evidences that you are true Nathanaels, men in whom there is no guile.

And thus I have done with the eight first Discoveries of a sincere man, in reference to sin.

Secondly, A man discovers his sincerity, in regard of his Duties to God, these three general ways:

1. An upright man performs Duties to God from a right Principle.
2. In a right Manner.
3. To a right End.

I. He performs Duties to God from a a right Principle: And this is twofold;

1. A principle of Faith. And,
2. A principle of Love.

1. From a principle of Faith: and hence it is called the obedience of Faith, in Rom. 16.26. because all obedience, if it be sincere, must flow from Faith.

2. From a principle of Love: He performs all his duties out of love to God, and to his service. When Christ would find out the sincerity of Peters heart, he asked him, Simon Peter, lovest thou me? Joh. 21. He did not ask him, Simon Peter, dost thou preach for me? dost thou labor to convert Souls for me? wilt thou follow after me? but, dost thou love me? dost thou preach in love, pray in love, do all in love?

And if thou dost so; 1. Love is liberal, and thinks no time too long that is spent in the service of God: If thou dost love God, thou art liberal in thy performances to him.

2. Love makes a man take as much delight in the performance of duties, as in the answer and return of your prayers upon your head.

3. The love thou bearest to God, and to the duties thou performest to him, will make thee out of love with thy sins, and out of love with every lust; as David in Psal. 119.163. I love thy Law, says he, but I hate lying.

Now then do you perform Duties from a right principle of Faith in God, and love to God.

II. A man without guile he labors to perform Duties in a right Manner, and that in these four particulars:

1. A sincere man makes as much conscience of the manner how he performs Duties, as of the matter of the performance.

2. He labors that the inward man be employed and taken up in Duties, as well as the outward man: Rom. 1.9. The God whom I serve in the spirit: So in Psa. 103.1. says David, Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and let all that is within me praise his holy Name. So Ezekiel is said to serve the Lord with all his heart. You should labor to have your inward man, as well as your outward man, employed in the service of God.

3. He does as sensibly bewail the sins of his Duties, as he can heartily rejoice for the returns of his Prayers.

4. He doth make as much conscience to be intent and fervent in secret Duties before God, as in public Duties before men. Cant. 2.14. Christ speaks to his Church, O my Dove, that art in the clefts of the rocks, and in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely. Some think that Christ speaks of his Church here, as in an afflicted condition; but others conceive these words [My Dove, that art in the clefts of the rocks, and in the secret places of the stairs] have reference to the people of God praying in secret; there says God, let me hear thy voice, and see thy countenance; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely. Why now such a man as makes conscience to pour out his heart to God in secret,

though it be in a corner where no eye sees him, and no ear hears him, this is a sincere man indeed.

III. He discovers his sincerity in performing his Duties to a right End: which he does these several ways:

1. More to get inward and saving grace, then to get outward and common mercies by his Duties. Hypocrites perform Duties, but it is for their public good and outward advantage; but a sincere man he performs Duties, that he may get inward and saving grace and comfort by them: as David in Psal. 4.6. says he, Other men say, who will show us any good? but Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me, and it shall make me more glad then they are when their Corn and Wine and Oil increaseth. Wicked men they assemble themselves for corn and wine, in Hosea 7.14. not for inward grace, but for outward mercies.

2. The end of a godly man's prayers under any affliction, is more to have sin removed, then to have the punishment removed: You have a platform of a godly man's heart in Hosea 14.2. Shall I say, Lord, free us from captivity, or deliver us from the sword? No; but say unto him, Take away the iniquity of thy servants. What was Pharaoh's prayer? In Exod. 8.8. says he, Entreat the Lord that he would remove his judgments from me: But now a guileless man he prays, O Lord, remove my sins and corruptions from me.

3. A sincere man performs duties more, that so he might express his submission and obedience to the authority of a command, then to stifle the accusations of his own conscience.

4. He performs Duties more to have communion with God, then to have communications from God. And thus I have done with the second particular. I have already gone over two Discoveries of a sincere man: First, In reference to his sins, in eight particulars. Secondly, In regard of his Duties to God, in three generals, His



performing Duties from a right Principle, in a right Manner, and to a right End.

I now proceed to a third Discovery of a man without guile, which shall be in reference to his carriage and conversation amongst men; wherein he discovers his sincerity several ways: As,

1. He is the same man in all companies: he is not a Chamaeleon, a man that can suit with all sorts, and comply with all societies of men: If he be in bad company, he will show a dislike of their ways, and labor to make them better; if in good company, he will commend and approve of their doings. Godly sincere men, you cannot turn them out of their course; they are the same men, take them where you will, and when you will, and in what company you will. He is like Aristides; It was said of him, you might as soon turn the Sun from his course, as deter him from the Administration of Justice.

2. It is a delight, and matter of rejoicing to them, to converse with good men; and a grief of heart to them to be amongst wicked men, or to have anything to do with them: This character you have laid down in Psal. 15.2, 4. He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart; you may know him by this mark, In whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. It is the joy of a godly man to be amongst good men, and his grief to be among wicked men: So says David, My delight is to be with the Saints, and with them that excel in virtue: And again says he, Woe is me that I am constrained to dwell in Mesech, and to have my habitation in the Tents of Kedar. The inhabitants of Mesech were a barbarous and a vicious people, as you may see in Genes. 10. And David dwelling amongst these wicked men, and in the Tents of Kedar, a wicked generation (Kedar was Ishmael's son) he bewails his sad condition therein. So we read of Jacob, who was the root of the Israelites, they all had their denomination from him; he would not be buried amongst a wicked people, to show his indignation against them, in Gen. 49.29.

3. A man without guile discovers his sincerity in his carriage amongst men, in that he orders his conversation so, as not to give offense to any man where he lives, neither to the Jew or Gentile, or to the Church of God. You have a pregnant place for this in Philip. 1.10. the Apostle prays, that they might be sincere, and without offense to others, which intimates, that those that are sincere, it is their continual endeavor to walk without offense to any. What Paul made an evidence of his sincerity in the course of his Ministry, that may be to us an evidence of our sincerity in the course of Christianity: in 2 Cor. 6.3. Paul gave no offense in anything, that so his Ministry might not be blamed: So if you walk without offense in the course of Christianity, this will be an argument of your sincerity.

And thus I have done with these three general Discoveries of a man without guile, in reference to his Sins, his Duties, and Conversation.

We now come to the Application: and the Use that I shall make of it, shall be of Comfort to all you that have the reflection and testimony of a good Conscience, that these characters of a sincere Nathanael are found in you: Know, for your Comfort, all you true Nathanaels and men without guile, that the Lord looks upon you as perfect men and women. If you have sincerity in you, the Lord accounts of you as if you had attained perfection.

## **SERMON, II.**

### The True Israelite

Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. -Joh. 1.47.

We come now to consider the words as an entire Proposition; and then the Doctrine itself will be this,

That it is an admirable and a commendable Excellency in a Christian, to be a man without guile.

I shall, in the prosecution of this Doctrine, show you the excellency of this temper, to be without guile; and then come to the Application.

I have pitched my thoughts upon ten particulars, wherein the excellency of this quality doth appear.

First, Sincerity, or to be without guile, hath this excellency in it, That if a man hath a sincere heart, his sincerity will cover a multitude of sins and infirmities in him. As Hypocrisy makes many Duties done, as if they were not done, in regard of divine acceptation: so Sincerity makes many sins and infirmities committed, as if they were not committed, in regard of divine imputation and condemnation. The sincerity of a guileless man's heart covers all his sins. As you may see first in David; There were many sins in him, as his numbering the people, his feigning himself mad, his angry and furious swearing the death of Nabal, his unjust dealing with Mephibosheth, &c. yet his sincerity covers all these sins, that God looks upon him as an upright man, except only in the matter of Uriah. And so Jehoshaphat he had many great failings: As,

1. He made a league with Ahab, a wicked King, which was against the command of God.
2. He went to battle with Ahab against Ramoth Gilead: 2 Chron. 18.27, 28.
3. Though he were reprov'd for making a league with Ahab, yet he made a league with his son a second time: In 2 Chron. 19.2. Jehu the Seer went out to meet Jehoshaphat, and said unto him, Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from the Lord: yet it is said, 2 Chron. 20. that after this Jehoshaphat King of Judah joined himself with Ahaziah King of Israel, who did very wickedly.
4. He gave his son in marriage unto Ahab's wicked daughter, in 2 Chron. 21.6. and yet, notwithstanding all these infirmities, it is said,

that he turned not aside from doing that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but his heart was upright before him, in 1 King. 22.43.

I will give you but one instance more, and that is in Asa, a good man, and yet he had many frailties; in 2 Chron. 16.10, 11, 12.

1. He was incensed and mad against the good Prophet of the Lord, that told him of his sin, and of his danger.

2. He was so wrathful that he put him into prison.

3. He did not only oppress the Prophet, but the people of the Land also.

4. When he was diseased in his feet, he sought not to the Lord, but to the Physicians.

5. The high places in Asa his reign were not taken down, in 1 King. 15.14. and yet notwithstanding all this, it is said, in 1 King. 15.14. that Asa his heart was perfect with the Lord all his days: His sincerity was as a mantle or covering for his infirmities. A man without guile, the integrity of his heart is a mantle to cover the infirmities of his hands. Whereas, on the contrary, if there want sincerity, all the good a man doth is not accepted, is nothing worth: as it was in the case of Jehu; He had zeal for the Lord his God, destroyed the Idolatrous Worship and Worshipers of Baal, &c. yet because his heart was not upright, God rejecteth him, notwithstanding all his services.

Secondly, Another Excellency of a sincere heart is this, If our hearts be sincere, and without guile, then the sincerity of our hearts supplies what is wanting in the measure of our graces: The defect of our graces is made up, in the divine account, in the truth of our hearts. And therefore Hebricians observe, that the same word in the Hebrew language that signifies upright, signifies perfect too; which implies, That he that is without guile, is, in divine account, as if he were perfect, and without sin. In 1 Chron. 12.33. The men of Zebulon that went forth to battle, are said to be men not of a double heart, or

of a perfect heart; intimating, that those that are of a sincere heart, they are of a perfect heart

And hence it is that you read often in Scripture, that the perfect and upright are joined together; as in Job 1.1. Job is said to be a man perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil: So in Psal. 37.37. says David, Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace. So in 2 King. 20.3. says Hezekiah there, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart. All which places do intimate, and clearly discover to us, That the truth of the heart does, in divine account, make recompense for the want of the measure of the graces.

And therefore it is worthy your noting (that which I hinted to you before) the question that Christ propounded to Peter, in Joh. 21.25. Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these? Thou hast sinned against me more than these, and now dost thou love me more than these? But Peter does not answer him to the quantity, but to the quality of his love, I do love thee, though not more than these: From whence one observes, That though we do not love, and fear, and honor God more than others; yet if we do fear him, and serve him, and love him in truth, the integrity of our hearts will supply the defect of our graces. Christ asked concerning the measure of Peters love, Peter answered concerning the truth of his love; and yet in Christ's account this is taken for an answer to his Question.

Thirdly, To be without guile, hath this Excellency in it; It is a comfortable and a heart-clearing cordial against the fear of death. O what comfort will this be to a man, to have the approbation of his conscience within him, that he hath lived without guile in the World, when he comes to go out of the World.

We read in Isai. 38.1, 3. when the sentence of death came to Hezekiah, saying, Set thy House in order, for thou shalt surely die, and not live: Then Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord, and said,

Remember now O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart. This consideration did comfort him against the sentence of death pronounced against him. I have read of one, that lying upon his death-bed, they asked him, Whether death were terrible to him? He answered, No: for he had the testimony of a good conscience witnessing to him, That in simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation in the world: and therefore, says he, my heart tells me, that I need not fear death. And another, that being asked the same question, He answered, I thank God, I have not so lived that I am afraid to die.

Fourthly, Another Excellency of Sincerity is this; It will quiet the heart against all slanderous aspersions that may be cast upon a man by wicked and malicious men. It may be wicked men do upbraid thee for following of Sermons, and carrying a Bible under thine arm to Church, that thou dost it in hypocrisy, or the like: now the testimony of thy own Conscience will be as a wall of brass against all their aspersions: As in 1 Cor. 4.3, 4. Says Paul there, With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; for, saith he, I know nothing by myself: As if he should say, My Conscience does not accuse me to be guilty of what they lay to my charge, and upbraid me with, and therefore I care not for it; It is a very small thing to me to be judged by them, seeing I know nothing by myself. So says Job, in Chap. 31. v. 35, 36, 37. O that one would hear me: Behold my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a Book; Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me: I would declare unto him the number of my steps, as a Prince would I go near unto him: (that is) I would go with an undaunted heart against him. The sincerity of Jobs heart did bear him out against all the aspersions that were cast upon him by his friends. So in Job 27.5, 6. says he, God forbid that I should justify you; till I die, I will not remove my integrity from me: My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live. Herein lies the excellency of a heart without guile; Such a man can acquit himself to God, notwithstanding all the slanders and reproaches that wicked

men cast upon him. A Politician (though he never was famous for sincerity) could say, Some men flatter me, others slander me; but I think myself never the better for the one, nor the worse for the other: as I do not think myself taller in the morning, because my shadow is then longer, nor shorter at noon, because my shadow is then shorter. How much more then may a sincere Christian say so!

Fifthly, Sincerity will make a man comfortably and courageously to suffer for Christ: It will make a man willingly to suffer from the hands, as well as the tongues of men: It will make him like a brazen wall against all opposition: As in 2 Cor. 1.12. Paul speaks there of the sentence of death they had in themselves; yet this was their comfort and rejoicing, the testimony of their consciences, that in simplicity and godly sincerity they had their conversations in the world. So in 2 Tim. 1.7. says the Apostle, God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind. The spirit of fear is there opposed to a sound mind; that is, power to undergo afflictions and persecutions.

But now a Hypocrite is like an ill-woven piece of cloth that shrinks in the wetting: So they tremble and quake in the time of affliction: in Isai. 33.14. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the Hypocrites: Who amongst us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who amongst us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings? But herein lies the excellency of sincerity, It will make a man courageous in times of trouble and persecution.

Sixthly, A sincere man does not care who knows his heart: As David says, Search my heart, O Lord, and try my ways, and see if there be any way of wickedness in me. So Job did not care what men said against him, because he knew his own sincerity: I would declare my steps; I would acquaint him with my whole life, let him pick what he can out of it: so clear am I in my own conscience, I would go near as a Prince; I would come to him, not tremblingly, as a slave; but confidently, as a Prince. A sincere man wisheth his breast were made of crystal, that everyone might see into his heart.

Seventhly, Another Excellency is this; As Hypocrisy doth war against all Grace, so Sincerity doth war against all sin. Sincerity is not like other single graces; for they do but war against their single opposites; as, Humility against Pride, Patience against Passion, Zeal against Lukewarmness, and the fear of God against the fear of men, &c. But now Sincerity, that wars against the whole body of sin, as well as against one particular sin of the body. Sincerity makes a man grapple with all his lusts, so that no corruptions shall stand against him, but he will by the assistance of God vanquish them all. The first special armor you read of in Ephes. 6.14. is, the girdle of Truth: now Sincerity is that which girds Truth close about you, and makes you fight against and oppose all the sins and corruptions that do make any incursions upon you.

Eighthly, A sincere heart is in a more receptive capacity to have growth of grace, and greater increase of it by Ordinances, then any other men in the World are: Psal. 92.13. Who shall flourish in the Courts of God's House? why, the upright in heart, they shall flourish there. Amongst all the sorts of ground into which the seed was cast, in Luk. 8.8. there was only one sort of ground wherein the seed grew up to perfection, which was in the good ground, the sincere and upright-hearted man: And therefore it is well observed from 1 Pet. 8.1. where the Apostle presseth them to thrive and grow under Ordinances, He first bids them lay aside all guile, and all hypocrisy, and then as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby. Sincerity is the way to get growth in grace, and increase by Ordinances. The seed of God's Word will never grow to perfection in rotten hypocritical hearts; whereas the sincere heart is in a receptive capacity always to be growing in grace.

Ninthly, Another Excellency is this; Sincerity puts a glorious and beautiful luster upon all a man's other gifts and graces. You cannot say your gifts are saving graces, till sincerity be in the heart; but sincerity is of that nature that it makes your gifts to be graces. What is Faith but a fancy, if it be not unfeigned? 1 Tim. 1.5. What is Love but flattery, if it be not without dissimulation? Rom. 12.9. What is



Wisdom but Machiavellism, or Ahithophel's Policy, if it be not without hypocrisy? Jam. 3.16. What are all your gifts but shining sins, unless there be sincerity in the heart? Gifts in an unsound heart are but like a jewel in a Swine's snout, or a pearl upon the dunghill; but now Sincerity puts a beauty and luster upon small and ordinary Gifts.

Tenthly, The Excellency of a sincere heart appears in this, Because the Promises of God do most generally and chiefly run to the sincerity of our hearts, rather than to the measure of our graces. God does not say, I will do this or that for you, if you are so strong, or have such a measure of grace; but they run chiefly to the upright in heart: as in Psal. 145.18. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. So in Psal. 18.25. With an upright man the Lord will show himself upright. In Prov. 14.11. The Tabernacle of the upright shall flourish. Psal. 84.11. 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. Psal. 125.4. The Lord is good, and doth good to all them that be upright in heart. So in Psal. 112.2. The generation of the upright shall be blessed.

The Promises of God do generally run in this channel, not to the measure of grace, but to the truth of grace; and therefore this is an admirable Excellency in Sincerity, It gives you a Right in all the Promises of God.

I might add this, A man of a sincere heart is in such a condition wherein the Lord will more manifest his Mind and Will to him, then to any other in the World that are of unsound hearts. I shall illustrate this to you by this similitude; Suppose you have two servants in your house, one whereof is a light-fingered man, that will steal away whatsoever he can finger with conveniency and secrecy: now to such a man you will lock your doors, and carry a strict eye over him, and trust him with no more than needs you must. But now another servant, that you know is faithful and trusty, such a man you will give him your keys, and trust him with your Cash, and employ him in

your Trade, and reveal to him your counsels, and tell him the mysteries of your Trade, and that because you have found him a faithful servant.

Why, so does the Lord deal with his people: Hypocrites they are like light-fingered servants, and therefore the Lord locks up Divine Truths from them: But where God sees sincerity in the heart, that he can say, I have experience of this man or woman, they are my old faithful servants, I can trust them with my treasuries of Gifts and Graces; and therefore I will reveal my secrets to them, and open my whole heart to them. If God hath found thee faithful before him, he will do to you as you use to do to your faithful servants, he will reveal his secrets and his counsels to you.

And thus I have done with the Doctrinal part of this Point, That there is a commendable Excellency in this temper, to be a man without guile; which I drew from the absolute consideration of the words. We come now to the Application, wherein I shall be but short at present, because I have another hour to finish it in.

The Use that I shall now make of it, shall be of Comfort to all you that can lay a just claim to this admirable excellency of sincerity, That you are true Nathanaels, in whom there is no guile. Let other men boast and triumph in other things, yet thou hast more cause to rejoice and triumph than any other man in the World. Let the Church of Rome boast that their Church is the true Church, because of their universality, unity, numerosity, or antiquity; yet, if thou canst plead but sincerity, thou hast an indubitable evidence of everlasting life. Scholars may boast that they have sound judgments, acute wits, strength of memory, and the like; yet, though you do want all these things, thou canst make boast of this above them all, that thou hast a sincere heart; and in having this, thou hast more than all the gifts of Philosophers, nay then all the men in the World have that are without grace. You may bless God, though you have nothing here in the World, yet happy, yea and forever happy are you, if you can lay a just claim to a sincere heart. He that hath one Diamond, or Pearl of

great value, hath more then he that hath many heaps of stones. Sincerity is this Diamond, which makes a man richer than he that hath mountains of all other excellencies.

Secondly, By way of lamentation: Is it so that this is such an admirable excellency for a man to be without guile? then this Doctrine may afford us matter of lamentation, to consider how many Hypocrites there are in the world, and how few Nathanaels there are: The Lord might justly say of us, as in Isai. 9.17. I have no joy in their young men, neither shall I have mercy on their fatherless and widows; for everyone is a hypocrite and an evil doer, and every mouth speaketh folly.

A third Use shall be by way of Instruction: Is it such an admirable and commendable excellency in a Christian, to be a man without guile? Then from hence I infer these three useful Instructions: As,

First, By this you may see the hatefulnes and mischievous nature of an hypocritical heart. If it be so great an excellency for a man to be without guile, then what an odious and mischievous thing is it for a man to have a guileful and a hypocritical heart? I shall show you the odiousness of it in these following particulars.

1. Guile and hypocrisy in the heart, it mars all the duties and services that ever you perform to God: herein lies the odiousness of it, It makes all your Duties unacceptable to God. Thus Jehu, though he did many good things for the matter of them, yet because he took no heed to walk in the ways of God with an upright heart, therefore the Lord does charge that upon Jehu as murder, which was but his duty for the matter of it: In Hosea 1.4. says God, I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu. Hypocrisy, or guile in the heart, is as the Fly in the Box of Ointment, it makes your Duties Fly-blown Duties; or like poison in the pot, that spoils all: So Hypocrisy spoils all the Duties you perform to God. As it is reported of a precious stone of admirable excellency, that if it be put into a dead man's

mouth, it loseth all its virtues: So Prayer, and Duties coming from an hypocritical and guileful heart, loseth all its virtue and efficacy.

2. The odiousness of this sin appears in that, Guile in the heart it will bereave a man of all those common gifts that God hath endowed him withal. Painted graces will soon decay and fade. As in Luk. 8.18. says Christ there, To him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have. That which hypocritical men have only a show of shall be taken away from them: It not only decays gifts, but graces; as you may see in the example of bloody Bonner, who at first was an eloquent Preacher; but having hypocrisy in his heart, that did quickly eat out all his gifts and graces, and he confessed he had lost the gift of preaching. A painted Child, though never so exactly drawn and colored, yet because it is but painted, it presently loseth its beauty, and grows worse and worse: but a living Child grows fresher and fairer every day then other. Painted graces may shine for a while, but ere long the gloss will vanish.

3. Hypocrisy and guile, it hardens a man's heart so, that he cannot repent for the hypocrisy that is in his heart. In 1 Tim. 4.2. the Apostle there speaks of some that should speak lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron. A guileful heart is a hard and seared heart: It makes repentance and amendment a far harder work then otherwise it would be.

4. A heart full of guile is odious, in regard it exposeth a man to all manner of Errors and Heresies. A man that hath an unsound heart, will hardly have a sound head and a pure judgment. As in 1 Tim. 1.18. you read there, that those that made shipwreck of a good Conscience, made shipwreck of Faith also. That man that casts away a good Conscience, will not long keep a clear Judgment. Hypocrisy will make one speak lies, as well as do wickedly: it lays a man open, and plungeth him into Error. If the heart will swallow down wicked practices, the mind will easily digest erroneous opinions. A pure Faith cannot well be preserved in an impure Conscience. Acts 20.29.

— grievous Wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock: He means, not open Tyrants, but hypocritical Seducers, Wolves in sheep's clothing, that had a show of holiness and harmlessness (but not the thing;) These lie and cry, like wounded men, to call the shepherds to them, and so fall upon the flock.

5. The odiousness of it appears in this, Because God, to show his indignation against it, hath provided more exquisite torments for Hypocrites, then for any other men in the World; and therefore when God would punish a notorious sinner, says he, Give him his portion with Hypocrites: in Mat. 24. ult.

Plutarch relates of one Thespesius, that he beheld Hell in a vision, wherein he saw those that did counterfeit the Religion of the true God, and served him in guile and hypocrisy of heart; they of all others had the greatest torture among the damned.

To this purpose is that passage in Ezek. 14.7, 8. says God there, Everyone of the House of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his Idols in his heart, and yet cometh to a Prophet to inquire of him concerning me; I the Lord will answer him by myself, and I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb; and I will cut him off from the midst of my people. A man that pretends to be religious, and yet keeps guile in his heart, I will deal with him myself, says God; as if none could punish a Hypocrite enough, unless God doth it himself.

This then is the first Inference, That if it be such an excellent temper for a man to be without guile, then hence we see the odiousness of a guileful and an unsound heart.

Secondly, If this be so, then this Doctrine should provoke each of you to purge out this leaven of Hypocrisy out of your hearts, and to gird your loins with the girdle of sincerity and truth. We have a Proverb amongst us, [Ungirt, unblessed;] though I do not say this is true, yet

take this from me, That if you be ungirt with this girdle of truth, you are unblessed: O therefore purge out this guile out of your hearts.

Thirdly, I infer from hence, That if this be so, it should then teach us to nourish hopefulness in us of men's integrity. If they make but a slender profession of the Gospel; if you see them love God's Ordinances, and join with his people, judge charitably of them.

Nathanael was but a new Convert, he was called and converted but that day: That very day that Philip converted him, Christ saw him coming towards him, and said this of him: Christ gave him this commendation upon the very first beginning of his conversion; To teach us not to dishearten young Converts, and small proficiencie in grace, and censure them to be Hypocrites, or the like: but to encourage them, and help them in the way to Heaven, and strengthen them as much as we can. And thus much shall serve by way of Inference and Instruction.

The next Use that I am to handle, is a Use of Examination: And having before given you the Discoveries and Excellencies of a man without guile, I shall here show you the Characters of a man full of guile and hypocrisy; and these Characters shall not be such only as are deduced from the Scripture, but such as are directly found in the Scripture, that so they may make the more impression upon your spirits; for they are the same Characters that Jesus Christ himself lays down of an hypocritical heart in Matt. 23. In that very Chapter there are eight Characters ushered in with so many Woes.

1. The first Character you shall find in Vers. 13. of that Chapter, and that is this; Hypocrites will not be good to themselves, and yet do what they can to hinder others from being so. Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for you shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. This is the character that Christ gives of him, He will neither do good, nor be good himself, and will hinder others what in him lies from being so too. Thus Elymas the Sorcerer,

in Acts 13.7. when Sergius Paulus, the Deputy, a prudent man, was going to embrace the Faith, and receive the Gospel, it is said, he withstood them, laboring to turn away the Deputy from the Faith; he endeavored to hinder his conversion: but Paul being filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes upon him and said, Oh full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the Devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

2. Another discovery is this, It is the badge of an hypocrite, to perform good duties merely to be a cover to hide some foul sins. This is laid down in the 14 verse, Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, for you devour widows houses, and for a pretense make long prayers: that is, to cover some foul sin in their practice, they made long prayers. So that dissembling Harlot, Prov. 7. paid her vows, and offered her peace-offerings, that she might with more secrecy and security entertain her paramours. Thus that hypocritical fox Herod, pretended to worship Christ, Mat. 2.8. when he intended to murder him. as when a man that is an adulterer, shall make a great profession of Religion, that so men might the less suspect him to follow the stews: this was the hypocrisy of Jezebel, that had painted grace as well As a painted face, she could cause a fast to be proclaimed, that so she might the better take away both the life and the vineyard of Naboth, 1 King. 21.9. and this is that which is expressly forbidden in 1 Pet. 2.16. says the Apostle, Use not your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness. When men shall take the veil of the Temple God's ordinances, and with them cover their deformities and notorious sins, this is a sad thing, and therefore all you that do make a holy profession, and frequent the congregations and assemblies of God's people, that come to the ordinances and hear the Word of God, and yet indulge yourselves in known and notorious sins, making the word of God and profession of Religion, a cloak to cover them: let me tell you, that these are the very badges of an hypocrite.

3. Another Character is this, all those that do converse or associate with them, are a great deal the worse, and not the better for their company: this is laid down in verse. 15. Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell then yourselves, his conversion is a mere perversion: this is the badge of a hypocrite, those that converse with them are the worse for them.

4. They make a thing either to be a sin or to be no sin, according as it makes for their private interest or advantage, and this you have in verse. 16. Woe unto you ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the Temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the Temple, he is a debtor. It is a sin to swear at all, but they say no, that it was no sin to swear by the Temple, but if any man did swear to give gold to the Temple to beautify the Temple, that so the Priests might be the better for it, then they should be debtors and make good their oath, but otherwise not: that which any man swears, if it makes for their advantage, they must fulfill, otherwise not. These men are of that religion, gain is their godliness: *Ubi utilitas ibi pietas*, as Epictetus observed.

5. The fifth badge that Christ gives of a guileful heart is this, to be scrupulous in the smaller and circumstantial matters of Religion, and to neglect the greater, and weightier, and substantial matters thereof. This you have laid down in verse. 23. Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, Faith, these ought you to have done, and not to have left the other undone: They would pay tithes of mint and cumin, &c. and be very scrupulous about nice and trivial matters of Religion, but neglect the practical points of Christianity, and have no regard at all to them, they were very exact in small inconsiderable things, but neglected the practical Doctrines of Christianity. And this was the hypocrisy of Saul, he gave a strict charge that men should not eat the blood of beasts, but yet he made no conscience of shedding the blood of men, he would have killed Jonathan, and because the people did



admire David and honor him above himself, he would have killed David likewise.

And so Joab did much scruple David's numbering of the people, and yet was not at all scrupulous of murdering of people.

Thus the Scribes and Pharisees, when Judas came to them and told them that he was guilty of innocent blood, and bid them take their money again, they would not receive it because it was the price of blood: they made no conscience of giving money to shed blood, and yet would not receive the money that was the price of innocent blood. They scrupled to have the price of blood in their treasuries, when they were not troubled for having the guilt of blood upon their consciences.

Thus the Papists are scrupulous of eating no flesh in Lent, and will suffer no man to do it, but make no conscience of suffering all profaneness and uncleanness, and of tearing the flesh and spilling the blood of poor Protestants.

And thus the Prelatical Clergy, they were very strict and ceremonious that every Minister must wear a Surplice, but yet took no care at all whether they lived holy lives or no: So they were mighty strict in observing holy days, which was needless, when they did not regard the profaning of the Sabbath, which the Lord does exactly command to be kept holy.

And so the Pharisees, though they would not eat meat with unwashed hands, yet they took no care to wash and cleanse their hearts from sin.

And therefore if any of you would know how the case stands with you in this particular, take a survey over your own hearts, and consider whether or no you are men that are nice and scrupulous about smaller matters, and yet neglect the greater and weightier matters of the Law.

(6) A guileful man is such a one that makes conscience to avoid great and open and scandalous transgressions, but takes no care, and makes no conscience to avoid small and secret and inward corruptions: this you have laid down in Mat. 23.29. Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess: they made no conscience of inward and bosom lusts, and yet were careful to avoid great and notorious sins that were obnoxious to the reproach of men, as in Psal. 36.4. They devise mischief upon their beds, and make no conscience of secret sins, they imagine mischief, Psal. 62.3. their inward and secret thoughts are very wicked.

(7) Another Character is this, they take more care and use more endeavors, for a seemingly holy life, then for a truly holy heart, he takes more care to be counted holy then to be so indeed: this is laid down in verse. 27. Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees hypocrites, for ye are like unto white sepulchers, which appear indeed beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness. Hypocrites have glorious outsides, but nothing but sin and corruptions, and rotten hearts within, they are like Apothecariers boxes that have specious superscriptions without, but nothing at all within. So hypocrites endeavor for a plausible carriage with the men of the world, but care for nothing else. Intus Nero, foras Cato, They have the heart of a Nero under the face of Cato.

(8) Hypocrites they blame and condemn those sins in, other men, which either themselves commit or would do so, so, had they the same opportunities. Vers. 29. Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees hypocrites, for ye build the tombs of the Prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would art have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets, and yet they themselves were guilty of the very same sin. For so Christ tells them afterward in verse. 34. Behold, I send unto you Prophets and wise men, and some of them ye shall kill and

crucify, and some of them you shall scourge in your Synagogues, and persecute them from city to city.

Our Chronicles tell us of a Jesuit here in London in the days of Queen Mary, that made a glorious speech in the praise of chastity, and dispraise of adultery, yet was that night taken in bed with a whore.

Now therefore I beseech you survey your own hearts, whether you do not blame others for the very same sins that you yourselves are guilty of.

And now if all these particulars be well weighed, what a world of hypocrites shall we find? how few Nathaniel's, how many Pharisees? One told the Emperor Frederick that he would go to a place where no hypocrites were. Then (said he) you must go beyond the frozen Ocean where there are no inhabitants: and yet thou wilt find an hypocrite there, if thou find thyself there. You have need therefore to make a thorough search whether you are not one of that number.

And thus I have done with these eight Discoveries, we come now to another Use an Use of Consolation.

All you that are sincere Nathaniel's I have three or four comfortable considerations to uphold your spirits.

And here first you must know that you are to distinguish between the having of hypocrisy, and the reigning of hypocrisy in your hearts; every man may have hypocrisy though he, does labor and strive against it: but where hypocrisy reigns, there it is unseen, unfelt, unbewailed, and unlabored against.

2. Take notice that you are to distinguish from doing of things in hypocrisy, and doing things with hypocrisy. A godly man may do a thing with hypocrisy, but he does not do it in hypocrisy. Christ says of Nathaniel, that he was a man in whom there was no guile, but does not say, with whom there was no guile.

3. Take notice that thou mayest have an assured pledge in thy own heart, that thou art no hypocrite, if thou hast but these three properties in thee, they are such dispositions, that no true child of God can be without, and yet such things as no wicked man or hypocrite can possibly have.

(1) Thou art no hypocrite if thou doest seriously bewail thy own hypocrisy and sin of this nature. It is Hildershams observation, he makes a bold challenge to all the world to do these two things, to bring a Scripture proof that ever a hypocrite did bewail his own hypocrisy, or mourn for the sin of his nature, there was never any wicked unsound man did ever bewail his own hypocrisy, or the pravity or sinfulness of his own nature, and hence it is that Paul he was never sensible, nor troubled for those sins and corruptions that were in his heart before he was converted, but afterward he cries out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death! Rom. 7.24.

And therefore you that bewail your hypocrisy, and mourn for the sin of your natures, that body of death you do carry about with you, this is an undoubted evidence that you are new born.

(2) If you are conversant in the mortification of your inclination to lusts: hypocrisy may have a seeming opposition against sin, but a godly man he wars and fights in good earnest against all sin. Now if you can appeal to heaven that all sins are alike to you, you do hate and abhor them all, your bosom sins, your constitution sins, your inclinations to lust and vanity that is in your natures, this is another evidence that you are void of hypocrisy. And,

(3) If you make conscience of the manner how, and the end why you perform duties to God, these are things that hypocrites never do all their life long, if your conscience bear you witness that it is thus with you, these are unquestionable evidences that you are the men and women that are true Nathaniel's, Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile.

# SERMON, III

## The True Israelite

And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? there are not found that returned to give glory to God save this stranger. - Luk. 17.17, 18.

These words present to your view a narration of a very famous miracle, or rather ten miracles, wrought by one word of Christ's mouth, ten Lepers were healed by Christ, by one word speaking.

Before I come to handle the words, I shall draw out some circumstantial observations from the scope of this History. The History is a miracle that Ch. wrought in healing ten Lepers in a certain village.

Several things might be observed from it. If it be supposed as in charity it might concerning some of them or one of them at the least, that they did not simply and solely desire Christ would cure their bodily distempers, but more generally that he would have mercy upon them both in regard of their souls and bodies, then the observation may be this,

That God doth many times make use of the Afflicting of men's bodies, to quicken and stir up supplications and prayers in their souls: as in Isaiah. 26.16. Lord in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.

From the consideration of the conjunction of these ten Lepers, they had all of them one request and desire, and yet they were men of a different Religion; for the Text says, one of them was a Samaritan, and the other were Jews, and between these two there was no commerce or society; the Samaritans were an abomination to the Jews, and the Jews to the Samaritans: they held it unlawful so much as to keep company with the Samaritans, Joh. 4.9. yet here they can

be together and pray together; they are all conjoined in affection and desire, all of them lying under the same affection: from whence I would note to you,

That many times a conjunction in affliction, doth cause and produce a union in men's judgments and opinions.

Hooper and Ridley could not agree when they were at liberty, yet a prison, a stake reconciled them.

I note this to this end, that though we are sadly disunited in our judgments in this nation, and are of so many several opinions; yet the Lord sending afflictions and miseries upon us, this may be a means to unite us together. Who knows whether God may not yet make use of some heavier affliction upon this nation, then any we have felt yet, to unite those that are now divided?

From the consideration of the time when Christ did heal these ten Lepers: the Text is very observable, Christ did not heal them while they were a praying, and crying out, Jesus have mercy on us. At other times he healed many while they were a praying to him, and bid them go away whole. But Christ heals these men when they were gone away from him, in their way towards the high Priest.

Christ would not heal them while they were a praying to him, because had he done so, the Jews (who were a self-conceited people and very apt to exalt their own righteousness) might have laid too much weight upon their own prayers; and Christ healed them in the way as they went, before they came to the high Priest, lest they should have said the Priest had healed them: Christ healed them by the way as they went when they were 20 miles off from Christ, saith Chemnitz, because the glory of Christ in working this miracle, might be the more manifested, and that they might ascribe their healing to the power of Christ only, and not to the Priest, or the efficacy of their own prayers. The Lord Christ is very cautious, that none should take away from him the glory that is due to him.

But these are only circumstantial points, and therefore I shall pass them over, and come now to survey the Text itself: Jesus said, Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine? The words are not difficult, and therefore I shall not lose time in the explication of them: only let me give you this caution, that you do not pervert these words by running into allegories, as to make these ten Lepers ten sinners, and that these ten sinners were going to the priest to be absolved, and have their sins forgiven them, or the like: for this Scripture is a history, and not mystery; it is a real history, that there were such Lepers as these that were cleansed by Christ.

Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine? there are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger; in both verses there are these two things considerable.

(1) An expostulatory interrogation; Were there not ten healed, but where are the nine? it is a question propounded with indignation; Christ was angry and displeased, that he should bestow mercy upon ten, and yet but one of these ten return him thanks for it.

(2) Here is a commendatory approbation; there is not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

I shall this day speak to the first of these, namely, the expostulatory interrogation here used; Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine? From whence I shall give you a view of 4. Doctrinal propositions in this one Sermon.

(1) From the consideration of the enumeration of the persons that were healed by Christ; Were there not ten healed? Christ did remember the number of those which he healed: from whence observe,

That Jesus Christ keeps an exact account of the particular persons that receive mercy from him.

(2) From the notification of the number that did not return praise to Christ for this mercy; where are the nine? Observe,

That Christ takes special notice of those particular men their names and their number, that do not return the praises of his own mercies.

(3) From the comparison between the number that did not return thanks, and those that did; there were nine that did not, and but one that did return thanks; where are the nine? there is none that returns to give glory to God, but this one stranger. From thence note,

That usually the greatest part and number of men in the world, do not return praises to Christ for mercies received.

(4) From the consideration of the different dispositions in these nine men that did not return praises after they had received the mercy, from what it was before they had received the mercy: for the ten Lepers they all lift up their voice and cried, Jesus have mercy on us; but when they were healed there was no talks then of returning thanks and praises unto God: from hence note,

That it is natural for men to be very importunate to beg mercies when they want them, and yet to be slow and backward in returning praises to God for those mercies when they enjoy them.

I shall begin with the first from the enumeration of the persons healed by Christ:

Were there not ten cleansed?

That Christ takes an especial account of the number of the persons that do receive mercy from him.

It may be we forget the mercies we receive, but Christ will never forget the mercies he bestows; he knows and remembers what particular mercies he gave to such and such particular persons, as in Isaiah. 11.11. It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set



his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people. He takes notice of a first and a second time, that he bestows mercies upon a people.

The use I would have you make of it, is briefly this to consider, that as Christ doth keep an account of the particular mercies he bestows, and of the particular men that receives them: so he doth likewise, upon the same account, take notice of the particular sins that are committed against him, and of the particular men that commits them: as in Numb. 14.22. says God, There they have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice. God reckons and numbers all the sins you commit against him, in Job 31.4. says Job, Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps, if I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hastened to deceit, he takes notice of it. If you step aside to the crooked paths of sin, God observes it.

(2) Oh keep you an account of your mercies; Does Christ keep an account of what mercy he gives? Oh then do you keep an account of what mercies you receive from him.

(3) Use all your mercies well; hath Christ bestowed mercies upon you? Oh then do not abuse them, but use them well: Christ takes notice of them all, and therefore use them well: in Mat. 25.9. it is said there of those that received the talents; one received two, and another five, and another ten talents; and after a long time, the master of those servants came and reckoned with them. Though it be long, yet it is certain, that Jesus Christ will come and have a reckoning with thee for all the mercies he hath bestowed upon thee; if Christ hath given thee anything, he will reckon with thee for it. And thus I pass over the first doctrine from the enumeration of the persons here healed by Christ: Were there not ten healed?

(2) From the notification of the number that did not return praise to Christ; for the mercies they received, there were ten healed; says Christ, but where are the nine? Observe,

That Christ takes special notice of those particular persons that do not return him the praise of his own mercies? Where are the nine? There are nine unthankful men, and but one thankful.

The use of this shall be only by way of counsel and exhortation, to persuade you in the fear of God, to take heed that you be not found in the number of those that do not return Christ the praise of his own mercies; and to quicken you to embrace this counsel, give me leave to press it upon you with these five considerations.

(1) Consider that unthankfulness is not only a sin of disobedience, but also of high injustice. It is worthy your note, that in Mat. 5.45. it is said there, That God maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain upon the just, and upon the unjust: and in Luk. 6.36. there it is said, The Lord is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. That which Luke calls the unthankful man, Matthew calls the unjust man, to show that unthankfulness is a high pitch of injustice.

(2) Consider that Christ taking notice of your not returning to him the praises due for his mercies, will provoke him to strip and deprive you of the mercies he hath bestowed upon you; as in Deut. 28.47, 48, 49. Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things, therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things.

When you abuse the blessings of God to prodigality, and sensuality, it is the ready way to be stripped and deprived of them all: in Isaiah. 17.10, 11. Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips; in the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish: but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and desperate sorrow.

God will recover those blessings which thou abusest, and take away those mercies which thou art not thankful for. Suppose thy mercy be a spiritual mercy, if God sees thee proud of it, proud of thy gifts and graces, he will strip and deprive thee of them, as in Rom. 1.21. Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, &c. therefore God gave them up unto vile affections.

(3) Consider that your unthankfulness under mercies will provoke God to curse those mercies and blessings he hath bestowed upon you, that though you enjoy them, yet you shall not have his blessing with them.

Thus when God gave the Jews Angels food to eat, Quails and Manna from heaven, because they were not thankful; therefore, while the meat was yet in their mouths the wrath of God fell upon them. God will breath a curse upon those blessings for which we are not thankful; God will not give you his grace with his mercies, if you deny him the glory of his mercies.

(4) Consider, that it will provoke the Lord to inflict some heavy judgment upon thee, if thou doest receive mercies from him, and yet never return the glory and praise of them to him: as in 2 Chron. 32.24. it is said there, That Hezekiah was sick even unto death: Interpreters do make a diligent inquiry into the cause of his sickness, and do conclude it to be this, because Hezekiah did not return praises to God, for the great overthrow given to Sennacherib and his Army: that therefore the Lord did send that deadly disease upon him, because he did not give glory to God for that great mercy and deliverance.

Beloved, the Lord knows whether our unthankfulness under present mercies of rest, and freedom from the fury of the sword, may not provoke the Lord to send some heavier judgment upon us.

5. It will impede and interrupt the streams of mercy for the future, from flowing in upon us; unthankfulness to God will not only curse present mercies enjoyed, but also interrupt, and hinder other mercies from coming in upon us.

And thus I have done with the second Doctrine from the notification of the number of those that did not return thanks to Christ.

(3) From the comparison between the number that did not return praise to Christ, and those that did return thanks: there were nine that did not return praise to Christ, and but one that was thankful; Where are the nine? From whence observe,

That amongst the multitudes of people that do receive mercies from Christ, usually the greatest number of them do not return thanks to him for those mercies they do enjoy.

I shall make but a short use of this, namely to stir up and provoke you to admire and magnify the bounty and mercy of God to us, that he should bestow mercy upon those men that he knows will not be thankful to him for them. Oh the bounty of God, that he should give any of us mercy, that will not give him the glory of his mercy: as in Luk. 1.35. The Lord is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil, he bestows mercy upon thee that will not return praises to him.

But may some say, [Obj.] Do not the greatest number of men return to give glory to God for mercies received, though it is true that here nine often, did not return praise to God, yet I hope it is not so now?

Answ. I wish it were not so, [Ans.] and that you may not deceive yourselves, I shall give you three Characters, whereby you may discern, whether you are one of those unthankful ones, that does not return to give glory to God for mercies received, or no.

(1) If the sense of one affliction thou livest under, does swallow up the comforts of 1000. mercies thou enjoyest, then thou art an unthankful man: and thus the Israelites discovered their ingratitude

to God, in Exod 17.3. Because they wanted water, the people murmured against Moses and said, Wherefore hast thou brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children, and our cattle with thirst? One affliction in the wilderness made them forget all their former mercies, and the great works that God did for them in Egypt and the red Sea, and in the wilderness; all the mercies they had received were swallowed up with one affliction. If thou wert a thankful man, thou wouldst say with Job, (under every affliction or loss) the Lord gives, and the Lord takes, blessed be the name of the Lord.

(2) That man is an unthankful man that makes an ill construction of the cross passages of God's providence, as those did in Deut. 1.27. They murmured in their tents, and said, Because the Lord hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us. Because God hated us (saith they) therefore hath he brought us out of Egypt to destroy us. Whereas God promised to preserve a seed that should be blessed, and of whom he would make a great nation.

You that for any affliction can fly out against God, and put ill constructions upon his dealings, and the dispensations of his providence, you are the men that are unthankful.

3. That man is an unthankful man, that does not act more grace upon the receipt of more mercies; for no man is a thankful man that doth praise God with his mouth only, but he that loves the praises of God; the reality of thanksgiving unto God, consists in obedience, and doing much for God; that as God heaps mercies upon thy head, so thou doest labor to act grace and obedience in thy heart and life. Real gratitude consists in a ready obedience to God; you must not Judge of your thankfulness by what you say of God, but by what you do for him. Do you add grace to grace, and duty to duty, as God adds mercy to mercy? then are you thankful indeed, otherwise you will be counted one day among the number of these nine unthankful Lepers.

Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine? So much for the  
3. Doctrine.

(4) From the consideration of the different dispositions in these nine Lepers, before they were cleansed they all cried out with a loud voice, Jesus have mercy on us; but after they were healed, then they had no thoughts of Christ; they were men of prayer before they were healed, but they are not men of praises when they were healed. From whence note.

That it is natural to men to be importunate with God for mercies, when they want them, but not to return praises to God for them, when they have received them.

And the reason of it is this, it proceeds from that predominant principle of self-love that is in man, which makes him more to look after his own good, then the glory of God; and more earnest to beg mercies when he wants them, then to return praises to God when he enjoys them. Many men (says Bernard) are importunate in begging mercies, and impatient till they receive them, and yet unthankful when they have them.

Let us look upon ourselves in this glass, and see whether it be not so with us or no.

And let this humble us, that those mercies that we have won by prayer, we have not worn them with thankfulness, that our praises have not held equipage with our prayers.

Many men are like the Ship-master we read of in the Turkish History, that being very likely to undergo shipwreck at sea; a great storm arising and the ship being in danger every moment to be cast away; in this great straight he made a vow, that if he were delivered this once he would in token of thankfulness sacrifice a wax candle to the Virgin Mary, as big as the Mast of his Ship. But when he came ashore, (being put in mind of his promise) he then resolved that a Candle of half a pound should serve the turn.

So it is with many of us, when we stand in need of mercy, then we make vows and promises of better obedience, but when we have received the mercies we desired, then we return with the dog to his vomit, and forget to return praises for them.

We have cause to be humbled that we have begged mercies so often, and yet when we have received them, have not been thankful for them. One hath a good observation upon Jonah, (says he) the Mariners of the ship where Jonah was, when they were in danger to suffer Shipwreck, then every man went and prayed to his God for mercy and deliverance; but there is no mention made at all of these returning thanks to God for his mercy after they were delivered.

Many men under imminent danger and troubles, make vows and promises of living better, and walking more humbly and holily before him; and yet afterwards return to their old sins again.

(2) By way of exhortation, let me persuade you in the fear of God, that what mercies you get by prayer, you would use with thankfulness; never win a mercy by prayer, but wear that mercy with praises, make good the promises you make to God, before you receive mercy from him: when you promise to God, that if he will give you such a mercy, you will praise him, and serve him, and love him, and live to him, make good this promise when you have received that mercy from him: as David says in Psal. 66.13. I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken when I was in trouble.

Now I have my mercy, God shall have his praises. It is natural for us when we are sick to promise; Oh if God will restore me to my health, I will become a new man, and live a holy life, and never do as I have done, &c. And yet when God does restore us, we forget all our vows; and return with the dog to his vomit, land with the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

These nine Lepers were very earnest, and importunate with God for mercy when they wanted it, they cried out Jesus have mercy on us; but after they received mercy, they make no conscience of returning praises unto God for it.

And thus I have done with the first part of the Text, the expostulatory interrogation, or objurgation that Christ here useth, Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?

## **SERMON, IV.**

### The Mischief of Unthankfulness

I Come now to the second part of the Text:

There is not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

Before I come to handle the words expressly, I would give you this caution, to take heed that you do not pervert this History (of healing ten Lepers by one word of Christ's mouth) to a wrong sense: and say that these nine Lepers were a type of the Jews rejection, and this one Leper a type of the Gentiles vocation, which some affirm. So Gorran and Gwalther: but this is merely a historical relation of what was past, not a typical signification of anything to come. Beloved, what need we strain this History to prove that, for which there are express Scriptures enough besides, My Text is only an Historical narration of ten Lepers healed by Christ.

And from this one Leper, that (after he was healed by Christ) returned to give glory to God, there is much of the mind of God to be given: I shall but briefly hint things to you.

This one Leper that Christ commends, if you look into the circumstances of the Text, you shall find that he was a man praiseworthy, and deserved his commendation: which will appear, if you



consider the grand hindrances, that might have interrupted him from coming to give glory to Christ.

(1) He might have pleaded, Here are nine of my companions healed as well as myself, and they have as much cause to give glory to God as I, am I wiser than all the rest that were healed? if they will go with me, I will go; otherwise if I return alone, I shall be accounted singular, and render myself wiser than the rest, and the like. Beloved, had any of us been in his stead, this objection would have taken more place in a 1000. of our hearts, then it did in his. This poor Leper overlooks all these dissuasions and interruptions, and though he could get no company, yet he resolves to go to heaven alone. From whence I would note this Doctrine.

That it is more commendable to do well alone, then to do evil with a multitude.

Had this man taken example by others, he would have been an unthankful man as well as the rest; but he thought it better to do good alone, then to do evil with company. And this was Joshua his resolution, in Josh. 24.15. Choose you (says he) whom you will serve; whether the God's which your fathers served, or the God's of the Amorites; but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.

To do well alone is a good and commendable singularity, but to do evil with a multitude, is an impious conspiracy against God: when you walk in solitary paths, you have God to be your companion, while you follow the thing that good is: 2 Tim. 4.16, 17. At my first answer, no man stood with me, notwithstanding the Lord stood with me. Such a man may say as Christ did, Joh. 16.32. You leave me alone, and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me: and as that Philosopher said, Nunquam minus solus quam eum solus, he is never less solitary then when he is most solitary.

I will only draw three or four inferences from hence, and so proceed.

(1) If a godly man will not do as a wicked man does, nor run with others to the same excess of riot; do not look upon this as a fantastic and a humorous singularity, do not repute that man that will not sin as you do, to be a humorous man.

(2) Another inference is this, Take heed you do not make example your rule to walk by. Make Scripture rules the Canon whereby you regulate all your actions. Christians are to walk by Scripture rule, not popular example. Had this man made example his rule, he had never come to Jesus Christ. Exod. 32.2. Follow not a multitude to do evil, and do not go with many to pervert judgment. If you live as the most do, you live as the worst do, Ephes. 2.2. Elijah made Scripture his rule, and therefore he followed God though he was left alone, as he supposed 1 King. 19.14. It is better to go to heaven alone without a precedent, then to go to hell with a crowd, or to be damned by example. Singularity in some cases is not only lawful, but laudable. Sometime we must not take example, but give example to other men.

3. Be sure that if you differ from other men in the world, you're dividing from them, be not out of fantastic singularity, but out of holy and a gracious singularity.

I know there is a fantastic and a humorous singularity, which is a conceited vanity of an aspiring mind, it is a sullen and a proud singularity: & that you may the better avoid it, I shall give you these Symptoms of it.

(1) A humorous singularity makes a man differ from the gravest and holiest and best of men; when a man shall live as the worst do, and yet walk singularly from the best of people amongst whom he lives. Now a holy singularity doth not make a man differ from the best, but from the worst, and vilest, and most ungodly sort of men: that (in the Apostles language) he will not run with others to the same excess of riot.

(2) A humorous singularity, you may know it by this, such a man will be singular from others, though by his singularity he disturbs the Church of God.

When a man shall for small and petty differences, walk contrary to godly and grave men, thereby making a disturbance in the Church of God, and give offense to weak Brethren; this is a humorous singularity. When men shall separate from others, and gather Churches out of Churches, and that not when they are declining, but when they are reforming, and when there is no necessity of it neither.

(3) A humorous singularity is in trivials and circumstantial, not in substantial.

It is a singularity that would be taken notice of, if none observe it they quickly grow weary of it, vainglory and observation feed this humor; but true singularity is so alone as well as in company.

But these things I only hint by the way.

2. A second hindrance that might lie in the way of the Leper, to obstruct his coming unto Christ, is this, Christ told these Lepers and commanded them, and gave them a strict charge that they should go show themselves to the Priest: Now the text says, that as they were going thither they were all healed. And therefore this Leper might have this conflict in his own breast, if I go to Christ to return him glory, in obeying one Command, I shall disobey another, for he hath commanded me to go show myself to the Priests. Now might this poor man reason with himself, If I go to the Priest then it may be I shall never know where to find Christ again to give him glory; or if I go first to Christ, then he may ask me why I did not according to his command, go to the Priest. But at length considering that his going to the Priest, was only a Mosaical ceremony, but his returning to give glory to Christ a Moral duty; therefore he thought it better to make a ceremony stoop to a substance, then the contrary. From whence I

would note to you this useful observation, from this poor Lepers waving a ceremony to perform a moral duty, of giving glory to Christ.

That it would be a man's wisdom so to order it in his Christian course to make a lesser duty give way to a greater.

That when two duties come in competition together, to let pass the lesser, and perform the greater. Thus (says God) I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; that is, when both these come in competition, I will have mercy, rather than sacrifice.

The Use that I would make of this should be of rebuke and blame, to those that make every slight occasion a means to keep them off, and make them neglect great duties, and weighty services; and of this sort are they, spoken of in Mat. 8.21. Christ was calling one of the Scribes to come and follow him, (saith he) suffer me first to go and bury my father, this was only a ceremony, and a piece of natural civility to his father that was dead, which made him neglect a moral duty, the following of Christ.

Many men are of such a temper, that any small slight occasion, shall hinder them from serious and weighty duties. Had this Leper been so, he had never come to give glory unto Christ, and he had never been the man whose fame shall be least upon record to the worlds end, that he was the man that gave glory to God above the nine.

This doctrine likewise reproveth those that are very exact and scrupulous about small and less considerable duties, but remiss and careless about greater and weightier services. Like the Pharisees in Mat. 23.23. who were very scrupulous in tithing of mixed and anise and cumin, in observing slight and trivial duties, and yet omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and saith. And so Saul he was very scrupulous about eating the blood of beasts, and yet he made no conscience of spilling the blood of men, 1 Sam. 22.17.

So the Jews that made a great scruple taking the price of blood into their Treasury, yet made no conscience of taking the guilt of blood

upon their hearts. Beloved, this is no better than gross and grand hypocrisy. And thus much for the second obstruction that might lie in this Leper's way to hinder him from coming to give glory to Christ.

We come now to the second part of the Text, There is not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger: I might note here that Christ does not say to give glory to me, but to give glory to God. I might from hence note a plain confutation of the Arians that deny the divinity of Christ; for this text expressly proves Christ to be God, because the Leper giving thanks to Christ, the Scripture records of him that he gave glory to God; but I shall not stand upon that. I will a little explain this passage, what it is to give glory to God. You must know that to give glory to God, so as to add anything to the excellency of his nature, that cannot be, for God is so infinitely and completely glorious, that it admits of no addition; but by giving glory to God is meant nothing else but acknowledging of that greatness and excellency and glory to be in God which indeed there is.

And there are two things especially wherein the Scripture declares, a giving of glory to God to consist. As,

(1) In confessing our sins against God, as in Josh. 7.19. Joshua said to Achan, My son, give I pray thee glory to the Lord God of Israel and make confession to him.

(2) In acknowledging that all the mercies we enjoy come from God, as in Psal. 50.23. Who so offereth me praise, glorifyeth me; and so in my text this Leper gave glory to Christ, by praising of him and acknowledging that he received this mercy and healing from him.

There is not found that returned to give glory to God save this stranger, none of them did return back to Christ to acknowledge his great mercy in healing them, but this one stranger.

Now from this commendation that Christ gives of this one Leper, there are these three Doctrinal Observations will arise, I shall but name the two first of them, and pitch upon the last.

(1) From the consideration of the quality of this Leper that did return praise to Jesus Christ, the text says he was a stranger, and the verse before my text says, he was a Samaritan; Now the Samaritans were an idolatrous company of people, their Religion was a composition of Paganism and Judaism, they did worship the God of Israel, and the Idols of the Land too; yet this one Samaritan gave glory to God, when the other nine Jews that had more reason to praise God, never returned at all to do it: from whence I note,

That sometimes God doth choose obscure persons from obscure places of the world to be great instruments of his praise.

David from keeping of sheep came to govern a Kingdom, from the Shepherds crook he came to hold the Kingly scepter, and from dwelling in a shepherds cottage he, came to sit upon a Throne.

And so that place wherein Christ was borne was in Bethlehem of Judah, the least of all the thousands of Israel, none so poor and despicable and inconsiderable a place as that; I could instance in many more, but I forbear.

The Reasons why I gave you this note are,

First, to keep up your hearts from despondency and discouragement of mind; suppose you may see the places wherein you dwell in danger to be destroyed, and you can discover no probable or likely means of safety and deliverance for you, yet remember the Lord can from obscure places and corners raise up, and work great deliverances, the Lord can raise up men from such obscure places as you are not aware of, to be instruments of his glory, and of his people's good.

Secondly, An other reason why I hinted this Doctrine, was to provoke all you (whom God hath raised up to be instruments of his praise, and to be men of repute and quality in the places where you live) to bless and praise the name of God; it may be God hath brought some of you hither, from obscure places in the Country, and here you have

gotten great estates, and are grown rich, and are men of esteem and credit, why labor to give glory to God, and return him the praise of his mercies and blessings.

Again, from the consideration of the different effects the same mercy produceth in these ten Lepers, (pray observe it) here were ten Lepers all sharers in the same mercy, and they were all cleansed from their Leprosy at the same time, and yet notwithstanding the same mercy at the same time wrought a different effect upon them; for nine of these Lepers went away unthankful, and but one of them returned to give glory to God; from whence note,

That the same mercy and the same deliverance and the same blessings of God, they have not the same effects upon the hearts of men.

It may be God may give another man as much wealth as thee, and yet his riches makes him humble, and thankful, and liberal, &c. when the same mercy makes thee proud, and covetous, and unthankful, and uncharitable, &c.

The same sun that softens the wax, hardens the clay, and the same sun that draws forth a sweet savor from the garden, extracts a stinking smell from the dunghill; so the same mercy from God may have different effects upon the hearts of men.

The Use I would have you to make of it is this,

Not to conclude that mercies are given you in mercy, unless they work those effects upon your hearts, for which God sent them. If another man by mercy shall grow more holy, and humble, and thankful, and fruitful in all good works; and thou grow more vicious, and loose, and irregular, and supercilious in the course of thy life, it is a sign the mercies thou enjoyest were not given thee in mercy. The nine Lepers had the same mercy that the other had, but they had not this mercy bestowed upon them in mercy.

The same mercy may not have the same effect upon our hearts, as in the ordinances of God, the same Sermon may make one man humble, that he blesseth God for the word he hath heard, and the same Sermon may make another man angry and storm, and grumble and fret at the word.

As we use to say concerning some kind of meats, that which is one man's meat is another man's poison, so the same mercy may be meat to one man, and poison to another. They may be as cords to draw some men to Christ, and as bonds to keep other men from him.

Oh therefore you that receive and enjoy the same mercies with the children of God, labor to use them so, that they may have the same effects upon your hearts as upon theirs.

I have but one observation more, and that is from the consideration of the disproportion that is here in the number between them that did not give glory to Christ, and those that did, here were nine that did not give glory to Christ, and but one that did give him glory; from whence observe,

That there are but a very few found amongst many who do give Jesus Christ the glory of all his mercies.

Beloved, a man would think that this is so reasonable a duty that there is not one of ten but will give glory to God; and yet scarce one of ten do give Christ the glory of his mercies.

I shall give you 3 or 4 Demonstrations to prove this.

(1) It will appear that there are but a few found amongst many that do give glory to God for mercies received, if you look to the Gentile part of the world, those that remain in Gentilism, for they do not give glory to God; the Apostle says of them in Rom. 1.21. that the Gentiles, though they knew God, yet they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful. The Gentiles remaining unconverted did not give glory to God.



(2) The Jews that were the Church of God, multitudes of them did not give glory to God, in Psal. 106.21. They forgot God their Savior that had done great things for them. So Jer. 2.6. They said not, Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, and that led us through the wilderness? &c. So Hos. 13.6. According to their pasture, so were they filled, they were filled and their heart was exalted, therefore have they forgotten me.

(3) It will appear to be so, because that it was prophesied of the last times, and ages of the world; that those that profess godliness should be defective in this great duty of giving glory to God for mercies received, in 2 Tim. 3.2. In the last days perilous times shall come, and men shall be lovers of themselves, proud, boasters, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, &c. It is a good gloss that a Divine hath upon that place, (says he) As old age doth dispose the body to corrupt and ill humors, so there shall more corruption settle in the old and last age of the world, then before; that is a third demonstration.

(4) It may well appear to be so, because that God's own people are many times defective in this great duty, even those that are truly godly are wonderful defective in this, in 2 Chron. 32.25. good Hezekiah rendered not to God according to the mercy he had received. Now if the people of God that are the Lord's vineyard, if they return not thanks, and bear no fruit to God's praise, what can you expect to grow upon briars and thorns?

The Use that I will make of this shall be by way of Exhortation, to persuade you in the fear of God, not to take pattern by the nine Lepers, but by this one Leper, that you would be the people of God's praise, and to give him glory, of all his mercies. And here I shall give you eight short heads to provoke you to this duty, four by way of consideration, and four by way of comparison.

1. I shall give you four encouragements to this duty by way of consideration.

(1) Consider, that the giving thanks for one mercy, is the way to procure more; he that is thankful for one mercy shall receive more, and greater mercies: Psal. 40.9, 10, 11. says David there, I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving kindness and thy truth from the great congregation. Therefore withhold not from me thy tender mercies oh Lord, let thy loving kindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

The best way to procure more mercies, is to bless God for what we have.

(2) Consider, That thy giving glory to God is the very end of thy being, God gave thee not a being to advance thy own name on high in the world, but to advance the glory and praise of God.

(3) Consider, That thou canst not expect glory from God when thou comest to die, if thou hast not been instrumental of giving glory to God, whilst thou didst live. It is an excellent argument that Christ useth in Joh. 17.4. Father (saith Christ) I have glorified thee on earth, therefore now glorify me with thyself in heaven. All you that can truly say and appeal to God when you come to die, Oh Lord I have glorified thee on earth, now glorify me with thyself in heaven; this will be a very good argument to prevail with him, otherwise how can you pray or expect that God should glorify you in heaven, when you were never careful to glorify him on earth.

(4) Consider, That if God shall not have glory by thee, he will have glory from thee one way or other. Though thou wilt give no glory to him, yet he can glorify himself in thy destruction and damnation, he can glorify his Justice and his power in thy deserved ruin and perdition. As God made his power known in his judgments upon Pharaoh, so he can make his glory shine forth in thy confusion, as well as in thy salvation: God will have glory from thee if he be not glorified by thee.

Thus much for the Considerations, I have now only four Comparisons, that will greatly heal and encourage you to the performance of this duty.

(1) Compare your mercies and your afflictions together.

(2) Compare your mercies and your graces together.

(3) Compare your mercies and your sins together.

(4) Compare your mercies and the mercies of other men together. And if all this will not provoke you to glorify the God of your mercies, you will never do it.

(1) Compare your mercies and afflictions together, mercies flow in upon you like a flood, but affliction fall upon you like drops, for one affliction you have a 100. mercies.

It may be thou hast had one months sickness, but thou hast enjoyed thy health all thy life time almost together. A man in his worst condition enjoys more of mercy, then he suffers of affliction, because his very life is a greater mercy then any affliction that can befall him, is a cross or trouble: For skin for skin all a man hath will he give for his life, and therefore says the Church in Lamen. 8.39. Wherefore doth a living man complain? if he be a living man he hath more cause to bless God for his mercy, then to complain of affliction. Eccles. 7.14. In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider, God also hath set the one over against the other. It is a very strange expression, and the meaning of it is this, that God doth balance afflictions with mercies. Thou hast prosperity and mercies to bless God for, as well as afflictions and adverfity to mourn for; the Lord doth set mercies against afflictions, and so should you do too, set your mercies over against your sufferings, and see whether the number of them will not be greater, and the sum of your mercies more then of your sufferings: The great ground of our unthankfulness is because we look upon our afflictions through an augmenting glass, but behold our mercies through a diminishing

glass. When David cried out upon the death of his son, Oh Absalom my son, my son, would to God I had died for thee my son; had David set a good Solomon over against a bad Absalom, it would have mitigated his affliction. If you set your mercies against your afflictions, and exactly weigh one with the other, you will find your mercies to reponderate and outweigh your sufferings. I remember what I have read concerning an old man, whom (in the two last years of his life) it pleased God to visit with a sore and grievous sickness, those that were about him wondered how he could be so patient under so great an affliction, and endure it with so much calmness and serenity of spirit; his answer to them was, (says he) I have had my health these eight and forty years together, and have lain under this great affliction but these two years, and therefore (says he) I have more cause to bless God for my eight and forty years of health, then to repine at him for these two years of sickness.

(2) Compare your mercies and your graces together; alas poor scanty creature thou art scanty of grace and yet abundant in mercy. And though your grace decay, yet your mercies increase and abound; should God cause our mercies but to hold equipage with our graces, then we had no reason to complain, but when God gives us many and great mercies, though our graces are but small, how should this provoke, and stir us up to bless and praise his name?

(3) Compare your mercies and your sins together, and this will provoke you to be much in thanksgiving to God. Notwithstanding great sins committed, yet behold great mercies enjoyed, oh that we could have our hearts raised up and enlarged to bless God, considering that though we have committed great sins in the places where we live, yet we enjoy great mercies there, though we mingle great sins in our relations, yet God mingles great mercies in our relations, why should not our families be families of affliction, as well as families of sin and provocation? Oh bless the name of God that he does not deal with us according to our sins nor reward us as our iniquities deserve.

(4) Compare thy mercies and the mercies of other men together, and then you will have cause to bless God, because he hath lifted up many of you above your brethren in the world: you eat of the fat, and drink of the sweet, when many of the dear Children of God eat the bread of affliction, and drink the water of adversity. The Lord gives thee to drink of the sweet, when other men drink their tears, and some men their blood too. Compare the mercies which you enjoy, with the mercies of other men, (who though (it may be) they exceed you in degrees of goodness yet come far short of you in regard of mercies,) and this cannot but provoke you to give glory to God. And thus beloved I have spent these two Sermons upon these two verses of my text, the instance of the nine Lepers that did not give glory to God, and the instance of this one Leper that returned to give God the glory of the mercy he had received.

## **SERMON, V.**

### Directions for Profitable Hearing

The beginning of the verse. Take heed therefore, how you hear, &c. - Luke 8.18.

Beloved, I intend to spend this hour only as a preparation Sermon to the Morning Exercise that is for a month to continue in this place.

It shall be my care and endeavor, to provide such able and godly men to exercise every morning, as may be acceptable to you, and let it be your care to bring along with you hearts suitable to the work. I shall take care what you hear, it is your work to take heed how you hear.

Take heed therefore how you hear.

We are to take heed not only what, and whom we hear, but also how we hear.

In the words there are these two parts:

(1) A serious caution given by Christ, Take heed how you hear.

(2) A reason of this Caution expressed in this word therefore, Take heed therefore how you hear.

Wherefore?

Answ. Because there is nothing hid that shall not be revealed: as we see your faces, so Christ sees your hearts, and observes all the deviations and miscarriages thereof, in your approaches to him, and waiting upon him, in the duties of his service; Take heed therefore how you hear.

(1) From the Caution that Christ here gives, [Obser. 1] we may observe, That Christians must take heed not only of the person whom, and the matter what they hear, but also of the manner how they hear the word of God.

(2) From the reason of the caution observe further; [Obser. 2] That the consideration of the all-seeing eye of God, who sees and takes notice of your behavior in your addresses to him, should incite and provoke you to take heed of the manner how you do hear the word of God. The all seeing Eye of God should be a motive to restrain us from the least secret sin: as Job says, I made a covenant with my eyes, why then should I think upon a maid? for doth not the Lord see all my ways, and count all my steps?

But I shall not stand upon these things, but shall only speak something to you, practically from the words: and the Doctrine I shall insist upon, shall be the very words of my Text, and then there will be no need of multiplying anymore places for the proof of it.

That Christians ought to take heed how or in what manner they hear the Word of God.

The Reasons I shall lay down for the proof of this Doctrine, shall be these five, being no other then what are found in this parable. For

this advice or counsel here given by Christ, is but a conclusion to a precedent parable of the four sorts of hearers; wherein to wind up all, our Savior gives this caution, that we should take heed how we hear: from this parable we shall draw these six Reasons to enforce this Doctrine:

(1) Because the most sort of hearers in the world do hear amiss, and therefore you should take heed how we hear. There is but one sort in 4. that hear the word of God aright, and if a great many, nay the most of men miscarry in hearing of the word, therefore let us take heed.

(2) Another Reason in the parable is this, because the devil doth take a great deal of heed to interrupt you in hearing, and therefore you should take heed how you hear, in the 12. verse of this chapter, when the seed was sown, the envious man came and took away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. Now is the Devil so careful to interrupt and hinder the efficacious working of the word upon thy heart, and shall there be no care in thee to attend upon God without distraction when you come into his presence? The Devil serves us in hearing the word of God, as he did the children of Job; It is said, that when they came before the Lord, Satan came in the midst of them; so when we come into the presence of God to hear his Word, the Devil stands at our right hand to divert and distract our thoughts from attending upon it. In Gen. 15.11. it is said, when Abraham was offering up a sacrifice to God, that the fowls of the air came down and picht upon it: which notes (says Diedate) the frequent disturbances, the people of God meet withal from Satan, to distract and interrupt them in the duties and services they are about. Take heed therefore how you hear.

(3) You must take heed how you hear, because if you do not, the word will not only be ineffectual to you, but do you a great deal of hurt. This you have laid down in the 16. verse. No man (says Christ) when he hath lighted a candle covereth it with a vessel, &c. this Text is not referred to the preachers of the Word, it is not meant of their light; but it is referred to the hearers of the Word; Now, says Christ,

the light which they have must not be hid under a vessel, or under a bed, &c. From whence one well observes; That if a light or a candle be put under a bed, not only the room where it is wants light, but the bed and the man that lies in it is in danger of burning. So that man that lives under the means of grace, and under the dispensations of the Word, and takes no care how he hears it, he is like a man that puts a candle under his bed, and is in as great danger of hell fire, as the other to be burned by a temporal fire.

(4) Take heed how you hear, because the great God's all-seeing, and heart-searching eye does take notice of the carriages of your hearts, and of the behavior of your spirits, while you are a hearing. If the Apostle in 1 Cor. 11.10. makes that an argument why the Corinthian women should wear a veil in token of their subjection to their Husbands, because of the Angels, says he, For this cause ought the woman to have power over her head, because of the Angels; then much more ought we to take heed how we hear, not only because the Angels of heaven are present in the assemblies of the Saints, when they come to worship God, but because the God of the Angels takes notice of the frame of your hearts, and of the deportment of your spirits when you are before him. This reason you have laid down in the 17. verse of this chapter, for nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest, neither anything hid that shall not be made known.

(5) Another Reason is, because God dispenseth out his blessings answerable to the conscientious care that we express in hearing his Word, and this is laid down in the words of the Text, Take heed how you hear, for whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that which he seemeth to have, if a man comes formally and customarily to hear the Word of God, even that which he seemeth to get by it shall be taken away from him, and therefore take heed how you hear.

I shall now speak something practically by way of Use, to what hath been said and so conclude; and that I may set home this counsel, that



our Savior here gives us, I shall lay down to you these 7. particular directions.

(1) Take heed how you hear, take heed that you hear the word of God preparedly, as the Preacher must take care to find out acceptable words, so the people should labor to bring acceptable affections to the work. In the Sanctuary there was on one side a Table of Shewbread, betokening the tribes of Israel; and a Candlestick on the other side, to note the service of God, and the Incense in the middle which is prayer, to note that when we come to the service of God, we should hear with all attention and pray with affection.

2. Hear the word not only preparedly but attentively too, as those did in Act. 8.6. it is said the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, and so in the Nehem. 8.5, 6. when Ezra opened the book of the Law, and read in the sight of all the people, they all stood up, and when he blessed the Lord the great God, all the people answered Amen, amen, with lifting up their hands: And so in Luke 19.48. it is said that all the people were very attentive to hear Christ; and therefore those that hear the Word with gazing eyes, and wandering thoughts, and sleepy bodies, they cannot hear it attentively, but are to be reprov'd; and let them take heed that while they hear the Word so remissly and so sleepily, the Devil does not catch them napping: Let such hearers read the story of Eutychus, Act. 20.9. and tremble. And so likewise are they to be reprov'd that hear the Word with an unquiet gesture, walking from place to place: it is said in Neh. 8.7. that when Ezra read the book of the Law, all the people stood every man in his own place.

(3) Hear the Word of God retentively. Labor to keep in thy memory what thou hearest that thou mayest put in practice in thy life: for hearing is not merely for hearing sake, but for practice sake. Thy heart should be as the Ark was; as that was a repository to keep the pot of Manna in, so this Manna the Word of God should be treasured up in thy heart. In Luke 8.15. the good hearer, hears the Word of God with an honest and good heart, and keeps it. So in Isa. 42.23. says the

Prophet, Who amongst you will give ear to this? Who will hearken and hear for the time to come? Who will treasure up the Word for time to come, for after ages that the Word may have a continual impression upon your hearts?

(4) Hear the Word understandingly. Christ called the multitude and bid them hear and understand. As the palate does taste and difference meats, so the ear should distinguish doctrines, as in Job 12.11. says Job, Does not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meats? In Heb. 5.14. says the Apostle, Those that are of full age have their senses exercised, to discern both good and evil: and to know when the Word is soundly and practically preached; men should not be like a sponge under a Sermon, to suck in all they hear indifferently, but they must with understanding search the Scriptures to see whether those things be so or no which are delivered unto them. Mercer upon Job hath a good observation, that the original word for an Ear signifies a pair of balances: to note, that when we are hearing we should be weighing, we should not only use the touchstone to try whether it be true or no, but also the balance whether it be of weight or no. If men should weigh all the doctrines of our times in the balance of the Sanctuary, how many would be found light?

(5) Hear the Word of God applicatively. If a Patient have never such excellent counsel given him, never so sovereign a Cordial prescribed, if he do not apply it, it will do him no more good than if he had never known it. And beloved, there is not one amongst us but may apply to his own soul what he hears preached and delivered out of the Word; as suppose the most foul and enormous sin be reprov'd, why either I have been, or am, or may be guilty of that sin; or if the crime be such as neither I have, or do, or will commit, yet if God should leave me to myself, I may be guilty of it; therefore hear the Word applicatively, and say with David, I will hear what the Lord will say to me.

(6) Hear the Word of God reverentially. Because our God is a consuming fire, not only the wicked but the people of God likewise

should look upon God with such apprehensions as these; many people represent God to themselves in such familiar notions, that it breeds a contempt of God in the conclusion, which we ought not to do, but rather consider that our God is a consuming fire, and therefore let us serve him with reverence and godly fear. It is true we may and ought through Christ to draw near to God with a holy boldness and confidence, as to a father, but withal we must demean ourselves with a humble reverence in his presence.

(7) You must hear the Word of God obedientially. Come with an obedient heart readily prepared and disposed to stoop and submit to all the instructions, corrections, and reproofs of the Word of God; like those spoken of in Act. 10.33. We are all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God; such a frame and disposition of heart should you always bring with you when you come to hear the Word of God; be willing to submit to it, and if you had a 1000 necks to lay them all under the obedience of the Word, (as a learned Dutch Divine once said) hear the Word with fear: we read of an obedient ear: why? the ear is for hearing, but the meaning is, hear to obey.

Is this so that we must take heed how we hear?

(1) Then by way of Exhortation take heed you do not come unpreparedly; take heed lest you come with ungodly and unhumble hearts into God's presence.

(2) Take heed you do not come to hear the Word carpingly; there are many in these times that come to hear merely to carpe and entrap the minister if they can; they forget all the good matter of a Sermon, but if there be anything amiss or impertinently (as they conceive) delivered, they will be sure to pitch upon that, though they let slip all the rest.

(3) Do not hear the Word dependingly. Do not depend upon your hearing or praying or any other service, you must make your duties

your way, but not your Christ: many times the Lord does interrupt and keep off the force and efficacy of his Word from the hearer because he depends too much upon the hearing of the Word, or upon the Preacher of it. When the Israelites fought with the Philistines, and had the worst of it, they imputed their loss to the absence of the Ark from them, but yet when they had got the Ark with them, they had then worse success than before, and a learned Divine gives this reason of it, namely, because they did Idolize the Ark, and depend too much upon it.

And therefore in hearing the Word do not depend too much upon your own strength, or upon the man, or upon the matter he preacheth, for though the matter be good, yet this is the way to have the benefit and prophet of it diverted from you. As in Prayer we should so prepare ourselves for that duty, as if we had no Spirit in heaven to help our infirmities, but when we have performed the duty, we should look upon ourselves as if we had said never a word, but that Christ had prayed in us, and done all in all for us. And so when we have heard a Sermon, we should look up to Christ, and beg his blessing upon it, that it may not return void, but accomplish the work for which it was sent, and be powerful and efficacious to the good of our souls.

(4) Take heed how you hear, and be persuaded in the Lord to practice this rule, upon this ground, because the Lord doth proportion out his blessings on the Word answerable to your care in hearing of it.

The Lord does require in us an answerable care, in the use of means, for the increase of those graces in us for which he hath appointed those means. With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again, sometimes it is applied to works of justice, as you judge others, so God shall you; And sometimes to works of mercy, Give full measure running over, for with what measure you mete it shall be meted unto you again: God shall restore to you again answerable to your charity towards others.

But another Evangelist applies this phrase to the hearing of the Word, Take heed how you hear, for with what measure you mete it shall be meted to you again; that is, as you measure the Word in your preparations for it, before you come to hear it; so God will mete out to you your profit and benefit by it after you have heard it, the efficacy and profit of the word upon your hearts shall be answerable to your preparations and care in receiving of it. Take heed therefore how you hear.

FINIS.

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ePub, .mobi & .pdf Editions May 2023. Requests for information should be addressed to: Monergism Books, PO Box 491, West Linn,

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